

Moscow Has No Plans to Dissuade Kiev from Signing EU Deal

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Moscow has no plans to dissuade Kiev from signing a free trade deal with the European Union, a Russian government spokesman said ahead of Tuesday's meeting between Russian and Ukrainian premiers.

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev will meet with his Ukrainian counterpart, Mykola Azarov, in Kaluga, a city some 150 kilometers southwest of Moscow.

"Russia is not going to dissuade Ukraine from signing an association agreement and a free trade zone deal with the EU, it is [Ukraine's] sovereign right," a government spokesman said. "We are just calling to thoroughly analyze all pros and cons of such a move."

"Russia is not pulling anyone into the customs union by force," he added.

Ukraine is one of several countries due to sign free trade agreements with the EU during a

summit in Lithuania on Nov. 28 to 29. Russia has invited Kiev to join its customs union with Belarus and Kazakhstan, but Ukraine, which already has an observer status in the union, said it was not yet ready for a full-fledged membership.

Moscow has warned Kiev that it might have to take protective measures to prevent the re-exportation of European goods from Ukraine to Russia if a free trade zone is established.

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