The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Medvedev Meets With Obama at G8 Summit

By Ken Martinez

May 20, 2012



Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev following other G8 leaders to a group photo during a weekend summit at Camp David, Maryland. In front of him are the leaders of Japan, Canada, France, the United States, Germany, Britain, Italy and European Council President Herman Van Rompuy. **Philippe Wojazer**

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev insisted that the "reset" was still on during a meeting with U.S. President Barack Obama on the sidelines of a weekend G8 summit at Camp David.

Medvedev said the pair's first meeting since he became prime minister was friendly and informal, "not only without ties, but even without jackets," Vedomosti reported Sunday.

The prime minister, who signed up on popular web service Instagram on the way to the United States, used the service to post a photo of the meeting.

At a news conference on Saturday, Medvedev said he explained to Obama why he came instead of President Vladimir Putin, whose unexpected decision not to attend the summit was seen by

some as a snub.

“I said that my appearance here at Camp David, as the head of the Russian delegation at a time when the president is busy forming the government, or more precisely matching candidates to the government, must also be regarded as a symbol of a certain continuity of foreign policy, the policy of the ‘reset’ to which President Obama and I have devoted much time,” Medvedev said.

He added that, as a person who “until a certain time participated in crafting foreign policy,” his understanding of the country’s priority foreign policy doesn’t differ from that of Putin.

The meeting touched on economic issues as well.

“I called attention to the fact that, according to one indicator, surprising even to myself, Russia has taken the lead against the United States,” Medvedev said. “If we talk about the volume of investment, our investment for the first time surpassed the United States, which, of course, on the one hand, is good for our investors, but for such a large economy like the U.S. economy, it in general is not a good indicator.”

He did not give any additional details about the investment.

Medvedev also said he was pleased with the conversation, which showed that “the communication continues.” He also said he conveyed a message from Putin that set out Russia’s position on a number of foreign policy and bilateral relations.

Medvedev also spoke generally about the G8 summit, saying that besides discussions on nuclear programs in Iran and North Korea, support of Afghanistan’s economy and the conflict in Syria, the meeting focused on world economics, with special attention placed on the situation in Greece. He said the G8 members had reached a consensus that its exit from the euro zone was impermissible.

“[The] Russian prime minister noted that we are not going to cut the share of the euro in our reserves in order not to send wrong signals on the situation in Europe,” Stanislav Voskresensky, Russia’s G-20 sherpa and deputy economic development minister, told reporters later the same day.

A U.S. official speaking to Reuters said Medvedev showed “good unity” with the other G8 leaders on Iran.

In addition, the leaders said in a statement Sunday that summed up the summit’s discussions: “We remain appalled by the loss of life, humanitarian crisis, and serious and widespread human rights abuses in Syria.”

“Some may like or dislike the Syrian government, some may have different views on the last election that took place in Syria, but one cannot avoid a question — if [Syrian President] Bashar Assad goes, who will replace him?” said Federation Council Senator and Medvedev aide Mikhail Margelov on Saturday.

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