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Rogozin Praises Defense Industry as Engine of Russian Economy

By The Moscow Times

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Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin

Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin, the official responsible for the arms industry, praised Russia's military industrial complex as the driving force of the nation's economy amid crisis, the TASS news agency reported late Thursday.

“Obviously the defense industry is not only the locomotive [of our economy], but the compensator for the heavy crisis in [Russian] industry,” Rogozin said in an interview aired on the NTV television station.

Russia's military is in the middle of a decade-long 20 trillion ruble ($295 billion) rearmament drive, which is seeing massive amounts of state funding — around 2 trillion rubles in 2015 — funneled into the pockets of defense industry enterprises, while Russian manufacturing in other sectors stalls.

Still, Rogozin chalked up the defense industry's performance to proper attitude in times of political crisis, rather than steady state funding amid Russia's economic crisis — driven largely by a collapse in global oil prices last year.

“Why is the defense industry turning out more than those engaged in the civilian industry? It is because we are not as relaxed as they are. We believe that today we live in a special period when the nation is forced to participate in conflict,” Rogozin said.

“Our guys — pilots are fighting in Syria, and our special forces are fighting in the North Caucasus against the terrorist threat. And we take full responsibility for the fact that these guys come home alive and well, that the weapons they use save them and do not save those who are trying to strike at our people,” Rogozin continued.

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