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Rogozin Threatens to Deactivate GPS Stations in Russia

By The Moscow Times

May 13, 2014

Deputy Prime Minister Dmitri Rogozin (right) at a function at the Kremlin.

Deputy Prime Ministry Dmitry Rogozin has threatened to deactivate all Global Positioning System, or GPS, infrastructure operating on Russian soil if the U.S. does not agree to allow Russia to place Glonass stations on U.S. soil.

At a news conference Tuesday, Rogozin lashed out at the U.S. by calling it an "unreliable partner" and said it has until May 31 to begin negotiations on the placement of Russia's Glonass stations in the U.S. If this does not happen, he warned, then "on June 1 [Russia] will suspend the operation of these [GPS] stations on its territory," he said.

There are currently 11 such sites in Russia, established by agreements regarding the placement of GPS and Glonass infrastructure on each other's territory, and Rogozin said the U.S. had violated these agreements by stalling.

If the demanded negotiations fail, he said, GPS stations will be axed completely.

"I hope that these negotiations will find a way to restore proportional cooperation. If not, from Sept. 1, the operation of these stations will be stopped completely," he said.

Oleg Ostapenko, head of the Federal Space Agency, said the U.S. has been provided with all the necessary documentation required for the deployment of Glonass stations, and that "adequate measures will be taken with respect to U.S. stations on our territory."

Recently, the U.S. Congress requested that national security officials provide an assessment of the potential threat to national security infrastructure posed by the Russian Glonass stations if they were to be placed in the U.S.

Concerns over the threat posed by Glonass stations arose last November, when CIA and Pentagon officials alleged that they might be used for espionage.

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