

Khodorkovsky: Putin Is Driving Russia Toward Repeat of 1917 Revolution

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Mikhail Khodorkovsky

Former oil tycoon Mikhail Khodorkovsky has warned that President Vladimir Putin's current policies threaten to trigger a repeat of Russia's 1917 revolution.

In an interview with Bloomberg, the former Yukos CEO described Putin as an authoritarian leader "forced to burn the field" all around himself in order to retain power.

"All authoritarian regimes, especially ones like this that aren't based on an ideology but on an individual person, are highly unstable," Khodorkovsky, 51, was cited as saying.

Citing dismal economic conditions exacerbated by Western sanctions imposed on Russia over the conflict in Ukraine, Khodorkovsky told Bloomberg the country was on the path to an uprising similar to the 1917 revolution that ended Russia's tsarist rule.

"I fear that Putin is going to bring the country to a crisis much more quickly than many would

like," he was cited as saying.

Khodorkovsky, who spent a decade in prison on tax evasion and money laundering charges that many believe were politically motivated, said Russia should be doing more to integrate with Europe.

"We are part of Europe," he told Bloomberg. "All of our culture is European. All of our traditions are European."

Since Russia's annexation of Crimea in March, the EU and U.S. have imposed wave after wave of economic sanctions in a bid to change Putin's policies in Ukraine, where Western leaders believe pro-Russian separatists have received Kremlin backing.

The conflict has spurred speculation of Russia becoming almost completely isolated from the rest of the global economy.

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