

Russia-U.S. Relations

Q. The question is for both Presidents. Now we can state that despite differences over Iraq, these differences have not led to the worsening of relations either between you, personally, or between our two countries. How can it be explained? Due to what reasons did it actually happen?

President Bush. Trust. Listen, I—Vladimir and I had some very frank discussions about Iraq. I understood his position. He understood mine. But because we've got a trustworthy relationship, we're able to move beyond any disagreement over a single issue. Plus, I like him. He's a good fellow to spend quality time with.

President Putin. Thank you, George, for your warm words. I would like to confirm everything that has been said by the President and to send him a response.

I would like to add just one thing. There are two reasons why such problems be-

tween our states and between us, personally, have not emerged. We had differences over Iraq in terms of practical ways how to resolve this problem, but we had understanding on the essence of this problem. And the second and the most important point, fundamental interests of our two countries are much more solid, are much stronger than the developments that you have just mentioned. And in our actions, we wish to be guided by these strategic interests of our two countries without excessive emotions or ambitions.

Thank you.

President Bush. Good job. Thank you.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:04 a.m. In his remarks, President Putin referred to Ramiro Armando de Oliveira Lopes da Silva, acting U.N. Special Representative for Iraq. President Putin spoke in Russian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Joint Statement Between the United States of America and the Russian Federation

September 27, 2003

President George W. Bush and President Vladimir V. Putin held productive discussions at Camp David, Maryland, on September 26 and 27, 2003. Building on the Joint Declaration on the New Strategic Relationship of May 24, 2002, and other joint documents, they focused on practical ways to broaden and deepen cooperation and partnership between the United States and Russia, overcoming obstacles and fulfilling their shared vision of a new strategic relationship to deal with the challenges and opportunities of the 21st Century.

The Presidents discussed a broad range of bilateral and international issues, including counter-terrorism; preventing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; the situations in the Middle East, Iraq, Iran,

and North Korea; strengthening the NATO-Russia relationship; progress in creating conditions to expand economic and commercial relations; cooperation in high technology, housing, and health; and people-to-people contacts, as well as other questions of mutual interest.

The Presidents agreed on next steps in a number of areas to strengthen the existing U.S.-Russia partnership. They issued specific instructions to their respective governments identifying tasks to be undertaken by the appropriate agencies and specifying timelines for doing so, and they underscored their shared intention to monitor fulfillment of these tasks. In particular, they identified key areas where progress might

be made in the near term, including, among other issues:

- implementing effectively the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (Treaty of Moscow), and continuing efforts to increase transparency and build confidence on strategic issues;
 - building cooperation between the American and Russian military establishments, as critical to joint efforts in areas such as counter-terrorism, missile defense, and peacekeeping;
 - strengthening commercial and economic relations through further cooperation in enhancing global energy security, eliminating barriers to trade and investment, promoting high-tech-
- nology cooperation, and protecting intellectual property rights;
 - strengthening consultation and cooperation in dealing with regional problems; and
 - deepening cooperation in the battle against HIV/AIDs, which will benefit the United States and Russia, and contribute to the global effort against this modern plague.

The Presidents agreed to remain in close contact to ensure progress across the broad agenda that they have defined.

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

Remarks Honoring the 2003 Stanley Cup Champion New Jersey Devils *September 29, 2003*

Thank you all for being here. Please be seated. It's my honor to welcome to the Rose Garden the Stanley Cup champs. Congratulations. It's a—I had the honor of meeting your captain. I saw a quote; he said, "It's an awesome experience," talked about winning, what it's like to win as a team. And I want to congratulate the team that is with us today.

I want to thank Peter Simon, who is the chairman. I appreciate Lou Lamoriello, who is the general manager and the president and CEO of the New Jersey Devils. I want to congratulate Pat Burns, the Jack Adams Award winner, which I guess means he's a really good coach. Gary Bettman, the commissioner, is with us. Mr. Commissioner, good to see you.

They tell me this cup is 110 years old. That makes it older than the Oval Office. [Laughter] I see it's got all the names of the players who have won it, and now your names are on it. It's a fantastic legacy to athleticism and desire and drive, a couple

of cuts here and there—[laughter]—maybe a missed tooth or two. [Laughter]

The concept of a team is just really important. I have a chance to welcome champs to the White House on a regular basis, and it seems to be a common ingredient, where people are willing to put something above individual achievement, called the team. They kind of work together for something bigger than self-glory. It's the common ingredient of all the champs that come here, and it's been the common ingredient of this team, led by a very capable captain and great players.

One of the things that's interesting about the Stanley Cup is that each player gets to spend time with it. It must be pretty neat. The cup has traveled throughout North America and Europe. It's been to some famous sites recently. It was at the McDonald's drive-through in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia. [Laughter] It must have been