

Moldova Plans to Sign EU Accord Despite Pressure

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Moldova's president says his country will exercise its "sovereign right" and sign an association agreement with the 28-nation European Union despite external political and economic pressures.

President Nicolae Timofti did not name Russia in Tuesday's comments but Moscow opposes Moldova seeking that deal with the EU, which Chisinau hopes to sign this year.

In the past, Russia has taken punitive trade measures against neighboring Baltic states and Ukraine as those countries sought closer ties with the west.

On Monday, Timofti met with NATO Deputy Secretary-General Alexander Vershbow, who offered to consolidate security in Moldova, a neutral state.

Relations between Moldova and Russia have been strained after Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin's plane was held up while traveling in the region last weekend.

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