

Russian Military Chief Warns US Against Striking Iran

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Moscow — Russia's top military warned the US on Wednesday against using force against Iran over its controversial nuclear ambitions, saying the consequences would be "dreadful".

"The consequences, I believe, would be dreadful for Iran, as well as Russia, the entire Asia-Pacific community," said Gen. Nikolai Makarov, chief of Russia's General Staff.

The statement came as world powers are mounting pressure on Tehran to accept a UN-drafted compromise to enrich uranium for Iran's research reactor abroad or face a new set of tougher sanctions.

The White House repeatedly said it did not rule out any options, including a military operation, in dealing with Iran's nuclear aspirations.

Gen. Makarov suggested Washington might turn its military attention on Iran once its operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have been completed.

Russia, which has strong business ties with Iran and was earlier reluctant to back new sanctions, recently joined Western calls on Tehran for curbing its nuclear ambitions which are feared to be geared towards weapons production.

Iran, the world's fifth largest oil exporter, insists its nuclear programme is for civil electricity purposes only.

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