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Putin Calls for Immediate Cease-Fire in Yemen in Talks With Iran

By The Moscow Times

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Warplanes from Saudi Arabia and Arab allies struck Shi'ite Muslim rebels fighting to oust Yemen's president on Thursday, in a major gamble by the world's top oil exporter to check Iranian influence in its backyard without direct military backing from Washington.

Russia's President Vladimir Putin called for an "immediate cessation of military activities" in Yemen in phone conversations with Iran's President Hassan Rouhani, the Kremlin said in a statement Thursday.

Iranian-backed Shi'ite Muslim Houthi militias have seized large parts of Yemen. The conflict deepened on Thursday when warplanes from Sunni Muslim power Saudi Arabia attacked Houthi positions in Yemen, drawing protests from Tehran.

Putin and Rouhani also discussed six-power negotiations over Iran's nuclear program, expressing hopes for a successful outcome to talks in Lausanne, the Kremlin statement said.

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