

American

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Joint Statement by Obama, Medvedev on Russia's Accession to WTO

U.S. commits to offering Russia full support in WTO accession process

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
June 24, 2010

Joint Statement by the Presidents of the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Russia's Accession to the WTO

The United States and the Russian Federation reaffirm their deep mutual commitment to Russia's integration into the multilateral trading system through Russian accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO). We welcome the renewed energy towards completing this process as soon as possible, which is in the clear interest of both our nations, and that of the global trading community. This is a trade policy priority for both nations.

Our governments will therefore both undertake the most vigorous possible efforts in the coming months – bilaterally and with other Members of the WTO – to build and sustain the momentum towards completing the remaining steps in this process. These steps have been clearly identified. We have agreed on approaches to resolve the small number of outstanding bilateral accession issues. Based on the significant progress achieved by our teams, including agreement on the treatment of state-owned enterprises, and provided that Russia fully implements the mutually agreed upon action plan for bringing Russian legislation into compliance with WTO requirements, we aim to settle these issues by September 30.

The United States commits itself to offering the Russian Federation its full support and best advice in the WTO accession process. The Russian Federation, meanwhile, commits to a government-wide effort to accelerate the adoption of measures that bring the country into conformity with WTO norms, in keeping with customary procedures for accession to the WTO.

Statement on G8 Muskoka: Nonproliferation and Iran

Outlines key objectives to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
June 26, 2010

G8 Muskoka: Non-proliferation and Iran

President Obama recognizes that the threat of nuclear proliferation constitutes one of the gravest national security issues confronting the United States. Since taking office, he has sought to strengthen and revitalize the global nonproliferation and disarmament regime. Based on the comprehensive strategy that he described in his speech last April in Prague, the Obama Administration is achieving substantial progress on the agenda, including in the following areas:

Nuclear Security Summit: On April 13, 2010, President Obama hosted a Summit meeting of nearly 50 world leaders who agreed to a communiqué and work-plan dedicated to achieving the President's goal of securing all vulnerable nuclear material around the world in four years, as well as specific national actions to pursue that goal. This was a critical step forward in the effort to prevent nuclear terrorism, and was backed by concrete steps by a range of nations. A second Summit is planned for 2012 hosted by South Korea.

New START Treaty: On April 8, Presidents Obama and Medvedev signed the new START Treaty. This Treaty will limit U.S. and Russia to significantly fewer strategic arms and delivery vehicles, while permitting each Party the flexibility to determine the structure of its strategic forces within the Treaty limits. The Treaty demonstrates U.S. and Russian leadership on non-proliferation, while also strengthening our cooperation with Russia more broadly. President Obama has submitted the New START Treaty to the U.S. Senate for advice and consent to ratification.

The Nuclear Posture Review: The NPR was a crucial step in moving toward a world without nuclear weapons. It elevated preventing nuclear proliferation and nuclear terrorism to the top of the U.S. policy agenda and outlined concrete steps for reducing the role and numbers of nuclear weapons in U.S. security strategy. The NPR changed U.S. declaratory policy to strengthen non-proliferation: The U.S. will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapons states in compliance with their nuclear non-proliferation obligations.

NPT Review Conference: On May 28, NPT parties adopted by consensus a Final Document that advances a realistic path towards achievement of the President's vision for the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons. This document includes calls for strengthened verification and compliance, recognizes the New START agreement and the need for deeper reductions of nuclear weapons, entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and the immediate start of talks on a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty, and supports efforts to pursue international fuel banks and related mechanisms to broaden access to peaceful nuclear energy without creating new proliferation risks.

UN Security Council Summit Meeting on Nonproliferation and Disarmament: In September 2009, President Obama presided over an historic Security Council summit meeting on nonproliferation and disarmament. As a result of this meeting, the Council reaffirmed its support for broad progress to halt the proliferation of nuclear weapons and ensure reductions in existing weapons stockpiles, as well as control of fissile material. The Council reaffirmed strong support for the NPT and called on NPT States parties to establish clear goals for the 2010 NPT Review Conference to strengthen all three of the NPT's pillars -- disarmament, non-proliferation, and the peaceful use of nuclear energy for all.

