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STRATEGIC COOPERATION KEY TO U.S.—RUSSIA SUMMIT

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When President George Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin meet for their historic summit later this month, the agenda should focus on the growing number of foreign policy and security challenges in which closer cooperation is necessary, if not crucial. These challenges include war against Iraq; the war on terrorism; North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs; Russia's proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and related technologies to countries like Iran; and energy security.

Relations Since September 11. Russia's track record since the terrorist attacks on the United States has been mixed. On the one hand, Russia has cooperated with the United States in the war on terrorism. On the other, it worked diligently to water down the new U.N. Security Council resolution on Iraq and continues to build a nuclear reactor in Iran.

Putin supported the United States in the campaign against al-Qaeda and its state sponsor, the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. He overruled his senior officials to allow the United States to deploy troops and build infrastructure in Georgia and Central Asia—areas Russia influences through the Commonwealth of Independent States Mutual Defense Treaty. Today, the U.S. military uses Russian ports and railroads to re-supply expeditionary forces in Afghanistan.

Putin also muted Moscow's objections to U.S. abrogation of the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty and enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The latter, to take place next week in Prague, will bring the Baltic States and the former Warsaw Pact countries of Bulgaria, Romania, and Slovakia into the alliance. The May 2002 creation of the NATO–Russia Council effectively buried the legacy of the Cold War.

The Putin administration has framed the recent hostage crisis in Moscow involving radical Islamist terrorists from Chechnya in terms of the global war on terrorism. While some officials may have adopted such rhetoric to justify Russia's military atrocities against innocent civilians in Chechnya, Osama bin Laden stated in a tape released this week that the attack in Moscow was part of his jihad against the West. Thus, Moscow correctly stressed that the same Persian Gulf terror masters who funded the theater attack are behind acts of terrorism in the United States, Bali, and elsewhere.

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Moscow and Washington differ fundamentally, however, on Russia's relations with Iraq, Iran, and North Korea. In addition to trying to keep language authorizing the use of force against Iraq out of the U.N. Security Council resolution on weapons inspections, according to the Iraqi Embassy in Moscow, Russia may sign a \$40 billion, 10-year trade agreement with Saddam Hussein's regime. Moscow announced plans to build five nuclear reactors in Iran in addition to the one under construction in Bushehr, even though Tehran made clear that it intends to acquire nuclear weapons and is building and testing ballistic missiles with increasingly longer ranges. North Korea and Russia are assisting Iran in this program. In August, Putin met with North Korean leader Kim Jong-il in Vladivostok to discuss economic cooperation. Such ties to these rogue states are driven primarily by economic motives, as Russia seeks to profit from oil and gas deals and arms sales and to recover billions of dollars in outstanding Soviet-era debt. Certain members of its political, military-industrial, and security establishment also support the ties because they still harbor Soviet-era anti-American sentiments.

Historic Opportunity. President Bush should stress to President Putin that both countries' security interests lie in global stability, access to energy resources, and economic growth, not in supporting rogue regimes, and that the United States, not the European Union, best understands the threat that radical Islamic movements pose to Russian security. In pursuing a U.S.–Russian strategic partnership at the summit, President Bush should:

- **Seek Russia's collaboration on political and security architecture for a post-Saddam Iraq.** Iraq must be disarmed. Should Saddam be removed, some Russian forces could participate in policing Iraq, and Russian companies could help rebuild it. The Administration should make clear that it would support the new Iraqi government's recognition of Iraq's \$7 billion to \$8 billion debt to the former Soviet Union.
- **Establish areas for closer cooperation in fighting terrorism,** such as joint intelligence operations to intercept sources of funding for al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations. Such cooperation could utilize Russian intelligence networks in the Middle East. The Administration should add the radical Islamist wing of

Chechen separatists led by Shamil Basaev (Abu Idris), which was responsible for the Moscow hostage crisis, to its list of terrorist organizations and support Moscow's request that Chechen extremist leaders, such as Movladi Udugov and Zelimkhan Yandarbiev, be extradited to Russia from Qatar and other Middle Eastern havens.

- **Gain Moscow's support for pressuring North Korea to cease its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs.** Kim Jong-il's desire to pit major powers against each other should not deter the U.S. and Russia from striving for peace on the peninsula. The Administration should stress that it is in both America's and Russia's interests to make sure Pyongyang terminates WMD programs and to cooperate on promoting economic reform in North Korea.
- **Request that Russia terminate its nuclear projects in Iran,** offering in exchange authorization for the safe storage of spent fuel from U.S.-built nuclear power station fuel cells in Russia. This arrangement could provide \$10 billion over the next 10 years to Russia's nuclear energy ministry, MinAtom. The Administration also should ask Moscow to terminate the training of Iranian nuclear engineers and scientists at its universities and nuclear facilities.
- **Pursue ways to expand oil and energy ties,** including U.S. private-sector investment and government cooperation (such as Overseas Private Investment Corporation and Export-Import Bank guarantees) to develop Russia's pipeline and port infrastructure to meet increased international demand and to expand Russian oil exports to global markets.

The U.S.–Russia summit provides President Bush and President Putin an historic opportunity to collaborate to make the world more secure. They should focus on policies that would allow the two countries to fight radical Islamic terrorism and limit the ability of dangerous regimes to obtain the world's most dangerous weapons. Russia and the United States should also work to improve energy security while expanding Russia's share of the world oil market.

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