

EU refugee crisis 'absolutely expected' – Putin

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Trends [EU refugee & migrant influx](#), [Islamic State](#)

"I think the crisis was absolutely expected," President Vladimir Putin told journalists at the Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok.

"We in Russia, and me personally a few years ago, said it straight that pervasive problems would emerge, if our so-called Western partners continue maintaining their flawed ... foreign policy, especially in the regions of the Muslim world, Middle East, North Africa, which they pursue to date," said Putin.

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According to the Russian president, the main flaw of Western foreign policy is the imposition of their own standards worldwide without taking into account the historical, religious, national and cultural characteristics of particular regions.

The only way to reverse the refugee flow streaming into Europe is to help people resolve problems at home. And the first step should be by creating a common and united front against jihadist groups such as Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIS/ISIL) and fighting them at their core.

"We really want to form some kind of an international coalition, therefore we conduct consultations with our US partners," Putin said, noting that he spoke about it with President Obama.

However it is premature to discuss “*direct*” Russian involvement in military actions against ISIS, needless to say joining the US-led coalition, as Moscow is currently considering “*other options*,” said Putin.

The issue of rebuilding local economies and social spheres to convince terrified people to move back would only arise after terrorism is rooted out, Russian President said. But international support for rebuilding the statehood of the countries which have suffered at the hand of ISIS should only occur with full respect for history, culture and local traditions.

“But if we act unilaterally and argue about the quasi-democratic principles and procedures for certain areas, that will lead us to an even greater impasse,” Putin concluded.

The Russian leader emphasized that he was being critical to figure out “*what is happening, and what to do next*,” rather than to tease or to point out that Western policies were “*shortsighted*.”

Putin noted that the US is not facing a refugee crisis of the same magnitude as the EU, which has been “*blindly following American orders*.”

Prior to Putin’s speech, the Russian Foreign Ministry said that the EU could actually learn something from Russia in terms of offering proper living conditions to those fleeing conflict zones.

Reminding Brussels of Russia’s experience in dealing with the influx of civilians fleeing Kiev’s so-called “*anti-terrorist operation*” in neighboring Ukraine, the ministry’s spokeswoman, Maria Zakharova said that hundreds of thousands of refugees who fled to Russia were provided with “*shelter, food and aid*.”
