

# Sanctioned Tycoon Kovalchuk Likens Relations With West to Expensive Toilet

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Businessman Yury Kovalchuk, one of the prominent names on U.S. President Obama's sanctions list, said that the sanctions present Russian with an opportunity to rethink its entire development and integration strategy, and backed his statements up with a toilet analogy.

In an interview on Rossia-1 TV on Sunday with host Dmitry Kiselyov, Kovalchuk asked the audience to picture moving in to their ideal apartment, complete with "European renovations and great closets," only to sign a contract that stipulates that you "cannot criticize the landlord and cannot be friends with your neighbors," Interfax reported. "In this case," he added, "I think, you should consider whether to sit on this expensive toilet and be afraid to criticize the landlord, or to not make friends with the neighbors you like."

For this reason, Kovalchuk said that Russia needs set aside some time for "serious reflection on the overall strategy of not only the economy, but the entire country in general," adding that Russians need to decide for themselves "to what extent are we ready to integrate into a

different system of values," and if such an integration would really benefit them.

Last week, Kovalchuk and Bank Rossiya, of which he is the majority shareholder, were included on the U.S. sanctions list.

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