

Wall Street Dirty Tricks: Visa, Mastercard Block US-sanctioned Russian Banks

By [RT](#)

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International payment system Mastercard has stopped serving clients of the Rossiya bank, with Visa halting operations with 3 more lenders. The move comes after the US issued sanctions against it regarding Russia's position over the Ukrainian turmoil.

Russia's Sobinbank, SMP Bank and Investcapitalbank are among other three lenders blocked by Visa.

The blockade came without warning, Rossiya bank said.

"The management of Rossiya understands the difficulties of clients in the current situation and will do all it can to solve them," the bank said in a statement.

The bank added that its own services relating to Visa and Mastercard cards, like withdrawing cash from the bank's ATMs works fine.

Apart from the payment blockade, Rossiya is operating *"in stable regime"* and is fulfilling all its obligations, the bank said.

Visa and Mastercard did not immediately comment on the news.

Washington's move is meant to put pressure on people they see as members of President Vladimir Putin's *"inner circle"*. The bank's owner, Yury Kovalchuk, is on the list as well, as an individual.

Visa and Mastercard have a record of bowing to political decisions from Washington, most notably in blocking donations to the WikiLeaks whistleblower website.

Garegin Tosunyan, the president of the Association of Russian Banks (ARB), said the action of the card payment companies was unacceptable.

"..the international payment system should correspond to the standards of the international payment system. That means it should not switch the tumblers on and off, depending on their own will, especially as it undermines their own foundations," he said.

The head of ARB said he wishes his *"colleagues from the international payment systems and all those who stands behind them, would show enough wisdom to stop these actions"*.

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