

Joint Statement by President Barack Obama and President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia on a New Field of Cooperation in Confidence Building

June 17, 2013

We, the Presidents of the United States of America and the Russian Federation, recognize the unprecedented progress in the use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs), the new capacity they create for the economies and societies of our countries, and the increasing interdependence of the modern world.

We recognize that threats to or in the use of ICTs include political-military and criminal threats, as well as threats of a terrorist nature, and are some of the most serious national and international security challenges we face in the 21st Century. We affirm the importance of cooperation between the United States of America and the Russian Federation for the purpose of enhancing bilateral understanding in this area. We view this cooperation as essential to safeguarding the security of our countries, and to achieving security and reliability in the use of ICTs that are essential to innovation and global interoperability.

Demonstrating our commitment to promoting international peace and security, today we affirm the completion of landmark steps designed to strengthen relations, increase transparency, and build confidence between our two nations:

- To create a mechanism for information sharing in order to better protect critical information systems, we have established a communication channel and information sharing arrangements between our computer emergency response teams;
- To facilitate the exchange of urgent communications that can reduce the risk of misperception, escalation and conflict, we have authorized the use of the direct communications link between our Nuclear Risk Reduction Centers for this purpose;
- Finally, we have directed officials in the White House and the Kremlin to establish a direct communication link between high-level officials to manage potentially dangerous situations arising from events that may carry security threats to or in the use of ICTs.

We have decided to create (in the framework of the U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission) a bilateral working group on issues of threats to or in the use of ICTs in the context of international security that is to meet on a regular basis to consult on issues of mutual interest and concern. This working group is to assess emerging threats, elaborate, propose and coordinate concrete joint measures to address such threats as well as strengthen confidence. This group should be created within the next month and should immediately start its practical activities.

These steps are necessary in order to meet our national and broader international interests. They are important practical measures which can help to further the advancement of norms of peaceful and just interstate conduct with respect to the use of ICTs. To further deepen our relationship, relevant agencies of our countries plan to continue their regular dialogue and to identify additional areas for mutually-beneficial cooperation in combating threats to or in the use of ICTs.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

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