

Putin: Russia's Annexation of Crimea Righted Historical Injustice

By [The Moscow Times](#)

April 27, 2015



Russian President Vladimir Putin attends a signing ceremony on the results of Russian-Argentinian talks at the Kremlin in Moscow April 23, 2015.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said Moscow's seizure of Crimea righted a historical injustice, according to news agency reports on Sunday citing a new documentary film.

The annexation of the Black Sea peninsula from Ukraine in March 2014 provoked the worst crisis between the West and Russia since the end of the Cold War. Putin said he had no regrets.

"It's not because Crimea has a strategic importance in the Black Sea region. It's because this has elements of historical justice. I believe we did the right thing and I don't regret anything," the RIA news agency quoted Putin as saying in the documentary "The President."

Putin also said sanctions imposed by the West after the annexation were aimed at halting Russia's progress as a global power.

The film, marking Putin's 15 years in power, had already been aired in Russia's Far East. It was scheduled to be shown in western Russia at 21:30 Moscow time (18:30 GMT) on Sunday.

Crimea was administered as part of Russia within the Soviet Union until it was transferred to Ukraine in 1954. The peninsula, connected to the mainland by a narrow causeway, provides the base for the Russian navy's Black Sea fleet.

Russia's annexation of Crimea last year followed what it said was an "unconstitutional coup" in which street protests toppled a Moscow-allied Ukrainian president in Kiev after he ditched a deal to move closer to the European Union.

Separatist unrest then spread to eastern, Russian-speaking regions of Ukraine where fighting between Kiev's troops and pro-Russian rebels has killed more than 6,000 people.

Putin condemned punitive sanctions imposed by the United States and European Union.

"We have witnessed such attempts during Russia's entire history, dating back to tsarist times. This attempt to deter Russia, this policy, has been known for a long time, for centuries. There is nothing new," RIA quoted him as saying.

Putin said Western leaders would like to see Russia begging with its "cap in hand."

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