

Lukashenko Warns Russia About Dangers of Privatization

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Belarussian President Alexander Lukashenko has warned Russia against charging headlong into privatizing state enterprises.

He accused Russia, the International Monetary Fund and the European Union of "whistling to the same tune," referring to their inclination to privatize and sell state property, in his annual state-of-the-nation address to both houses of parliament on Friday, Interfax reported.

Lukashenko said that while he did not oppose privatization in principle, the time was not right given the unfavorable market conditions.

"We are not against the sale of enterprises, but you need to get a reasonable price for them," he said.

"It isn't necessary to give in to privatization now, because market value is low and businesses are being sold for a song," the Belarussian president said, adding that he would not consider selling state enterprises until market conditions improved.

In March, Russia's Finance Minister Anton Siluanov outlined the government's plans to supplement the federal budget with at least 427 billion rubles (\$13.5 billion) from privatization, RIA-Novosti reported.

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev supported the position of the Finance Ministry, which insisted that all the planned privatization proceeds should go toward the budget.

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