

Rogozin Denies He Has Presidential Ambitions

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin denied harboring ambitions of becoming president in an interview broadcast Sunday evening.

"I do not have any presidential ambitions," Rogozin told Vladimir Pozner during the journalist's Channel One talk show, adding that he derived "great creative pleasure" from working with President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev.

Instead, Rogozin wants to focus on the defense industry to "get the flywheel of Russian industry turning in three to four years," he said.

Stressing the importance of a strong military, the deputy prime minister advocated increased defense spending in order to protect Russia's sovereignty.

"We are a big, wealthy country, but we have a small population. It's too early to think that

everything's fine, sniff daisies and tie knots in our Kalashnikovs," he said, refusing to comment on the ongoing corruption scandal in the Defense Ministry.

Asked about recently passed legislation obliging NGOs engaging in political activities to register as "foreign agents," Rogozin said Russia-sponsored organizations would be treated the same way in the West.

"You do not want Russia to become an ultra-liberal country, do you?" Rogozin asked Pozner, calling on the opposition to stop holding anti-government rallies and work for the good of their country.

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