

Threat No Greater in Sochi Than Elsewhere, Medvedev Says

By [Anna Dolgov](#)

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Christiane Amanpour's exclusive interview with Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev.

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev took to a major U.S. television network to reassure the world that the upcoming Sochi Winter Olympics will be safe, while a U.S. Olympic speed-skater underscored security concerns by telling his family to stay home during the Games.

In an interview to CNN's Amanpour program aired Wednesday night, Medvedev said that "on public events, there are always some threats," but insisted that Russian security forces are working to ensure that the Games go smoothly, despite the backdrop of recent suicide bombings in a nearby region, the threats of more attacks, and the reported penetration of Sochi's security zone by a suspected suicide bomber.

Threats accompany major events "not only in this country but also in others," Medvedev said. "Definitely we are aware of that, and we will take that into account during the Olympics."

In the latest sign that many foreign fans are staying away from the Games, U.S. Olympic speed-skater Tucker Fredericks told his parents — who attended the 2006 Games in Torino, Italy, and the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, Canada — to root for him from home this time, instead of coming to Sochi, CBS reported Wednesday.

"Tucker said he doesn't want to worry about us or about security," his father, Dan Fredricks, told The Janesville Gazette.

Asked by CNN's program host whether he was worried about warnings for Americans to avoid the Games for safety concerns, Medvedev said "the threats during the Sochi Games are no greater than at any Olympics in other places."

"It's a global world ... and we know about other deplorable developments in other countries, including the U.S. during sports events," he said. "So to speak that all the threats are accumulating in Sochi would not be right."

Russia's security measures would include "the mobilization buildup of police forces, and ... a huge number of policemen will watch the process of the Games," he said, adding "some other forces will be involved, and we will control and will recite the facilities and venues."

About 40,000 police officers and troops will be patrolling Sochi during the Games. Russian officials have said they have activated a space-based monitoring system, and the Federal Security Service has installed equipment to monitor online and phone communications in the city.

Medvedev also praised the joint efforts "in coordination with our partners" to ensure a safe Olympics.

U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey said this week that the U.S. would share with Russia its sophisticated electronic equipment, developed to disrupt signals that terrorists use to set off bombs from a distance.

Russian Chief of Staff General Valery Gerasimov had expressed an interest in this technology during a meeting with Dempsey in Brussels.

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