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By Chris Johnston

Mikhail Gorbachev: world on brink of new cold war over Ukraine

Михайло Горбачов: світ знаходиться на межі нової холодної війни через Україну

В Німеччині, в межах заходів, присвячених падінню Берлінської стіни, останній лідер Радянського Союзу Михайло Горбачьов заявив про те, що світ наразі знаходиться на межі нової холодної війни, яка викликана напругою у відносинах між США та Росією з приводу конфлікту в Східній Україні. Він закликав Захід налагодити діалог з Москвою, зокрема шляхом відміни санкцій проти Росії.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/nov/08/gorbachev-new-cold-war-ukraine-soviet-union-us-russia>



Mikhail Gorbachev has warned that tensions between the US and Russia over Ukraine have put the world on the brink of a new cold war.

The former leader of the Soviet Union said: “We must make sure that we get the tensions that have arisen recently under control.”

The call comes amid a warning from the Dutch foreign minister that the last victims of the Malaysia Airlines plane shot down over Ukraine might never be recovered.

Gorbachev was speaking on Saturday at an event marking the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin wall, close to the Brandenburg Gate.

His *perestroika* and *glasnost* reforms helped spell the end of communism in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in the late 1980s and early 1990s. He kept Soviet troops stationed in East Germany in their barracks the night of 9 November 1989, as the border was opened.

The 83-year-old former leader has accused the west – particularly the US – of “triumphalism” after the collapse of the communist bloc.

Gorbachev called for new trust to be built through dialogue with Moscow and suggested the west should lift sanctions imposed against senior Russian officials over its actions in eastern Ukraine.

Before arriving in Berlin, he gave pointed backing to Russian president Vladimir Putin, saying the Ukraine crisis offered an “excuse” for the US to victimise Russia: “I am absolutely convinced that Putin protects Russia’s interests better than anyone else.”

In an interview with the Interfax news agency, Gorbachev admitted that Putin was not above criticism, but he said he did not want others to pick on the Russian leader.

Ties between Berlin and Moscow have been strained in recent months by the conflict in eastern Ukraine. Gorbachev said: “As long as Russians and Germans understand each other, as long as our relationship is good, then everyone benefits.”

Failure to achieve security in Europe would make the continent irrelevant in world affairs, he added.

Germany will celebrate the fall of the wall with the release of a nine-mile chain of lit balloons along the former border on Sunday night, around the same time that a garbled announcement by a senior communist official set off the chain of events that brought down the cold war’s most potent symbol.

Meanwhile, five more coffins were flown out of Ukraine on Saturday as Bert Koenders warned that the remains of the remaining nine victims on MH17 might never be fully recovered.

“We cannot say at this moment in any certain way ... but we will do everything we can in cooperation with authorities here to make that happen, and that work is still possible to do,” the Dutch foreign minister said after a ceremony at Kharkiv airport.

Koenders said investigators still hoped to recover the wreckage of the downed Boeing 777, but could not say when that might be because the security situation remained volatile.

[The Malaysia Airlines plane was shot down on July 17 over rebel-held territory in east Ukraine, killing all 298 people on board.](#)

So far 289 victims had been identified among body parts recovered from the site by a team led by Dutch investigators. The Netherlands lost 193 citizens in the tragedy.

Ukraine and the west say the plane was shot down by separatist fighters using a BUK surface-to-air missile supplied by Russia, but Moscow strongly denies the charges and blames Kiev.

Dutch experts have made four trips to the crash site since a fragile ceasefire deal was signed in early September between rebels and government forces, Ukrainian officials said.

The visits came after international investigators were forced to halt an initial probe at the site in August due to heavy fighting in the region.