

# *India Will Not Support Western Sanctions against Russia*

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New Delhi, March 19 (RHC) -- India will not support Western sanctions against Russia over Crimea, unless such sanctions are approved by the United Nations Security Council, local TV CNN-IBN quoted Ministry of External Affairs officials as saying on Wednesday.

The report said India is closely watching the situation in Ukraine but it does not intend to support any Western move against Russia at the UN.

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh spoke with Russian President Vladimir Putin Wednesday over the situation in Ukraine, said Indian officials

Singh reportedly reminded Putin of the importance of maintaining the territorial integrity of Ukraine after Crimea voted for independence from Ukraine and adhesion to Russia.

Local newspaper Hindustan Times said India's traditional stance has been non-interference in the affairs of other countries, and India has strong ties with Russia.

"Hence the wisest course for India, for now at least, would be not to involve itself in the geopolitics of the region and maintain a distance from both Mr. Putin and the West, particularly the United States, with which India's relations are now on the slightly chilly side," said the newspaper in an analysis.

The United States and European Union have threatened to impose sanctions on Russia over the secession of Crimea from Ukraine.

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