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29/12/2007

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## Highlights of 2007 - Putin Slams the West at Munich

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President Vladimir Putin tells the world in no uncertain terms that he is concerned about Western activities that are threatening global peace, not to mention Russian security. Speaking at the Munich Conference on Security Policy before an audience that included U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates and German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Putin underlined existing grievances between Russia and the West and protested against a "unipolar" world, NATO expansion and the ineffectiveness of the OSCE.

He also outlined plans for an "asymmetrical" response to U.S. moves, such as plans for a missile shield in Eastern Europe, and the ongoing controversy of the now defunct CFE Treaty.

Back home in Russia, the speech was regarded as a pivotal moment in standing up for Russian national interests in the face of incessant Western criticism. Abroad, it likewise set the stage for a more assertive and outspoken Russian foreign policy.

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