



Backgroundunder

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STRATEGIC DEFENSE AND COOPERATION MUST TOP THE AGENDA AT THE BUSH-PUTIN SUMMIT IN TEXAS

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The upcoming summit in Crawford, Texas, between President George W. Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin will be their first formal meeting since the war on terrorism began. The challenge for these two popular leaders, who already have forged a congenial relationship, will be to keep their eyes on the prize: defeating terrorism; facilitating defenses against missiles carrying nuclear, chemical, biological, and radiological weapons; reducing strategic nuclear weapons; and building a long-term cooperative alliance. President Putin has demonstrated a willingness to work with President Bush: In the war on terrorism, he provided intelligence on the Taliban, gave Central Asian states the green light to allow the United States to use their military bases, signed on to U.N. Security Council resolutions to support the U.S. use of force, toned down resistance to NATO enlargement, and even closed an electronic intelligence collection facility in Cuba.

The Administration should not, however, rush to interpret Putin's good relations with Bush or support for the war on terrorism to mean that the Kremlin is ready to support all of America's priorities on strategic defense. President Bush must be careful that any agreement he signs at the summit

does not compromise national security. For example, he must not sign any deal that would keep in force the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, which bars the development and deployment of missile defenses and leaves Americans vulnerable to attack while giving Russia the ability to veto specific U.S. missile defense activities.

When President Bush welcomes President Putin to his ranch in Crawford, he should put forth an agenda that focuses clearly on improving strategic defense and cooperation with Russia on a broad range of security and economic issues. Specifically, he should:

- **Announce that he will set aside the ABM Treaty.** Ideally, both presidents will agree at the summit to set aside the outmoded ABM Treaty between the United States and the now-

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found at: [www.heritage.org/library/
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defunct Soviet Union. This would pave the way for a variety of cooperative measures to address the growing threat of missile attack, such as transparency, shared threat assessments and sharing of early warning and defense technology, coordinated deployments of missile defense systems, and non-proliferation. But if such agreements are not forthcoming, President Bush should announce that the United States is setting aside the ABM Treaty.

- **Offer additional reductions in strategic nuclear forces.** A treaty agreement on reducing strategic nuclear forces is not necessary at this summit. However, to demonstrate their intent to reduce nuclear arms, both leaders could issue reciprocal statements. Putin, for example, could renew his earlier pledge to reduce Russia's force of deployed strategic nuclear warheads to 1,500. President Bush could state that strategic nuclear force requirements for a post-Cold War world, under certain conditions, will allow the United States to reduce its force below the 2,000 to 2,500 warheads envisioned for START III.
- **Discuss further cooperation in the war on terrorism and efforts to stabilize Afghanistan.** This could include, for example, coordinating policies on joint training of and supplying anti-Taliban forces and anti-terrorism units, and recruiting ethnic Tajiks and Uzbeks from Central Asia to help the Northern Alliance; joint refugee relief efforts and radio broadcasts into Afghanistan in Tajik, Uzbek, and Pashtu; broadening the war to terrorist-sponsoring states beyond Afghanistan; and the nature of the future Afghan government.
- **Encourage expansion of NATO-Russian cooperation** beyond the Partnership for Peace program that Russia joined in 1994. Such a plan would require going beyond the summit, Foreign Ministerial, and Ambassadorial meetings of the NATO-Russian Permanent Joint Council, and may include creating permanent staff to develop cooperative programs. NATO and Russia could cooperate on a plan for comprehensive military reform in Russia, perhaps

modeled after reforms in NATO's new members, Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. This includes strengthening democratic civilian control of armed forces, professionalizing the forces, and increasing transparency in military budgets. President Bush should invite President Putin to address the NATO summit in Prague in November 2002. Both leaders should be aware that an alliance relationship would require a commitment to provide mutual defenses under Article V. President Bush also should encourage Putin to resolve the conflict in Chechnya peacefully to increase regional stability.

- **Facilitate cooperation on other issues such as energy supply and economic growth.** For example, the leaders should discuss: the potential for Russia to supply energy to the West if Middle East supplies are threatened; ways to further integrate Russia's economy with that of the West, including membership in the World Trade Organization; and "graduating" Russia from Jackson-Vanik Amendment trade restrictions imposed in 1974 to pressure the Soviet Union for severely limiting the emigration of Jews.

Conclusion. The Crawford summit may be as important to international security today as the historic conferences between Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev were to the end of the Cold War. The summit offers avenues for wartime cooperation against terrorism and concurrent steps to further integrate Russia into the West. It also provides the United States with an opportunity to formally end its vulnerability to missile attack to pursue the deployment of effective missile defenses. Indeed, a new era of cooperation between the United States and Russia, which includes strategic defense, should bear fruit at the summit in policies that will make the world safer for many years to come.

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