

Putin, Saudi Intelligence Chief Discuss Syria, Iran

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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President Vladimir Putin met with Saudi intelligence chief Prince Bandar bin Sultan near Moscow, the Kremlin said Tuesday.

Putin and Prince Bandar, who also heads the Saudi National Security Council, discussed the situation in the Middle East and North Africa, it said in a statement.

The sides noted positive dynamics in dealing with the Iranian nuclear problem and exchanged opinions on Syria ahead of a planned international conference aimed at finding a peaceful solution to the civil war there, in which Russia and Saudi Arabia have supported opposing sides.

Iran and six international negotiators struck a deal in late November to slow the Islamic republic's nuclear program. Tehran will get some \$7 billion in relief from sanctions. The deal also stipulates that international observers will monitor nuclear sites in the country.

The long-delayed Geneva-2 international peace conference, dedicated to ending the conflict in Syria, is expected to be held Jan. 22 in Geneva. Russia has supported the Syrian government during the civil war, while Saudi Arabia has backed the opposition.

More than 100,000 people have been killed and 9 million people displaced since fighting broke out in Syria in 2011, according to the United Nations.

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