

Saudis offer Moscow billions to break with Tehran

Contributed by AFP
Tuesday, 15 July 2008
Last Updated Tuesday, 15 July 2008

MOSCOW: Saudi Arabia has offered to buy Russian arms worth 2.4 billion dollars (1.5 billion euros) if Moscow stops supporting Iran, a Russian newspaper reported Tuesday, citing diplomatic sources. "The kingdom's government advised Moscow to cease its cooperation with Tehran, and in exchange it held out the prospect of profitable contracts with Saudi Arabia," the daily business newspaper Kommersant wrote.

The report came one day after Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin met with the General Secretary of Saudi Arabia's Security Council, Prince Bandar bin Sultan.

Citing sources in Russia's defence industry, the newspaper said Saudi Arabia was ready to buy at least 100 BMP-3 combat vehicles, 150 T-90 tanks and 160 Mi-17, Mi-26 and Mi-35 helicopters.

Kommersant put the total value of the equipment at about 2.4 billion dollars (1.5 million euros).

Moscow has opposed stiffer international sanctions on Iran for its nuclear programme, which Tehran says is civilian in nature. Relations between Russia and Saudi Arabia - a traditional US ally - have warmed considerably in recent years.

GPO Uralvagonzavod Russian T-90 Tank Demo
{youtube}2W26BDuNUsA{/youtube}

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T-90>