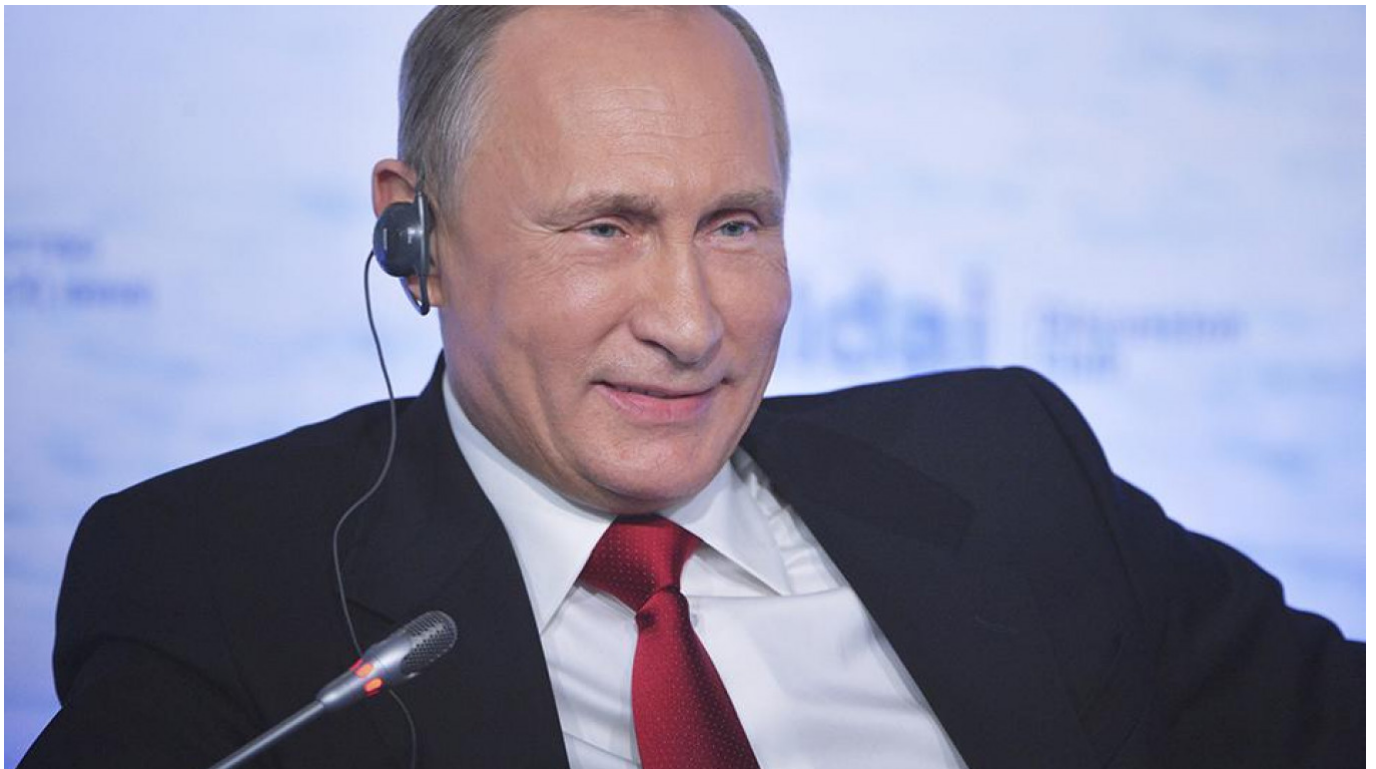


# Putin Talks about Being a Villain, Annexing Crimea and Trusting Women in New Documentary

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RIA Novosti / Reuters

Pro-Kremlin pundit Vladimir Solovyov has [published](#) his “World Order 2018” series of interviews with President Vladimir Putin online ahead of its release on state television.

In the documentary, the 65-year-old leader talks about topics ranging from the necessity of Crimea’s annexation to his reputation as a global villain.

We watched it so you don’t have to. Here are the highlights:

## **On the 2014 annexation of Crimea from Ukraine**

“I sometimes think that [...] someone deliberately tipped us to the edge, where — once there — we had to act in the way that we did.”

## **On expecting western sanctions post-Crimea**

“I had no doubt that [sanctions would be imposed after Russia’s annexation of Crimea].”

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“I had to put Crimea’s return and the possible repercussions on the scales. But when you consider the fates of millions of people on one side— there are more than 2 million people living in Crimea, especially those who wanted to return to Russia — and difficult relations with other countries on the other, of course, the first is incomparably more important.”

## **On overcoming sanctions**

“Our opponents and partners have developed a very good tactic and, to a certain extent, are achieving their tactical goals. But I think we will still win in the long run.”

## **On his attitude towards being labeled a ‘global villain’**

“Ask the villains. This is only the opinion of Western sources, and far from all of them.”

“I’ve gotten used to it [being called a villain] a long time ago... My guiding light is the interest of Russia and its people. If I feel that I haven’t strayed and that I’m going in the right direction, then I don’t care about anything else.

## **On the U.S. ‘lying through their teeth’ about Ukraine’s 2014 Maidan Revolution**

“This is perhaps the first [time the U.S. deceived Russia] so grossly and brazenly.”

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“We were approached by our American partners, who asked us to do everything — I’m practically literally citing their request — to make sure [Ukraine’s ex-president Viktor] Yanukovich didn’t use the army [...] We said OK. A day later, there was a coup d’etat. They could have called at least or done something or said something. Instead, they gave full support to those who overthrew the government.”

## **On trusting countries and women**

“If you would have asked me now: ‘Can you trust women?’ I would have mused on this question. But when you [ask] whether it’s possible to trust certain countries — that’s a completely different matter.”

## **On Russia's involvement in the war in Ukraine**

“The current Ukrainian government tells me that soldiers in the Ukrainian army are being killed by arms supplied from Russia. When I think about this, it leaves a deep impression on me. I actually think that everyone there is our people. But I always want to ask: whose shells and bullets are killing the innocent citizens of Donbas? We should speak about how to end this and how to achieve peace instead of about arms.

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