

# Putin Calls U.S. Fiscal 'Hooligan'

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**The  Moscow Times**

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin said the United States is "acting like hooligans" and "abuses its monopoly" on printing money.

"They turn on the printing press and scatter money around the world," Putin said during a meeting with economists in Moscow on Monday. "We can hardly allow ourselves to solve problems by running a deficit."

Putin also said members of the Eurasian Economic Community, a grouping of former Soviet nations, should set up a rating agency.

At the same meeting the prime minister urged the Central Bank and Finance Ministry to diversify Russia's reserve holdings.

Meanwhile, President Dmitry Medvedev met with business leaders Monday. Medvedev said the country's capital outflow might fall to \$35 billion this year from almost \$40 billion last year, as he criticized the country's poor investment climate.

Medvedev met the businessmen at his Gorki residence, as a follow up to the St. Petersburg

International Economic Forum that took place last month.

Proposals on state assets sales are "modest" and leave all companies under governmental control until 2016, the president said. "We must act much more decisively," Medvedev said. He ordered the government to make new proposals by Aug. 1.

The president reported that the replacement of high government officials holding key posts on the boards of directors at major companies with independent figures is almost finished. "This process should be complete at all stock companies controlled by the government by autumn," he said.

Regarding securities regulation, Medvedev said, "We have made the circulation of Russian securities on international exchanges easier."

"We should also use privatization to increase the liquidity ... by placing a significant portion of the stock in Russia," he said.

Medvedev also expects the government to continue the simplification of visa formalities for highly skilled specialists.

"It is unclear who we are blocking. I hope you share my position. The work must be done to the end," he told the businessmen at the Gorki meeting on Monday.

A number of legislative decisions were made in 2010-11 to cut barriers to attract foreign workers. "However, we still did little. There are restrictions, and foreign colleagues are telling me about them. The work must continue," he said.

The president also commented on investor access to corporate information. He said draft legislation has already been prepared, which will ensure that minority shareholders get access to information on corporate operations.

"This is a difficult issue, and it is necessary to act this way in order to avoid creating disproportionate damage to companies," Medvedev said.

*(Bloomberg, Interfax)*

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