

Russia Can Build Own Mistral Warships, Rogozin Says

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A Mistral-class amphibious assault carrier.

Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin on Wednesday said that the latest U.S. sanctions demonstrate fear on the part of Russia's adversaries, and that Russia can build its own Mistral warships if France fails to deliver the two vessels.

On Tuesday, the U.S. announced a new round of sanctions that target, among other things, Russia's United Shipbuilding Corporation, an industry conglomerate that controls Russia's network of shipbuilding enterprises. The sanctions, which are aimed at punishing Russia over its alleged involvement in the Ukraine crisis, freeze any assets the shipbuilder might hold in the United States and bans all U.S. transactions with it, Reuters reported.

"Obama's decision to impose sanctions against the United Shipbuilding Corporation is a clear sign that Russian military shipbuilding is becoming a problem for Russia's enemies," Rogozin said on Twitter.

Rogozin later told RIA Novosti that Russia could build its own Mistral-class amphibious assault carriers if France ends up reneging on a deal worth 1.2 billion euros (\$1.7 billion) that the two sides signed in 2011. Under the agreement France is to build two of the vessels with the participation of Russian engineers, who would later build another two ships in Russia.

France has already built the first ship, the Sevastopol, and is due to deliver it to the Russian navy by the end of the year. The second ship, the Vladivostok, will be delivered in late 2015 or early 2016.

Other Western governments have asked France to pull the plug on the deal amid increasing tensions in Ukraine, but Paris has so far shown no willingness to bow to pressure.

Russia's naval buildup is reaching fever pitch, with 50 new warships slated to join the fleet by the end of the year, while several new submarines are under construction as part of a \$700 billion military rearmament program through 2020.

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