

2013, to discuss in greater detail the full range of bilateral and international issues.

We have also decided to expand the dialogue between the U.S. Vice President and the Russian Prime Minister to address our joint agenda, including discussion of the development and diversification of trade and investment links, to promote the strengthening of relations and economic growth in both countries.

An understanding was reached on launching a regular dialogue in the “two plus two” format between foreign and defense ministers to address issues of strategic stability, international security, and shared threats to our countries.

With a view to intensifying cooperation in the security realm, we instructed the Security Councils of the United States and Russia to maintain a regular dialogue to discuss issues of mutual interest.

The Bilateral Presidential Commission will continue to play an important role in develop-

ing engagement in various areas. More than sixty U.S. and Russian government agencies currently take part in its activities. To complement the governments’ work on intensifying cooperation, we call on public and business communities in the United States and Russia to establish close links in the interest of bringing our countries closer together.

Expanding direct contracts between Americans and Russians, including through implementation of the bilateral Agreement on Simplifying Visa Formalities, which has been in force since 2012, will serve to strengthen mutual understanding and trust and make it possible to raise U.S.-Russian relations to a qualitatively new level.

NOTE: The joint statement referred to Prime Minister Dmitry Anatolyevich Medvedev of Russia. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Joint Statement by President Obama and President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia on Cooperation in Countering Terrorism *June 17, 2013*

The United States and Russia resolutely condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. The explosions in Boston on April 15, 2013, and the explosion of the terrorist suicide bomber in Makhachkala on May 25, 2013, have demonstrated anew that the global terrorist threat is not weakening and calls for a build-up of our joint efforts in countering it.

Terrorists do not acknowledge borders and seek to impose their extremist ideology of violence everywhere. We note with concern the cases in which terrorist groups have coalesced with transborder organized crime, in particular in the area of the illegal traffic in drugs and arms.

The terrorist threat calls for a concerted, comprehensive response that presupposes law enforcement measures for the protection of our citizens, as well as the implementation of a long-term strategy aimed at denying terrorists any social or material support, and working with societies to prevent the spread of the ter-

rorist ideology. To that end, the United States and Russia intend to strengthen our counterterrorism cooperation on the basis of mutual trust, including the exchange of pertinent operational information between intelligence services and the conduct of coordinated operations.

We intend to continue to contribute to international endeavors to counter terrorism within the framework of the United Nations (UN), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF), Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), Russia-NATO Council, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and Group of Eight (G-8). By way of example, the United States and Russia are engaged in active joint work in the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the UN Security Council, as well as the Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee and the Taliban Sanctions Committee. Together, we work in the G-8 on

implementing the initiative for countering improvised explosive devices; in the GCTF, on strengthening the institutions of criminal justice and on the objective of countering violent extremism; and in APEC, on enhancing the security and stability of critical infrastructure. Our countries are cooperating closely as founders and co-chairs of the Global Initiative to Counter Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT), which already counts 85 participant states.

The joint efforts of the United States and Russia, including in the context of the Counterterrorism Working Group of the Bilateral Presidential Commission, are focused on preventing weapons of mass destruction from falling into the hands of terrorists, and halting the funding of terrorist activities, the recruitment and training of those who commit terrorist acts, and the actions of lone terrorists.

Another cause of serious concern is the terrorists' use of contemporary information and communication technologies for staying in touch, collecting information, spreading their

ideology, attracting new adherents and financial resources, planning, organizing, and carrying out terrorist acts. With due respect for the freedom to express opinions, as provided for in international law, we intend to use all legal means to counter the abuse of the Internet for terrorist or other criminal purposes.

The United States and Russia intend to continue to develop their counterterrorism partnership with the business community, including in the field of protecting the tourist sector. Providing security for major sporting and public events, including the Winter Olympic Games in Sochi, is to be an important area of interaction.

We reiterate our firm resolve to join in countering terrorism in accordance with national laws and the fundamental principles of international law, including respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

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

Joint Statement by President Obama and President Vladimir Vladimirovich 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 Nu-