

U.S. Lawmakers See Serious Threat of Attacks During Games

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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WASHINGTON — Top lawmakers from the U.S. House of Representatives' intelligence and homeland security panels on Sunday warned of a serious threat of attacks in Russia during the Winter Olympics, though U.S. officials say the Olympic grounds are secure.

The Olympics formally opened on Friday in Sochi. Islamist militant groups based in the nearby North Caucasus region have threatened attacks during the Feb. 7 to 23 Games.

"I have never seen a greater threat certainly in my lifetime," said House Homeland Security Committee chairman Michael McCaul, a Republican from Texas.

"I think there is a high degree of probability that something will detonate, something will go off, but I do think it is probably most likely to happen outside of the ring of steel and the Olympic Village," he said on "Fox News Sunday."

About 40,000 security personnel are on high alert in Sochi and U.S. officials on Sunday said cooperation has improved, though still not enough, between Russian and U.S. intelligence authorities.

"We are quite satisfied with the level of cooperation we have now," U.S. Ambassador to Russia Michael McFaul said on NBC's "Meet the Press."

Janet Napolitano, head of the U.S. Olympic delegation to Sochi and a former Homeland Security chief, also described the level of security at the Games as very good.

"Within the boundaries of Sochi, within the so-called ring of steel, there is a lot of security," she said on CNN's "State of the Union" on Sunday. "I hope that the attention of the media and the world turns now more to what the athletes are going to do instead of the threats that are being made."

Despite a "ring of steel" around venues, Russian security forces were last month hunting a woman suspected of planning a suicide bombing and who may already be in Sochi. House Intelligence Committee Chairman Mike Rogers, a Republican from Michigan, said the search was continuing on ABC's "This Week" on Sunday.

"The guards, gates and guns portion of this is really unparalleled for an Olympic Games," said Rogers, a Republican from Michigan, adding that "internationally, intelligence is as good as I have seen it."

One issue is sharing of intelligence between Washington and Moscow.

"There has been some more sharing than there had been, still not what it should be," Representative Peter King, a New York Republican who sits on the House Homeland Security and Intelligence committees, said on CBS's "Face the Nation."

"[The Russians] are still reluctant to give intelligence that they feel would allow us to determine their sources and methods. And also, there is a certain amount of pride. I believe that they feel they can handle a lot of this on their own."

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