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Kremlin Promises Not to Boycott Olympics Ahead of IOC Ruling

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Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov has said that Moscow is not considering a boycott of the upcoming Winter Olympic Games, despite possible sanctions against Russian athletes for doping.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) is set to decide on Tuesday whether to allow Russia to participate in the Games in Pyeongchang in South Korea in February 2018, following an ongoing investigation of state-sponsored doping.

The IOC meeting comes after the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) in November ruled that Russia was "non-compliant" with its anti-doping code. WADA said Russia's leadership continued to deny the existence of a state-sponsored doping scheme, which led to a blanket ban for the country's track-and-field athletes at the Rio Olympics in 2016.

Since then, some Russian athletes with a clean doping record have been allowed to compete under a neutral flag.

Some Russian officials have proposed boycotting the 2018 Winter Games if the country's Olympic team was not allowed to compete under the Russian flag. But speaking a day ahead of the IOC's ruling, Peskov denied that option was on the cards.

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"It's not being considered," he was cited as saying by the Interfax news agency.

"As before, we disagree with many of the decisions taken towards our athletes — including by WADA. We're against any baseless encroachments on the rights of our athletes."

"At the same time, Russia upholds the Olympic values," he added. "That is what Putin has said, and that is his decision."

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