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Russia Boycotts Nuclear Meeting

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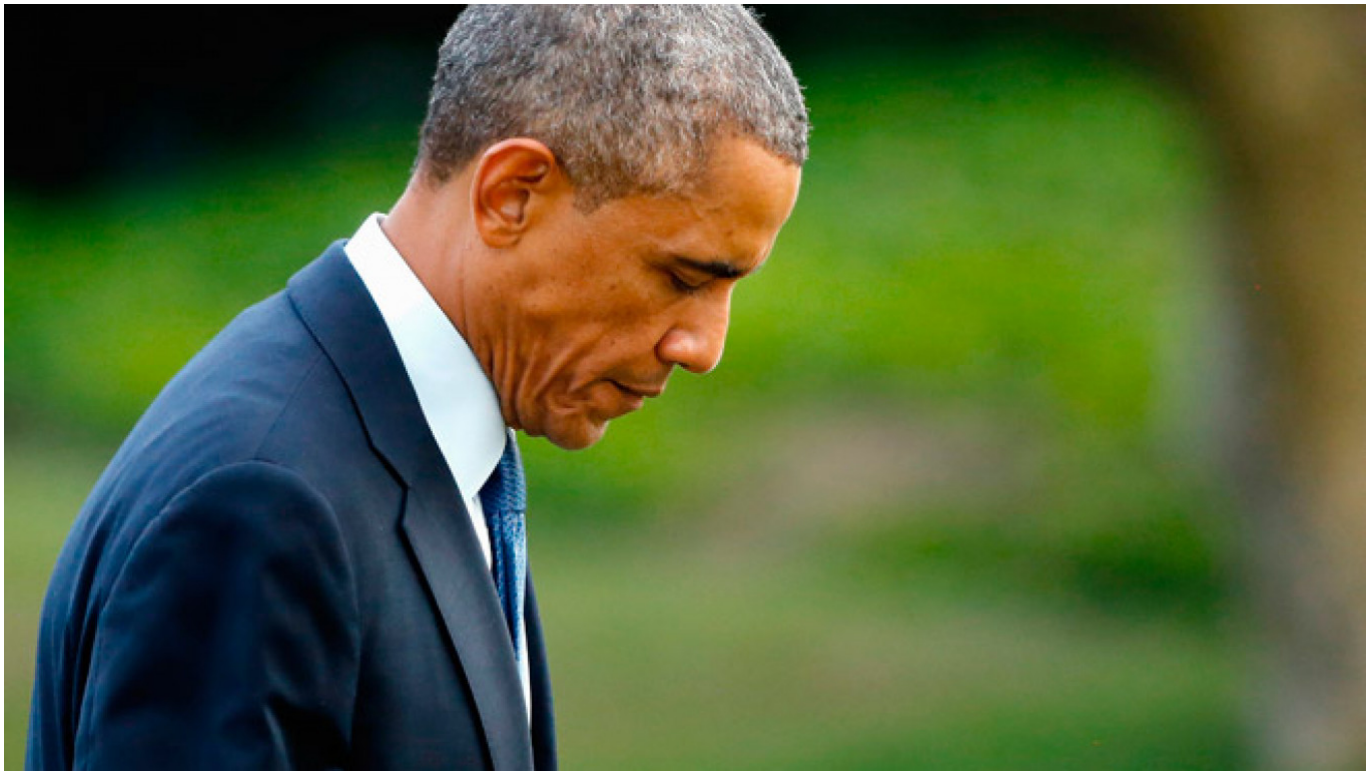

The U.S. president initiated a string of summits in 2010 aimed at preventing terrorists from getting their hands on weapons-grade nuclear material.

Russia has failed to show up to a meeting planning the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit, U.S and European officials said Monday, in a potentially serious blow to efforts by U.S. President Barack Obama to cement his legacy as leaving the world safer from nuclear terrorism than when he took office.

The officials said it was not immediately clear whether Russia's absence meant that Moscow intended to boycott the summit or if it was a temporary show of displeasure over Washington's harsh condemnation of Moscow's role in Ukraine unrest and its lead in orchestrating Western sanctions and other punitive measures in response.

But even if short-term, Russia's no-show is significant. Only three or four planning meetings are scheduled before the spring of 2016, when the summit is tentatively set to open. With Russia a key global player — and one of the world's five formally recognized nuclear powers — its input is crucial to setting an agenda.

The U.S. president initiated a string of summits in 2010 aimed at preventing terrorists

from getting their hands on weapons-grade nuclear material. Since then, the number of countries that have enough material to build a nuclear weapon has fallen from 39 to 25.

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