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Russia Warns Ukraine Against Missile-Technology Sale

By Anna Dolgov

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The Russian Foreign Ministry has warned Ukraine against a reportedly planned sale of technology for long-range missiles, saying the Kiev administration was illegitimate but still needed to act responsibly on the world stage.

Citing two international nonproliferation treaties, to which Ukraine is a signatory — the International Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation and the Missile Technology Control Regime — the ministry told Ukraine to "exercise particular reserve" when considering the transfer of "technologies for creating missiles capable of carrying a payload of more than 500 kilograms for more than 300 kilometers."

"Despite the difficult domestic political situation in Ukraine and the absence of a legitimate supreme authority," the ministry hopes "the current leaders of that country will show proper responsibility and will refrain from steps that can undermine the current nonproliferation regime," the statement said.

While the Foreign Ministry said it had learned about the sale from the media, it was not immediately clear which reports it may have been referring to, though some Russian bloggers have accused Ukraine of planning to sell its technologies for the missiles — known by the NATO classification as Satan — to Turkey.

Satan missiles, which were built in Ukraine during Soviet times, are in service with the Russian army, and their maintenance is still provided by Ukrainian experts, BBC reported.

Ukraine's First Deputy Prime Minister Vitaliy Yarema said Friday that Kiev would curb its military cooperation with Russia, following Moscow's annexation of Crimea and amid fears that Russia may dispatch its troops to eastern Ukraine as well.

"Manufacturing products for Russia that will later be aimed against us would be complete insanity," Yarema said.

The Russian-Ukrainian cooperation on the maintenance of the Satan appeared to be drawing to an end even before the Crimea crisis. The commander of Russia's Strategic Missile forces said in December that the country would deploy a new type of long-range missile called the Sarmat in 2018 to replace the Satan.

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