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Russia accuses the West of playing a 'double game'

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday accused the West of playing a 'double game' with terrorist groups in Syria. He said this at the Valdai Club, a meeting of political scientists in Sochi.

"The United States is the world's strongest military power, but has played a double game. It's always difficult to play a double game: declaring a fight against terrorists while simultaneously trying to use some of them to arrange the pieces on the Middle East chess board in one's own interests," Putin said.

Putin said Russia's main objective in Syria is to establish peace. Putin pledged to continue to support Damascus militarily, while calling for a political solution involving all groups to try to end the war.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov is scheduled to meet US Secretary of State John Kerry, as well as their Turkish and Saudi counterparts, in Vienna today for crucial talks on the Syrian conflict. Putin also criticized NATO's deployment of missile defense systems in East Europe, saying that the decision has fostered instability in the region.