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Garry Kasparov: Russia's Putin Is 'World's Most Dangerous Man'

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Garry Kasparov

Russian chess player and opposition figure Garry Kasparov has called Russian President Vladimir Putin the "world's most dangerous man" — saying the leader poses a bigger threat to global security than militant group Islamic State.

"The war with Islamic State [IS] can be won on the ground. It is very clear that if America decides to eliminate IS, they will turn it into dust in 24 hours but you cannot do this with Putin," Kasparov told Yahoo News and Finance anchor Bianna Golodryga on Tuesday.

Asked if Putin was a bigger threat than the Islamic State, which has claimed swathes of territory in Iraq and Syria in recent months and orchestrated the beheadings of several Westerners, he answered: "Of course."

"Putin's behavior is aimed at destroying the system of global security ... He has thousands of nuclear warheads. I will not be surprised if he starts blackmailing the world into nuclear Armageddon, that is why we should recognize this man is the [world's] most dangerous,"

Kasparov was quoted as saying.

Kasparov, a former World Chess Champion turned political activist, also condemned the West for its weak response to Putin's policy on Ukraine, which he accused of being mere rhetoric.

"Putin and his entourage had already learnt to differentiate between words and real actions," he said.

Western nations have levied several rounds of sanctions against Moscow following its annexation of Crimea and perceived support of pro-Russian rebels in the east of that country, though U.S. President Obama recently ruled out the possibility of NATO action in Ukraine.

Once Russia's youngest world chess champion in 1985 at age 22, Kasparov sought comparison with his own trade to shed light on Putin's character.

"It's not a game of chess, it's not a game where you can apply rules, from Putin's perspective it's more like poker. And so far he has found out there is little resistance from the opposite side," Kasparov concluded.

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