

The Best Quotes From Putin at the Russian Energy Week Forum

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Kremlin Press Service

President Vladimir Putin took part in the Russian Energy Week forum in Moscow on Wednesday, where he spoke about North Korea, his relationship with U.S. President Donald Trump and electric cars.

Here are some of the highlights:

On the elections next year

— “I haven’t decided whether I’m going to run at all. Because by law I think the presidential election campaign will be officially announced at the end of November, beginning of December. By that point, I believe that the main contenders will probably come out and state their intentions as well as their election programs.”

On U.S. President Donald Trump

— “There are almost no personal relations. We saw each other just once. Yes, we had a couple of phone conversations on various issues of mutual interest, including Syria.”

— “Regarding bilateral relations, you can judge for yourself. They have become hostage to the domestic political situation in the U.S. Certain forces are using Russian-American relations to address internal political issues. We are patiently waiting for this internal political process to end.”

— “I do hope that the fundamental mutual interests — which are the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, combating cyber-crime, energy cooperation, cooperation in addressing regional conflicts, anti-terrorism — will ultimately change the nature of Russian-American relations for the better.”

— “I believe that a personality like Trump, with his character, will never be hostage to anyone.”

On electric cars

— “One certainly has to move toward renewable sources of energy. But that won’t happen for another 30-year period, and for now we don’t know how that would happen because the technology of utilizing both oil and coal is improving.”

— “I certainly can imagine [buying an electric car]. And I will definitely declare it, addressing those who are scrutinizing my material status [wealth]. “

— “Why not [drive one of Elon Musk’s Teslas]? We are open, we buy and sell everything that we consider useful and profitable. So there’s nothing to it. Do you think we’re only going to drive horse-driven carts or tanks? No, we’re no longer doing that.”

On North Korea

— “In 2001, I believe, I met the current leader's father. He told me back then they had a nuclear bomb. Furthermore, he said that with the help of fairly unsophisticated artillery systems, they could cover the distance to Seoul.”

— “It’s 2017, the country is living under constant sanctions. Instead of a nuclear bomb, they have a hydrogen bomb. Instead of simple artillery systems, they have long-range missiles covering the distance up to 5,000 kilometers. What’s changed? Is this the path that will solve the issue? No, we see that quite the opposite is happening.”

— “Those who are trying to talk to North Korea through the use of force, are strengthening the North Korean regime.”

On reports that North Korea has opened an internet connection via Russia, making countries vulnerable to cyber-attacks from Pyongyang:

— “[Internet] connection? We have a common border. Their nuclear test field is 200 km from the Russian border. We are highly concerned about that. We are even more concerned about that than you.” “There is no [Internet connection] route you are talking about.”

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