

Mounting Tension: Russia will not accept an attack on Iran

By [Global Research](#)

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Russia's Medvedev: Armed action on Iran unacceptable

A military solution to the standoff over Iran's nuclear ambitions is unacceptable and there is no need at the moment for new sanctions, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev said on Friday.

But Medvedev said Russia continued to support a diplomatic drive led by European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana to offer Tehran a package of incentives in return for it reining in some of its nuclear activities.

Western states are anxious that a rift between Moscow and the West over Russia's intervention in Georgia may shatter the fragile international coalition that has been applying pressure on Iran over its nuclear programme.

'We should not take any unilateral steps. It is not acceptable to opt for a military scenario. It would be dangerous,' Medvedev told the Valdai Club, a panel of journalists and academics who specialise in Russia.

'The key is that negotiations be pursued... They have been quite positive,' Medvedev said. 'We should not adopt any additional sanctions now.'

Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki was in Moscow on Monday for talks with his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov, the two countries' first high-level contact since Russia angered the West last month by sending troops and tanks into Georgia.

Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin has said Western states will have to tackle Iran without Russia's help if they withdraw cooperation in other areas as punishment for the Kremlin's actions in Georgia.

The United States and other Western powers say they suspect Iran is seeking a nuclear bomb under cover of its civilian nuclear programme.

Tehran denies it has any such intention. It says it is exercising its sovereign right to develop nuclear technology for generating electricity.

U.S. President George W. Bush has refused to rule out the use of force against Iran, though he has said he favours a diplomatic solution.

Russia has consistently opposed military action against Iran and has also used its veto power in the United Nations Security Council to dilute U.S.-led attempts to impose tougher sanctions.

Existing U.N. sanctions include financial and travel curbs on a list of Iranian individuals and companies linked with the nuclear programme.

'We will use only proportionate sanctions. They will be aimed at individuals and organisations involved in Iran's nuclear programme,' Lavrov told the Valdai Club at a separate session earlier on Friday.

Additional reporting by Dmitry Solovyov; Writing by Christian Lowe; Editing by Sami Aboudi

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