

Russian President Vladimir Putin Says Moscow Will Respond to Threats



Moscow, March 27 (RHC)-- Amid tensions over the issue of eastern Ukraine, Russian President Vladimir Putin has downplayed U.S.-led efforts to isolate Moscow, warning the West that his country will stand firm.

Speaking before officials of the Federal Security Service, Putin said Moscow will make no concessions or “bend down” to political and economic pressures exerted on the country. “No one has succeeded in scaring or pressuring our country, and no one will,” Putin said, adding: “Russia will respond to any threats.”

Russia’s relations with the West have deteriorated to its lowest levels since the end of the Cold War, apparently reflecting on the Ukraine crisis. The United States and its European allies have imposed economic sanctions against Russia over its alleged support for pro-Russia fighters in eastern Ukraine.

Russian-speaking regions in eastern Ukraine have been in crisis since last year when deadly clashes between pro-Russia forces and the Ukrainian army began. Kiev launched heavy military operations to crush the pro-Russians in Donetsk and Lugansk.

In May 2014, the situation in the two flashpoint regions started to worsen as residents overwhelmingly voted for independence from Ukraine in referendums.

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