

Stocks Go to 6-Month High on G20

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Stocks climbed to their highest in more than six months on Monday after the Group of 20 finance ministers agreed to avoid weakening currencies to lift exports and oil and metals gained.

Magnitogorsk Iron & Steel increased 2.9 percent. Gazprom added 0.9 percent, while oil producer Gazprom Neft gained 1.1 percent, helping push the MICEX Index 0.6 percent higher to 1,528.24 at close. The 30-stock gauge pared gains after earlier advancing to its strongest since July 24, 2008.

Finance ministers of the G20 leading economies pledged to refrain from “competitive devaluation” and let markets set foreign exchange values and increase the influence of emerging markets within the International Monetary Fund. Oil rose as much as \$1.59 to \$83.28 a barrel in New York. Tin, zinc, nickel, lead and copper all advanced on the London Metal Exchange. Norilsk Nickel added 2.8 percent to 5,613.08 rubles, its biggest gain in 2 1/2 months.

“The G20 move, which is derivative of dollar weakness spurring the appeal of commodity markets, is one of the things helping Russian stocks on Monday,” Michael Kart, a managing partner at investment firm Marshall Spectrum, said by phone. “Rising oil and commodity prices are also supporting sentiment and risk taking by investors.”

VTB Group advanced to its strongest in more than 2 1/2 years after its price target was lifted at Citigroup, which forecast rising profit and accelerating loan growth next year. The stock gained 2.4 percent to 10.38 kopeks — it's highest since January 2008. The shares have surged 18 percent this month.

Russian stocks, the world's best performers last year, increased 6 percent this month as crude oil prices climbed 3.6 percent amid signs that the global economic recovery is gaining pace.

“Russia is suddenly at the forefront of the high-beta markets again,” Vladimir Savov, head of research at Otkritie Financial, said by phone. “Sentiment has changed. Clients are calling us again asking about Russia and we are seeing significant fund flows over the past three weeks.”

The ruble gained for a third day versus the dollar, strengthening 0.4 percent to 30.25 in Moscow. The currency was 0.2 percent weaker against the euro at 42.40.

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