

Russia Signals Backing for New Sanctions on N. Korea

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russia is ready to back a draft UN Security Council resolution calling for sanctions against North Korea over its third nuclear test if the draft focuses solely on Pyongyang's nuclear and missile programs, a senior diplomat said Tuesday.

UN envoys say the United States and China struck a tentative deal on a draft resolution to punish North Korea over the test.

"It will be acceptable to us if the restrictive measures do not go beyond the boundaries of missile and nuclear issues," Deputy Foreign Minister Gennady Gatilov said, Interfax reported.

Russia, which holds the presidency of the 15-nation Security Council this month, was due to convene consultations on North Korea at the United Nations later Tuesday, the UN press office said.

Security Council diplomats have said they would like to strengthen the provisions in previous sanctions resolutions adopted after North Korea's 2006 and 2009 nuclear tests, above all those related to inspection and seizure of shipments of banned items and imposition of tougher financial restrictions.

China has criticized the nuclear tests and said the council should respond "appropriately."

A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman in Beijing refused to give any details about the deal at her daily media briefing but indicated that China was concerned about Pyongyang's behavior.

"We have said here many times that China supports the UN Security Council in reacting moderately and explicitly objects to North Korea's nuclear test," spokeswoman Hua Chunying said.

UN diplomats, speaking on condition of anonymity because no official announcement has been made, said the United States was expected to circulate a draft resolution to the full council Tuesday. Council members were then expected to send the draft to their capitals for review.

All 15 council members approved a press statement that condemned Pyongyang's Feb. 12 nuclear test and pledged further action in response to North Korea's third atomic blast.

The swift and unanimous response from the UN's most powerful body set the stage for a fourth round of sanctions against Pyongyang.

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