

and protecting intellectual property rights in this area.

We note growing trade cooperation between our countries. As our trade and economic cooperation gains momentum, we might face certain contentious issues that must be addressed in a swift, transparent and constructive manner by taking account of the interests of both sides.

Already existing positive examples of cooperation between U.S. and Russian companies give us confidence that many new significant and mutually beneficial projects will be implemented in the course of our expanding economic cooperation.

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

**Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and President Vladimir V. Putin on U.S.-Russian People-to-People Contacts**

*May 24, 2002*

In keeping with the spirit of cooperation between our two countries, we affirm the importance of strengthening contacts between our societies and citizens. We are confident that direct links between our cities, states and regions, businesses, educational, research, and medical institutions, and non-governmental organizations increase communication and promote understanding and trust between the United States and Russia.

Over the past decade, direct ties between Americans and Russians have grown rapidly, and they continue to broaden and deepen, including through joint business ventures and trade and economic relationships, academic and cultural exchanges, and cooperative efforts aimed at protecting the environment and developing new medical technologies and cures for the most deadly diseases. Such cooperation now goes beyond programs, projects, and agreements financed by our governments; our primary role in the future should be to support this trend by removing legal, bureaucratic, and other impediments. Recognizing the mutual benefits of travel for our private and official visitors, the United States and Russia are committed

to streamlining visa practices and taking additional steps to facilitate travel. To this end, we have agreed to reduce substantially visa fees for participants in student and school exchanges.

We note that government-supported partnerships between American and Russian institutions are flourishing: they include 94 Russian-American sister cities, 8 hospital partnerships, and 37 university partnerships. In addition, more than 100 U.S.-Russian community and institutional partnerships have been forged between local governments, judges, businesses, professional associations, and other non-governmental groups.

We also recognize the strong ties between American and Russian regions and cities, especially the Russian Far East and the U.S. West Coast. Thanks to existing intergovernmental agreements, Native American and Russian citizens can visit their relatives in Alaska and Chukotka visa-free. In an effort to stimulate more of these regional ties, we have just begun a new program which will use U.S.-Russian partnerships to facilitate cooperation, strengthen civil society and media, and improve the business climate in the Russian Far East and the Volga Federal District.

Government-supported exchange programs that send Russians to the United States and Americans to Russia have also grown exponentially over the past decade. Under these programs, more than 50,000 Russian students, scientists, legislators and others have been hosted by families and communities in all 50 American states. Last year alone, about 1,000 Russian entrepreneurs visited the United States to exchange experiences and develop mutually profitable ties with their American hosts; these business exchanges are set to increase significantly this year. Meanwhile, thousands of American scholars, scientists, business people, health care professionals, language teachers, and other experts from many walks of life have spent time in virtually every region of Russia, working side-by-side with their Russian colleagues.

We will also continue to support our partnership in the critically important area of health care. Our priorities are fighting such infectious diseases as tuberculosis, improving maternal and child health in order to reduce

maternal and child mortality, and combating cardiovascular disease. The United States and Russia are committed to preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS. In three regions in Russia, we are currently carrying out health education programs aimed at high-risk populations. We are pleased to note that funding will now be provided for an HIV/AIDS prevention program in a fourth site—St. Petersburg and Leningrad Oblast. In addition, joint programs for the treatment of tuberculosis within the framework of the World Health Organization are now underway in a number of Russian regions.

We will promote further expansion of contacts in such areas of cooperation as information technology, the natural and social sciences, and areas of fundamental research, such as fusion energy and high-energy physics.

A viable and independent media sector is an integral component of democracy in both our countries. Accordingly, we initiated the Media Entrepreneurship Dialogue in November. This dialogue has brought together American and Russian media professionals in a business-to-business partnership to exchange experience in resolving problems facing the media, including those of ensuring the development of commercially viable independent media. We welcome the successful development of this dialogue. We also welcome a new partnership starting this year that will bring together Moscow State University's journalism school with an American school of journalism to develop curricula and materials used for training media managers and journalists.

The availability and use of the Internet in both the United States and Russia has increased dramatically in recent years, greatly facilitating communication between our two peoples. Both governments will do all in their power to create the conditions for information to flow freely within and between our two countries.

Both of our countries are rich in the vast territories they cover and in the diversity of their populations. Respecting the spiritual, cultural, and ethnic legacies of our nations, we affirm our commitment to universal values in the sphere of human rights and religious freedoms. We will seek to promote a

climate of mutual tolerance and respect between different creeds and beliefs. To advance these goals, new initiatives are being developed to support Russian and American non-governmental organizations.

Our governments intend to promote further cultural interchange between our two countries, including the organization of exchanges between national museums, theaters, operas, ballets, orchestras, and individual artists. In addition, we will seek to promote activities that will enable American and Russian scholars, artists, and ordinary citizens to learn more about one another's history, language, and culture. We encourage the establishment of new contacts between American and Russian organizations such as the agreement between the State Hermitage Museum and the S. Guggenheim Foundation.

Through the centuries, Russia's great poets, novelists, painters, composers, and scientists have made brilliant contributions to world civilization, and Americans find their own lives enriched by learning more about this cultural legacy. Similarly, Russians have shown a great interest in learning more about American contributions to the arts and sciences. Increased appreciation of each other's cultures will help advance relations between our two nations into the future.

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

**Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and President Vladimir V. Putin on the New U.S.-Russian Energy Dialogue**

*May 24, 2002*

Successful development of the global economy depends on timely and reliable energy delivery. In this context, we welcome the fact that the Russian Federation has confirmed its role as a major world energy provider. In order to strengthen our overall relationship and enhance global energy security and international strategic stability, we have agreed to launch a bilateral energy dialogue.

Through this Dialogue we seek to: