

Official Promises Greater Role for Private Arms Companies

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Private weapons contractors will be allowed to take part in developing nuclear weapons, a senior official said Monday.

Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin, who oversees the defense sector, told RIA-Novosti that while the defense industry will remain under strict state control, private contractors will be able to play a role in producing nuclear arms.

He added that up to 400 companies could participate in such cooperation between the private and public sectors.

Rogozin, who backs private companies' involvement in the defense sector, said that between 30 and 35 percent of the country's defense contracts should be fulfilled with private companies' involvement.

Although private companies currently play a minor role in the government-controlled defense industry, Rogozin said earlier that private contractors have taken part in designing new sniper rifles and handguns for the military.

The idea of bringing private business into the domestic defense industry has another prominent backer — President Vladimir Putin. Putin said in July that the country is planning to spend 600 billion rubles (\$19 billion) to modernize 85 percent of its nuclear arsenal.

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