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Russia's Putin accuses U.S. of damaging world order

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In a speech laced with language reminiscent of the Cold War, Putin shifted blame for the crisis in Ukraine to the West and portrayed Russia as a strong power that would not be forced to beg the West to lift sanctions imposed over the conflict.

"Statements that Russia is trying to reinstate some sort of empire, that it is encroaching on the sovereignty of its neighbors, are groundless," Putin told a group of political scholars known as the Valdai Club in a resort above the Black Sea city of Sochi, which hosted the Winter Olympics this year.

Warning that Washington was trying to "remake the whole world" around its own interests and that the risk of international conflicts was growing, he said: "We did not start this."

Dismissing the U.S. and European Union sanctions on Russia as a mistake, he said: "Russia will not be posturing, get offended, ask someone for anything. Russia is self-sufficient."

Putin said the threat of arms control treaties being violated was growing and called for talks on internationally acceptable conditions for the use of force.

The speech included some of Putin's fiercest rhetoric against the West since he first rose to power in 2000 and underlined how far apart Moscow and the West are on a range of matters.

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The West has accused Russia of violating Ukraine's sovereignty by annexing the Crimea peninsula and says it has sent troops and weapons to help pro-Russian separatists fighting government forces in eastern Ukraine. Moscow denies the accusations.

(Additional reporting by Lidia Kelly, Vladimir Soldatkin, Alexander Winnign and [Jason Bush](#), Writing by Gabriela Baczynska, Editing by Timothy Heritage)

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