

Russia ready to work with whoever is elected new US president: Vladimir Putin

18/06/2016 20:05 by admin

St Petersburg: Refusing to get drawn into the ongoing presidential campaign in the United States, Russian President Vladimir Putin has said that his country is ready to work with anybody who is elected the new president of the United States of America.

Vladimir Putin

The statement of Putin is being seen in diplomatic circles as a sign of reconciliatory tone that the Russian President has decided to opt for.

He has also offered only a mild condemnation of the IAAF's decision to ban Russian track and field athletes from competing in the upcoming Olympics.

Putin's statement comes after his two days of meetings with top European officials and international executives.

Putin spent Thursday and Friday in St. Petersburg, his home town, hosting the president of the European Commission, the Italian prime minister and chief executives of the world's biggest companies. The weekend was set to underline the futility of European and US sanctions which were imposed on Russia over the 2014 annexation of Crimea and its interference in eastern Ukraine.

Speaking at the late evening meeting with the leaders of major news agencies, Putin said on Friday Russia would work with whoever is elected the new US president. "We will judge by the deeds, not words of the new United States president and will seek ways to normalize ties and advance our cooperation in economy and international security," he said.

Dampening the high spirits at Russia's top economic gathering in St. Petersburg, track and field's world governing body on Friday ruled to uphold its ban on Russia's athletes, punishing the sports powerhouse for a systematic doping system that operated "from the top down."

The IAAF said the country had made some progress in cleaning up but failed to meet the requirements for reinstatement and would be barred from sending its athletes to the Rio Games that begin in 50 days.

Putin condemned the ruling as "unfair" and said it was "collected punishment" hurting clean athletes. But he expressed hope that some Russian athletes will still be allowed to compete, a possibility that the IAAF also allowed.

"I hope we will find some solution here, but it does not mean that we will get offended and stop battling doping," he said in a response to a question from The Associated Press.

"On the contrary, we will intensify our fight on doping." Despite sounding reconciliatory on many subjects and refusing to pronounce judgment on divisive issues such as Britain's upcoming referendum to exit the European Union, Putin expressed concern about the US-led NATO missile defense plans.

"The strategic balance used to guarantee peace in the world, it saved us from major armed conflicts in the past 70 years," Putin said.

"It was a good thing. It was based on a mutual threat but this mutual threat has given us global peace for

decades.â€•

- (With AP inputs)