

Excerpts from Russian President Vladimir Putin's press-conference with Russian journalists on the situation in Ukraine

Unofficial translation from Russian

On March 4, 2014, the President met the representatives of the media and responded to a number of questions relating, in particular, the situation in Ukraine.

QUESTION: A question about the hypothetical possibility of using troops. We hear statements from the West that in this case, Russia would violate the Budapest Treaty, according to which security, territorial integrity of Ukraine was guaranteed by the USA and some NATO partners in exchange for abandoning nuclear weapons. In case of such a development is there a possibility of intervention of global players in this local conflict, thus escalating the conflict into a global phase? How do you assess such risks?

VLADIMIR PUTIN: Before saying something publicly, and definitely before doing something in practical terms, we think everything over and try to predict all the consequences and reactions of all possible players. With respect to those agreements you mentioned, you represent "Reuters", don't you?

REPLY: Yes.

VLADIMIR PUTIN: So how does your public, your political circles assess the events? It is clear that it is an armed seizure of power, right? It is obvious. And it is clear that this was done contrary to the Constitution. This is another obvious fact, isn't it?

REPLY: I live in Russia.

VLADIMIR PUTIN: Well done. You should join the diplomatic service. You will make a good diplomat. It is well known, that the tongue was given to the diplomat to conceal his thoughts. So, when we point out that it is unconstitutional coup, we here the response: "No". I'm sure, you heard it many times: "This is not anti-constitutional coup; it is not armed seizure of power. This is a revolution!" Right?

REPLY: Yes

VLADIMIR PUTIN: Right. And if it is a revolution, what does it mean? Then I cannot but agree with some of our experts, who believe that a new state was created in this territory. Just as it was after the collapse of the Russian Empire, after 1917, we saw a new state emerge. And with that state and in respect to the state, we have not signed any binding documents.