

Rogozin Says U.S., NATO 'Threats' Justify Russia Rearmament

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The deputy prime minister in charge of defense has said "overt threats" by the U.S. and NATO demonstrate the necessity of equipping the Russian army with modern weapons.

"A hope that after the overt threats by the U.S. and NATO nobody will doubt the necessity of rearming our army and fleet and of reviving our defense industry and military science," Dmitry Rogozin wrote on his Facebook page on Saturday.

Another round of political standoff between Russia and the West was sparked by the recent uprising in Ukraine and the fate of Crimea, an autonomous Ukrainian region with a majority ethnic Russian population.

Crimean authorities have refused to recognize as legitimate the new central government in Kiev, which ousted President Viktor Yanukovich late last month, and on Thursday they announced a decision to become part of Russia.

Ukraine earlier appealed for assistance from NATO, asking the alliance to use all possible measures to ensure the country's territorial integrity and protect its people following the approval by Russia's parliament of the deployment of military forces in Ukraine.

Following these developments, the West showered Moscow with accusations of aggression and threats of sanctions while cutting off military exchanges with Russia and scrambling to bolster military cooperation within NATO.

The Pentagon announced plans on Wednesday to expand combat pilot training in Poland and to send six additional F-15C fighter jets to a NATO mission carrying out air patrols over Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

The U.S. Defense Department's newspaper, "Stars & Stripes," reported Thursday that the Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS Truxtun was en route to the Black Sea for previously scheduled exercises with Romania and Bulgaria.

Russia has held a number of military exercises in its western regions in the past days, including air defense drills, combat readiness snap checks and a launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile.

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