



Embassy of the Russian Federation in the Republic of South Africa

Summary of the News Conference by Russian President Dmitry Medvedev

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“Russia will boost its strike nuclear capabilities if NATO refuses to cooperate with Moscow in the European missile defence project”, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev declared on Wednesday at a news conference held in Skolkovo School of Management . “The United States refused to comply with a Russian request to provide legally binding guarantees that its European missile defence system will not be directed at Russia” he said.

"I hope we will be able to forge a missile defence cooperation model." Medvedev told journalists. "If we don't, we will have to take retaliatory measures, which we don't want to. This will mean forcing the development of our strike nuclear potential, and it would be a very bad scenario, which could take us back to the Cold War era." the President added.

Medvedev reiterated a warning issued by the Foreign Ministry that Moscow may pull out of the New START disarmament agreement, which entered into force this year, in response to the United State's position on the shield. "It is clear that the missile defence shield is directed at blocking the strategic capabilities of certain states," Medvedev said. "I understand that those states do not have Russian-like nuclear potential and are unlikely to obtain it in the coming years... So, it is directed against us."

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev said that Russia will not back a UN resolution on Syria. Britain, France and Germany have been pushing for the UN Security Council to condemn Syria's crackdown on pro-democracy protests. Syrian President Bashar al-Assad has been using tanks and troops to crush the dissent. "I will not back this resolution even if my friends are going to beg me to." Medvedev told a news conference. "It is sad that such resolutions can be manipulated." he said.

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev declined to say if he will run in the 2012 presidential elections despite speculation that the much-awaited decision would be announced at the President's biggest ever news conference. "I think that politicians should make such announcements when they consider the time is right." Medvedev said.

According to the President, Russia is going to maintain modernization as its main priority. The President stated that “Modernization is not just a gradual process, but a qualitative change of the situation in the country.” Medvedev said that Skolkovo was a “symbolic place” for modernization talks. “It is the place where the new technologies develop; the place where the University of Technology as well as the School of Management were established. There will be innovation centre here, and I want the brand “Skolkovo” to become known globally” the President said, adding that Skolkovo should be the most important chain in the modernization process.