Administration of Barack Obama, 2012

Remarks Following a Meeting with President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia in Los Cabos, Mexico
June 18, 2012

President Putin. Mr. President, this has been our second meeting. I remember our lengthy meeting we had in Moscow.

Today we had a very meaningful and subject-oriented discussion. We've been able to discuss issues pertaining to security. We discussed bilateral economic relations. In this regard, I'd like to thank you for the support rendered to Russia with her accession to the World Trade Organization. I am positive this will help to further develop the economic relations between our two countries, to promote creation of jobs in both countries.

We also discussed international affairs, including the Syrian affair. From my perspective, we've been able to find many commonalities pertaining to all of those issues. And we'll now further develop our contacts both on a personal level and on the level of our experts involved.

You visited the Russian Federation 3 years ago. Now, welcome again. I invite you to visit Moscow.

President Obama. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

We, in fact, did have a candid, thoughtful, and thorough conversation on a whole range of bilateral and international issues. Over the last 3 years, the United States and Russia have been able to make significant progress on a wide range of issues, including the new START Treaty, the 123 Agreement, the work we've done on Russia's accession to the WTO, and setting up a Presidential process whereby issues of trade and commerce, science, technology are all discussed at a much more intensive level.

We agreed that we need to build on these successes, even as we recognize that there are going to be areas of disagreement, and that we can find constructive ways to manage through any bilateral tensions. In particular, we discussed the need to expand trade and commercial ties between the United States and Russia, which are still far below where they should be. And I emphasized my priority of having Congress repeal Jackson-Vanik, provide permanent trade relations status to Russia, so that American businesses can take advantage of the extraordinary opportunities now that Russia is a member of the WTO.

We discussed a range of strategic issues, including missile defense, and resolved to continue to work through some of the difficult problems involved there.

I thanked the President and the Russian people for the work they've done with us on the Northern Distribution Network that is vital to providing supplies and resources to our brave troops who are still in Afghanistan.

We emphasized our shared approach when it comes to the Iranian situation, as members of the P–5-plus-1. We agreed that there's still time and space to resolve diplomatically the issue of Iran's potential development of nuclear weapons, as well as its interest in developing peaceful nuclear power.

And finally, as Mr. President mentioned, we discussed Syria, where we agreed that we need to see a cessation of the violence, that a political process has to be created to prevent civil
war and the kind of horrific deaths that we've seen over the last several weeks. And we pledged to work with other international actors including the United Nations, Kofi Annan, and all interested parties in trying to find a resolution to this problem.

Mr. President, I look forward to visiting Russia again, and I look forward to hosting you in the United States.

Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:42 p.m. at the Esperanza Resort. In his remarks, he referred to former Secretary-General Kofi A. Annan of the United Nations, in his capacity as Joint U.N.-Arab League Special Envoy to Syria. He also referred to the Jackson-Vanik amendment to the Trade Act of 1974, which places restrictions on normalized trade relations between the U.S. and Russia and other countries of the former Soviet Union based on their economic structure and emigration policies. President Putin spoke in Russian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Categories: Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials :: Russia :: President Putin.

Locations: Los Cabos, Mexico.

Names: Annan, Kofi A.; Putin, Vladimir V.

Subjects: Afghanistan :: U.S. military forces :: Deployment; Arms and munitions :: Nuclear weapons and material :: Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) with Russia; Commerce, international :: U.S. exports :: Expansion; Defense and national security :: Missile defense; Iran :: International diplomatic efforts; Ireland :: Nuclear weapons development; Mexico :: President Obama's visit; Russia :: Afghanistan, role; Russia :: President; Russia :: Relations with U.S.; Russia :: Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) with U.S., expansion; Russia :: Trade with U.S.; Russia :: World Trade Organization, accession; Syria :: Political unrest and violence; Syria :: United Nations, role; World Trade Organization.

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