

# Putin Praises American Qualities in Interview With U.S. Television

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September 25, 2015



Russian President Vladimir Putin

In excerpts from an upcoming American television interview, Russia's President Vladimir Putin said he admired American creativity and open-mindedness — a break from his usual anti-U.S. rhetoric ahead of a planned meeting with U.S. President Barack Obama.

CBS network's "60 Minutes," an American TV news program, posted an interview preview on their website Thursday.

Interviewer Charlie Rose told Putin that he was a frequent subject of discussion in the U.S., to which Putin said, "Maybe they have nothing else to do in America but talk about me," before laughing.

Putin denounced suggestions that he wields authoritarian power in Russia, insisting his actions are made with the best interests of his nation at heart, and shrugging off the “tsar” descriptor often applied to him.

The name “does not fit me,” Putin said, adding: “It's not important how I'm called, whether these are well-wishers, friends or political opponents. It's important what you think about you, what you must do for the interest of the country which has entrusted you with the position as the head of the Russian state.”

The Russian president acknowledged he was “curious about what's going on” in the United States given that “America exerts enormous influence on the situation in the world as a whole.”

Putin has frequently accused the United States of meddling in other countries affairs and trying to impose its will on Moscow's erstwhile allies, such as Ukraine, and claimed that Western governments seek to “dismember” Russia.

However, when asked during the CBS latest interview about what he admired about the United States, Putin responded: “I like the creativity.”

“Creativity when it comes to your tackling problems,” he added. “Their openness — openness and open-mindedness — because it allows them to unleash the inner potential of their people. And thanks to that, America has attained such amazing results in developing their country.”

Putin will meet with Obama in New York on Monday, when attending the United Nations General Assembly, both Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov and the White House have confirmed, Reuters reported. The meeting marks the leaders' first sit-down conversation in over a year.

Obama canceled a meeting with Putin in 2013 after Russia granted asylum to CIA whistleblower Edward Snowden, and has avoided one-on-one encounters with the Russian leader after Moscow annexed Crimea from Ukraine last year.

Obama and Putin have only crossed paths at international gatherings, such as a D-Day celebration in France in June 2014, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Beijing the following November, and an economic summit in Australia the same month, but conducted no sit-down meetings.

Charlie Rose is a talk show host and journalist who has interviewed numerous celebrities and politicians, including Syrian President Bashar Assad, an interview for which he won a Peabody Award.

Rose's full interview with Putin airs Sept. 27 on CBS.

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