

# Obama Says Would 'Absolutely' Save Putin From Drowning

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**The  Moscow Times**

Tensions between Russia and the U.S. may remained strained, but U.S. President Barack Obama said he would "absolutely" save Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin from drowning if such a situation were to arise.

Speaking at a press conference during his tour of South Korea, Obama said he would like to think he would save anyone from drowning — not least the Russian president.

"I used to be a pretty good swimmer — I grew up in Hawaii — but I'm a little out of practice," Obama said in a [video uploaded to YouTube](#).

Obama was responding to a comment made by Putin during his annual call-in show earlier this month.

When asked whether he thought Obama would save him from drowning, Putin said he was sure that the American president would do so, describing him as a "decent" and "courageous" man.

Obama's light-hearted response comes as the U.S. prepares to push for increased sanctions against Russia over its supposed unwillingness to de-escalate tensions in eastern Ukraine, where separatists have seized several regional administrative buildings.

Obama said Friday he would be speaking with EU leaders later that day about the ongoing crisis in Ukraine, Reuters reported.

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