

## Putin vows to stay out of arms race

*by UPI*

MUSCOW, Russia -- Russian President Vladimir Putin Friday said a new arms race unleashed by the West is under way, but Russia will have no part of it. "The developed countries spend huge amounts of funds on developing weapons systems," Putin said in a speech to the State Council in Moscow. "We must not allow ourselves to be drawn into this," The Russian leader, who is scheduled to step down after the March 2 presidential election, said some countries pursue a policy of "containment" against Russia motivated by a desire to gain access to its natural resources, RIA Novosti reported. "God did not begrudge us natural riches," said Putin. "Many conflicts, political decisions and diplomatic stunts have the smell of oil and natural gas about them."

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