

Kremlin Will Not Discuss Curbing Arms for Sanctions Deal, Minister Says

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Evan Vucci / AP

The Kremlin will not discuss making policy concessions in order for U.S. sanctions on the country to be lifted, [Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov has claimed](#).

His statement comes after U.S. President-elect Donald Trump suggested that Washington could scrap sanctions on Russia if Moscow agreed to reduce its nuclear stockpile.

"Sanctions are not a subject for dialogue," Ryabkov told reporters at the United Nations in New York on Monday.

"We have never discussed any criteria to see sanctions lifted and we will not discuss it. These sanctions are contrived and were imposed on us illegally," he said.

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Ryabkov said that Russia would be willing to discuss a nuclear arms deal, but stressed that any concessions would be linked to defense concerns and other interests.

"Without dialogue nothing will happen," he said. "But it's too naive to think Moscow would change its [defense policy] for [sanctions] or other reasons."

Ryabkov also slammed the U.S. media for criticizing incoming members of the Trump administration for their perceived links to the Kremlin.

"I'm still shocked by how destructive this speculation is in the U.S. media and among US politicians, especially on Capitol Hill," he said. "It's as if having contacts was something abnormal."

"No matter how hard [people] try to embroil members of the incoming administration in intrigue – and that is what is happening, to call a spade a spade – life will put everything in its place," he said.

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