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he also explains to me, he doesn't want anybody telling him how to run his Government. He was elected. And so it was a cordial relationship. But he can speak for himself.

President Putin. We certainly would not want to have the same kind of democracy as they have in Iraq, I will tell you quite honestly. [*Laughter*]

President Bush. Just wait.

President Putin. But it is true that we have discussed this issue at length, on the initiative of the President of the United States and on my own initiative as well. It is true that we assume that nobody knows better than us how we can strengthen our own nation. But we know for sure that we cannot strengthen our nation without developing democratic institutions, and this is the path that we will certainly take. But certainly, we will do this by ourselves.

At the same time, as far as the forum and context in which we discussed this last night and earlier today, we believe that this is not only acceptable to us to have such discussions with our partners, but I personally believe that this is quite useful as well, because when we do this in a nonbiased manner, in a friendly manner, in an objective manner, when we recognize that the existence of problems in this part of the world, when we recognize that problems with democracy are universal in their nature—these are not specifically Russian problems, the problems of building democracy are universal. And when we honestly and openly discuss this, as was the case last night, as was the case earlier today, this will always be useful.

Thank you for your attention. Have a nice day.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 12:29 p.m. at the International Media Center. In his remarks, President Bush referred to Lyudmila Putina, wife of President Putin; Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel; and President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority. President Putin referred to President Mahmud Ahmadi-nejad of Iran. President Putin spoke in Russian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia Announcing the Global Initiative To Combat Nuclear Terrorism

July 15, 2006

The United States of America and Russia are committed to combating the threat of nuclear terrorism, which is one of the most dangerous international security challenges we face.

Today we announce our decision to launch the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. Building on our earlier work, the Global Initiative reflects our intention to pursue the necessary steps with all those who share our views to prevent the acquisition, transport, or use by terrorists of nuclear materials and radioactive substances or improvised explosive devices using such materials, as well as hostile actions against nuclear facilities. These objectives are reflected in the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Facilities as amended in 2005, the Protocol to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation, and other international legal frameworks relevant to combating nuclear terrorism.

The United States and Russia call upon like-minded nations to expand and accelerate efforts that develop partnership capacity to combat nuclear terrorism on a determined and systematic basis. Together with other participating countries and interacting closely with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), we will take steps to improve participants' capabilities to: ensure accounting, control, and physical protection of nuclear material and radioactive substances, as well as security of nuclear facilities; detect and suppress illicit trafficking or other illicit activities involving such materials, especially measures to prevent their acquisition and use by terrorists; respond to and mitigate the consequences of acts of nuclear terrorism; ensure cooperation in the development of technical means to combat nuclear terrorism;

ensure that law enforcement takes all possible measures to deny safe haven to terrorists seeking to acquire or use nuclear materials; and strengthen our respective national legal frameworks to ensure the effective prosecution of, and the certainty of punishment for, terrorists and those who facilitate such acts.

We stress that consolidated efforts and cooperation to combat the threat of nuclear terrorism will be carried out in accordance with international law and national legislation. This Global Initiative builds on the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, which Russia and the United States were the first to sign on September 14, 2005. This unique international treaty provides for broad areas of cooperation between states for the purpose of detecting, preventing, suppressing, and investigating acts of nuclear terrorism.

One of our priority objectives remains full implementation by all countries of the provisions of UNSCR 1540, which was adopted in 2004 as a result of joint efforts by the United States and Russia. This resolution is an important non-proliferation instrument aimed at preventing weapons of mass destruction (WMD) from entering "black market" networks and, above all, keeping WMD and related material from falling into the hands of terrorists. The full implementation by all countries of UNSCR 1373, including the sharing of information pertaining to the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism and their facilitation, also remains a priority.

We note the importance of IAEA activities in implementing the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Facilities, as amended and its Plan entitled "Physical Nuclear Security—Measures to Protect Against Nuclear Terrorism," and we reaffirm our willingness to continue supporting and working with the IAEA in this area to enhance the effectiveness of national systems for accounting, control, physical protection of nuclear materials and radioactive substances, and the security of civilian nuclear facilities, and, where necessary, to establish such systems.

We trust that, through their participation in this new Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, all countries that share our common goals of suppressing and mitigating the consequences of acts of nuclear terrorism will—on a voluntary basis and on the basis of independent responsibility of each country for the steps taken within its jurisdiction—reinforce the joint efforts to increase international cooperation in combating this threat.

The United States and the Russian Federation reaffirm that issues related to safeguarding nuclear weapons and other nuclear facilities, installations and materials used for military purposes remain strictly the national prerogative of the nuclear weapons state parties to the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty (NPT), for which they bear special responsibility. The Joint Statement on Nuclear Security, which we adopted in Bratislava, noted that while the security of nuclear facilities in the United States and Russian Federation meets current requirements, these requirements must be constantly enhanced to counter evolving terrorist threats. We trust that the other nuclear weapon state parties to the NPT will also ensure a proper level of protection for their nuclear facilities, while taking into account the constantly changing nature of the terrorist threat.

As part of this initiative, we intend to work with countries possessing sensitive nuclear technologies to reaffirm their commitment to take all necessary measures to ensure proper protection and safeguarding of nuclear facilities and relevant materials in their territory.

We will be prepared to work with all those who share our views to strengthen mechanisms for multilateral and bilateral cooperation to suppress acts of nuclear terrorism, with a view to practical implementation of the measures provided for in the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism as well as in other relevant international legal frameworks.

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

The President's Radio Address
July 15, 2006

Good morning. This weekend, I am in Russia meeting with other world leaders at the G–8 summit. This annual summit gives