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Gorbachev Urges West to Lift Sanctions, Consider Putin's Valdai Speech

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BERLIN, November 8 (RIA Novosti) — The West should lift its economic sanctions against Russia and consider the remarks that Russian President Vladimir Putin made at a meeting of the Valdai Discussion Club, former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev said Saturday.

"I would like to urge you and [the western] political and government leaders to consider carefully Vladimir Putin's recent remarks at the Valdai forum. Despite the harshness of his criticism of the West and of the United States in particular I see in his speech the desire to find the way to lower tensions and ultimately to build a new basis for partnership," Gorbachev said addressing the forum in Berlin amid the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Gorbachev also said that Russia and the West "must move from polemics and the mutual accusations to the search for the points of convergence and the gradual lifting of sanctions which are damaging both sides."

At a recent meeting of the Valdai Discussion club Russian President Vladimir Putin addressed a number of international issues, including the situation in Ukraine, the western economic sanctions imposed against Moscow over its alleged role in the Ukrainian crisis, the terrorism threats in the Middle East and the unbalanced nature of the post-Cold war world order.

The Russian leader noted that the Western sanctions undermine the fundamentals of world trade, WTO rules and liberal model of globalization but Russia will remain open to dialogue on the normalization of economic relations.

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