

France Tells Britain to Look at Russian Oligarchs in Own Backyard Before Damning Mistral

By [The Moscow Times](#)

July 23, 2014



French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius.

France's foreign minister told Prime Minister David Cameron he should look at Britain's Russian oligarchs before questioning France's Mistral helicopter carriers deal with Moscow.

Cameron on Monday said Paris's plan to press ahead with the 1.2 billion-euro (\$1.7 billion) order after the downing of the Malaysian Airlines plane in Ukraine would be "unthinkable" in Britain.

"The English in particular were very pleasant so to speak saying we would never do that, but I told my dear British friends let's talk about the financial sector," Laurent Fabius told TF1 television after returning from a European foreign ministers meeting in Brussels.

"I am led to believe that there are quite a few Russian oligarchs in London."

When asked if that meant Britain should take care of its own business first, Fabius said:
"Exactly."

France faced renewed criticism from some European allies in Brussels after French President Francois Hollande said that the planned delivery of the warships would go ahead hampering efforts to forge a united front.

France has rebuffed those calls, saying that canceling the deal would do more damage to Paris than Moscow, illustrating the limitations of EU sanctions meant to punish Russia.

Paris has repeatedly said other countries must share the burden in imposing a third round of sanctions on Russia and that any measures should also include the energy and financial sectors as well as defence.

Hollande said on Monday Paris would go ahead with delivery of the first carrier by the end of this year, but was ready to review the second delivered due by 2016.

"It's a contract that was signed in 2011. There is an international rule that is worth the same nationally. Contracts that are signed and paid should be honored," Fabius said.

See also:

[Under Fire, France Stands by Mistral Warship Sale to Russia](https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2014/07/23/france-tells-britain-to-look-at-russian-oligarchs-in-own-backyard-before-damning-mistral-a37585)

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2014/07/23/france-tells-britain-to-look-at-russian-oligarchs-in-own-backyard-before-damning-mistral-a37585>