

logue with native peoples to help determine the specific goals and methods for such cooperation.

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

Joint Statement by President Barack Obama and President Dmitry A. Medvedev of Russia Regarding Cooperation on Visa Issues *May 26, 2011*

Last June, when we met in Washington, we expressed our determination to establish stronger bilateral ties on the basis of mutually beneficial cooperation. We are seeking to expand our economic and trade relations, and also to strengthen contacts between our citizens. As has been highlighted in many of the meetings of the Working Groups of the Presidential Commission, the current state of visa procedures between our countries does not correspond to the present level of collaboration nor to the development of bilateral relations that we hope is to come.

We continue to seek ways to facilitate travel between our countries, consistent with the laws and regulations of both countries. Over the past year, our officials have clarified the requirements for travel for purposes of tourism, work, and study, and we intend to streamline this process in order to make travel easier. As a first major step, we have instructed our officials to concentrate on visa liberalization on a reciprocal basis for the largest segments of our traveling nationals—business travelers and tourists, traveling both as individuals and in groups, and official representatives. Taking in-

to account the significant progress achieved by our negotiators, we are working on a new agreement to issue, as a general rule without unduly formalized invitations and justifications, multiple-entry visas for eligible business travelers and tourists of 36 month validity at a unified and reciprocal fee, as well as the issuance of 12-month, multiple-entry visas for official representatives of our countries. We aim to settle these issues and sign the agreement in the very near future, consistent with domestic procedures in both countries.

As relations between our countries grow stronger, and the ties become more intense, we will seek even greater simplification and liberalization of our countries' visa systems on a reciprocal basis, aimed at providing entry of U.S. citizens into Russia and of Russian citizens into the U.S. unencumbered by unnecessary formalities, in accordance with domestic legislation of each country. We are instructing our government agencies to work in this direction.

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

Joint Statement by President Barack Obama, President Dmitry A. Medvedev of Russia, and President Nicolas Sarkozy of France on the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict *May 26, 2011*

We, the Presidents of the OSCE Minsk Group's Co-Chair countries—France, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America—are convinced the time has arrived for all the sides to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict to take a decisive step towards a peaceful settlement.

We reiterate that only a negotiated settlement can lead to peace, stability, and reconciliation, opening opportunities for regional development and cooperation. The use of force created the current situation of confrontation and instability. Its use again would only bring more suffering and devastation, and

would be condemned by the international community. We strongly urge the leaders of the sides to prepare their populations for peace, not war.

As a result of efforts by the parties and the Co-Chair countries at all levels, significant progress has been made. The latest version of the Basic Principles, as discussed in Sochi on March 5, lays a just and balanced foundation for the drafting of a comprehensive peace settlement. This document, based on the Helsinki Final Act and elements outlined in our joint declarations in L'Aquila in July 2009 and Muskoka in June 2010, provides a way for all sides to move beyond the unacceptable status quo.

We therefore call upon the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan to demonstrate their

political will by finalizing the Basic Principles during their upcoming summit in June. Further delay would only call into question the commitment of the sides to reach an agreement. Once an agreement has been reached, we stand ready to witness the formal acceptance of these Principles, to assist in the drafting of the peace agreement, and then to support its implementation with our international partners.

NOTE: The statement referred to President Serzh Sargsian of Armenia; and President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Statement on the Arrest of Ratko Mladic

May 26, 2011

Fifteen years ago, Ratko Mladic ordered the systematic execution of some 8,000 unarmed men and boys in Srebrenica. Today he is behind bars. I applaud President Tadic and the Government of Serbia on their determined efforts to ensure that Mladic was found and that he faces justice. We look forward to his expeditious transfer to The Hague.

Today is an important day for the families of Mladic's many victims, for Serbia, for Bosnia, for the United States, and for international justice. While we will never be able to bring back those who were murdered, Mladic will now have to answer to his victims and the world in a court of law. From Nuremberg to the present, the United States has long viewed justice for

war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide as both a moral imperative and an essential element of stability and peace. In Bosnia, the United States—our troops and our diplomats—led the international effort to end ethnic cleansing and bring a lasting peace. On this important day, we recommit ourselves to supporting ongoing reconciliation efforts in the Balkans and to working to prevent future atrocities. Those who have committed crimes against humanity and genocide will not escape judgment.

May the families of Mladic's victims find some solace in today's arrest, and may this deepen the ties among the people of the region.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Naoto Kan of Japan in Deauville, France

May 26, 2011

President Obama. I just want to very briefly say how glad I am to have an opportunity to discuss important issues with Prime Minister Kan once again. As I've said so often, we have one of the strongest alliances that has made

both the United States and Japan safer and more prosperous for half a century now.

And obviously, all of us were heartbroken by the extraordinary devastation that took place recently as a consequence of the tsunami and