

Dvorkovich Says WTO Talks On Track to Wrap Up in 2011

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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WASHINGTON — Arkady Dvorkovich, chief economic adviser to President Dmitry Medvedev, said Friday that he hoped negotiations would be done by mid-2011 for Russia to join the World Trade Organization, a move the U.S. administration has said it would welcome.

Dvorkovich also said the 2007-09 financial crisis had pushed Russian authorities to speed reforms to make their economy more competitive and open to innovation.

“We are hopeful that by the middle of next year we can actually announce that all negotiations are completed” for entry to the WTO,” Dvorkovich said. He was speaking by satellite from Moscow to a meeting of the European Institute in Washington.

On Thursday, President Barack Obama voiced strong support for Russian membership in the global trade body and said the United States would make every effort see it happen.

“Welcoming Russia to the WTO would be good for them, but it would also be good for us and good for the global economy,” Obama said at a meeting of his Export Council advisers.

Dvorkovich described negotiations as “on track.” Answering questions later, Dvorkovich played down concerns that large-scale capital flight was a continuing problem for Russia. He said U.S. firms that had invested in industries as diverse as pharmaceuticals, energy and high technology were in fact planning to expand in Russia.

“We are expecting a major inflow of foreign direct investment over the next two to three years,” he said.

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