The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

'Reset' With U.S. Continues at APEC

By Khristina Narizhnaya

November 13, 2011



Medvedev and Obama may have met for the last time in office Saturday. **Larry Downing**

The "reset" between Russia and the United States appeared to be in full force at the annual Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation conference, held in held in Hawaii's capital, Honolulu, over the weekend.

Presidents Dmitry Medvedev and Barack Obama, who may be meeting for the last time as presidents with elections in both countries coming up next year, praised each other and discussed further cooperation.

Obama has done more than any other American leader to help Russia enter the World Trade Organization, Medvedev said, according to news reports. Russia is ready to join the WTO, and Obama is "enthusiastic" about the country's likely upcoming entry, Medvedev told a news conference after the private meeting between the leaders.

The United States agreed to let Russia join the WTO after a dispute with Georgia was recently resolved, Obama said last week, Bloomberg reported.

"Russia's membership in the WTO will lower tariffs, improve international access to Russia's services markets, hold the Russian government accountable to a system of rules governing trade behavior, and provide the means to enforce those rules," Obama said, Bloomberg reported.

Accession to the WTO will strengthen Russia's economy and bring it closer to international standards, Medvedev said.

"We will have to go through development," Medvedev said.

Medvedev and Obama discussed cooperation on a response to the nuclear threat from Iran, as well as a way to try to negotiate with the country to contain that threat, on the sidelines of the conference.

But NATO plans for a defense missile shield in Eastern Europe, slated to be built by 2018, could derail the U.S.-Russian "reset." The United States said the anti-missile system is necessary as a defense from Iran, Afghanistan and other "rogue" states, while Russia argued that the anti-missile system is also aimed at them. Russia has asked for participation in developing the shield, but the request has been denied by NATO.

"Concerning this issue, we have agreed to continue searching for possible solutions, taking into account that our positions are still far away from each other," Medvedev said Saturday.

Negotiations to supply gas to China are currently under way, Medvedev said. Russia's gas trade with Europe is valued at $250 billion annually. China and Asia-Pacific hold great potential to provide at least a "no lesser" volume of trade, Medvedev said.

A gas pipeline between Russia and China has been in the works for nearly five years, but stalled recently since the two sides have failed to agree on pricing.

Medvedev discussed the possibility of defense cooperation with new Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda in the face of the looming threat of China's military buildup.

APEC, the annual meeting where leaders of 21 countries discuss cooperation and trade facilitation, will be hosted in Vladivostok next year.

Izvestia reporters spotted Medvedev and Dvorkovich strolling along the beach in Hawaiian shirts, and Primorye Governor Sergei Darkin was spotted sunbathing, the paper reported.

Original url: https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2011/11/13/reset-with-us-continues-at-apec-a10754