

Russia Supports Political Role for Qaddafi's Son in Libya

By [Bloomberg](#)

December 24, 2018



Saif al-Islam Qaddafi / Reuters

Russia said it supports a political role for the son of deposed Libyan dictator Muammar Qaddafi, who's bidding to take over the leadership of the oil-rich North African state.

“Our position is that no one should be isolated and excluded from a constructive political role,” Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov told state-run news service RIA Novosti on Monday. Qaddafi’s son “Saif al-Islam has the backing of specific tribes in Libya and all this should be part of the overall political process,” he said.

Moscow is open to Saif al-Islam’s political participation, Bloomberg reported last week, after he sent a representative to ask for Russian support earlier this month. Russia last year switched its strategy in Libya away from solely backing Khalifa Haftar, a military strongman who controls most of the oil-producing east, to opening dialogue with all rival power centers in the fractured country.

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Russia, which had close ties with the Qaddafi regime until his overthrow in 2011, is maintaining contacts with all sides in Libya, said Bogdanov, who is President Vladimir Putin's envoy to the Middle East. "We are supporting them all."

Qaddafi's son could stand in national elections the United Nations plans to hold next year, though he's wanted by the International Criminal Court on charges from 2011 including two counts of crimes against humanity.

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