

# Executive Memorandum

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## The Bush–Putin Summit Agenda: Russian Peacekeepers for Iraq?

Ariel Cohen, Ph.D.

At the Camp David summit on September 25–27, Presidents George W. Bush and Vladimir Putin should put the recent U.S.–Russian differences over the Iraq war behind them and close ranks on rebuilding Iraq and defeating al-Qaeda. The senior leadership of both countries recognizes that global terrorism is a strategic threat to their countries and to the West in general, whether in New York, the Caucasus, Moscow, or Baghdad.

At his August 30 press conference in Sardinia, Italy, Putin signaled a willingness to put past differences aside and negotiate an acceptable formula for Moscow's support of a U.N. Security Council resolution on sending U.N. peacekeepers to Iraq under U.S. command. Progress in such negotiations—and in the overall U.S.–Russian strategic relationship—will depend on the *quid pro quo* that the U.S. offers.

Restoring the U.S.–Russian anti-terrorism alliance may also spur other major powers, such as Germany, India, and possibly Turkey, to support U.S.-led efforts to shore up security in Iraq and restore the Iraqi economy.

**Improving the Balance of Interests.** Two years after the September 11 attacks, disagreements over Iraq—combined with the Moscow elite's perception that Russia has little to show for its unprecedented cooperation with Washington—have marred U.S.–Russian solidarity in the war on terrorism. This

resulted in Russia's siding with France and Germany in opposition to the U.S.-led war in Iraq. As early as the fall of 2001, high-level officials in Moscow had signaled that recognition of Russian economic interests in Iraq could secure Moscow's support of the war, but the U.S. ignored their overtures.

Russian policymakers have also criticized the relationship as skewed against Moscow. Russia has acquiesced, for example, to U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, NATO enlargement, and U.S. deployment of forces in the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia, all of which are often cited as examples of the United States taking advantage of Russia. There is also dissatisfaction in Moscow because Congress has not lifted the obso-

lete 1974 Jackson–Vanik Amendment, which continues on a symbolic level to restrict Permanent Normal Trade Relations with Russia—despite Bush Administration pledges that the amendment would be repealed.

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- Request Russian support for sending U.S.-led U.N. peacekeepers to Iraq.
  - Offer to expand Russian participation in the reconstruction of Iraq.
  - Urge Russia to cooperate in blocking Iran's nuclear weapons program.
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This paper, in its entirety, can be found at:  
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Russian criticism that the U.S.–Russian relationship is a one-way street may have some validity. But to be fair, since September 11, the United States has taken steps toward Moscow by declaring some Chechen extremists international terrorists and by pursuing cooperation with Russian companies on ballistic missile defense.

Some of Putin's political allies, especially from the secret police, nuclear power, and defense circles, still harbor anti-American sentiments and insist on Russia's "special path." This path includes building military presence and political influence in the former Soviet republics and coordinating policies with and selling arms to China and Iran. The transfer of Russian nuclear technology to Tehran is particularly dangerous and destabilizing. The new Russian overtures to Saudi Arabia are also a signal that Russia is keeping open the option of cutting a "separate deal" with the Islamic world to attract massive investment and prevent the financing of terrorist operations on Russian soil.

While all politics is local, all foreign policy is domestic: Future Russian foreign policy will be influenced by the continuing political struggle in Moscow between the Westernizers and authoritarian statist.

#### What Should the Bush Administration Do?

Improving anti-terrorism cooperation and pulling Russia closer to the U.S. side on Iraq may trigger competition between other powers to offer peacekeepers and support for the U.S. on Iraq, Iran, and the war on terrorism. At Camp David, President Bush should:

- **Request** Russian support for the U.S. draft of the U.N. resolution authorizing U.N. peacekeepers for Iraq under U.S. military command while rejecting the French demands for a hasty transfer of power to the Iraqis. Putin and Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov have signaled that Russia will support U.N. peacekeepers under U.S. command in Iraq.
- **Invite** Russian participation in the U.N. peacekeeping force for Iraq. While Russian U.N. Ambassador Sergey Lavrov has ruled out Russian troops in Iraq, peacekeepers could provide training, emergency relief, and oil pipeline

security. Russia currently has up to 10,000 experienced peacekeepers who adequately cooperated with American troops in Bosnia and Kosovo.

- **Expand** Russian participation in the reconstruction of Iraq. Russian companies have up to \$1 billion in contracts to rebuild Iraq. The USSR built the Iraqi power grid, which is in need of major refurbishing, and Russian oil companies have contracts to increase production in the depleted Iraqi oil fields. Doubling the value of contracts for Russian participation in the reconstruction of Iraq would give Moscow an incentive to cooperate.
- **Urge** Russia to cooperate in preventing further development of Iran's uranium enrichment and nuclear weapons program. On August 26, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) announced that it had found traces of weapons-grade uranium in Iran. Russia has expressed support for intrusive inspections under the IAEA's "additional protocol" and expects to conclude a spent fuel repatriation agreement with Tehran. However, as Iran is threatening to follow North Korea and withdraw from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, President Bush should encourage Russia to coordinate its position with Washington and stress that a nuclear-armed Iran will pose a strategic threat to Russia.
- **Explore** further cooperation on missile defense. President Bush has signed a policy directive calling for missile defense cooperation with Russia, and he should use this summit to further this policy.

**Conclusion.** The Camp David summit is a strategic opportunity to put U.S.–Russian relations back on track. If successful, Presidents Bush and Putin will contribute to achieving security and peace in Iraq and strengthening the struggle against international terrorism.

—Ariel Cohen, Ph.D., is Research Fellow in Russian and Eurasian Studies in the Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis Institute for International Studies at The Heritage Foundation.