

Medvedev Thanks Top Officials, Wishes Putin Luck as President

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President Dmitry Medvedev speaking to top officials in the Kremlin on Saturday.

Dmitry Medvedev, whose term as president will end Monday when Vladimir Putin retakes the post for a third term, gathered members of the Cabinet and other top officials Saturday to thank them for their work over his time in office and to spur them on to future progress.

In an informal ceremony in the Grand Kremlin Palace, Medvedev told those gathered that "nothing would have worked out" without their contributions given the economic crisis that began in 2008 and the war with Georgia in August of the same year, according to a transcript of his comments posted on the Kremlin website.

He said "many problems" had accumulated in the economy as a result of the crisis but that there had been "obvious achievements that allowed us, generally, to overcome the crisis rather successfully."

He said many "useful programs" had been initiated in the social and political spheres and seemed to allude to the nascent opposition movement's aspirations for political reforms.

"I am sure that they [the programs] will undergo progress in future work, especially since our people tell us that we, first of all, should be more attentive to society's problems, to the hopes of people who, essentially, shape the authorities," Medvedev said.

"On the other hand, we have to preserve the groundwork that has been laid as a result of our work together," he said.

Medvedev also wished Putin success in his third term as president and said their partnership, known as the "tandem," would endure.

"We have been together, and we will continue [our] work together," he said.

Putin has said he will appoint Medvedev to the post of prime minister after taking office, completing their job swap.

Medvedev concluded by saying he would like also to thank the gathered officials materially — with lunch.

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