UN Security Council Resolution 1887: The U.S. presidency of the UN Security Council and President Obama's historic Council Summit on nonproliferation and disarmament led to the unanimous passage of UN Security Council resolution 1887 on September 24, 2009. This resolution reaffirmed the international community's commitment to the global nonproliferation regime based on the NPT, expressed the unified view that all countries enjoy rights and responsibilities under the NPT, and signaled particular concern that all countries need to comply with their obligations. Resolution 1887 also reinforced ongoing work based on UNSC Resolution 1540 to strengthen the nonproliferation regime.

Global Partnership: In Muskoka, the G-8 reaffirmed their commitment to joint efforts to address global threats, which will ensure the G-8 will continue its support for important initiatives like the Global Partnership against Weapons of Mass Destruction. The U.S. looks forward to working closely with other Global Partnership supporters to advance progress in addressing key priorities such as nuclear and radiological security; biological security; engagement of scientists; and facilitating the implementation of UNSCR 1540. The Global Partnership positions resources to address commitments made at the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington and provides the financial basis for international cooperation to secure all vulnerable nuclear material in four years.

The international community's reinvigorated commitment to the global nonproliferation regime and President Obama's accomplishments based on the principled approach of "rights and responsibilities" have strengthened the world's resolve to address the challenge of Iran's nuclear program and Iran's failure to fulfill its obligations.

-- Since taking office, President Obama has pursued a new and more effective approach that has broadened the scope of U.S. and multilateral efforts to confront the Iranian government with a clear choice: advance its own security and prosperity by living up to its obligations, or face

growing consequences and deeper isolation.

-- Our comprehensive strategy has produced a stronger global determination to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons and persuade Iran to engage seriously with the international community. These accomplishments include:

- The adoption of UNSC resolution 1887 in September 2009 reaffirming the rights and responsibilities of the global nonproliferation regime, which demonstrated Iran is an outlier of the international nonproliferation system;
- The strong November 2009 resolution adopted by the International Atomic Energy Agency's Board of Governors censuring Iran for pursuing a secret nuclear enrichment facility – the first such resolution since 2006;
- The December 2009 European Council declaration that the EU would support action by the UNSC if Iran continues to not cooperate with the international community over its nuclear program, and that the EU stands ready to take the necessary steps to accompany the UNSC process;
- UN Security Council Resolution 1929, which established the toughest and most comprehensive sanctions on Iran to date by building on three previous rounds of UN sanctions, expanding existing measures, targeting new entities and individuals, and breaking new ground in several new areas of proliferation concern;
- The June 17, 2010 declaration by European Union Heads of State that the EU will adopt strong measures to implement and accompany UN Security Council resolution 1929, including on trade, financial, banking and insurance, transport, and oil and gas sectors as well as new visa bans and asset freezes;
- The announcement by Australia of additional steps that it is taking pursuant to resolution 1929, including in banking and shipping and against the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), and;
- The announcement by the U.S. Treasury of a new set of U.S. designations targeting Iran's nuclear and missile programs to begin to implement resolution 1929 and expand upon actions mandated by the Security Council, which focus on Iran's use of its financial sector, shipping industry, and the IRGC to support its proliferation activities.
- The United States Congress earlier this week passed comprehensive legislation aimed at holding Iran accountable for failing to meet its international obligations, and complementing the multilateral strategy. The Administration is committed to implementing this

legislation fully in a manner that advances our multilateral dual-track strategy of engagement and pressure.

General Petraeus Testifies on Afghanistan Strategy

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — The U.S. Army general nominated to command U.S. and allied forces in Afghanistan testified before a U.S. Senate committee June 29 that his major goals are to provide security and development assistance while the Afghan government strengthens and takes greater responsibility for its own security.

A reduction of U.S. forces set to begin in July 2011, which was announced by President Obama in a December 2009 speech at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, is not a date when forces will be rapidly withdrawn without regard for existing security conditions, General David Petraeus testified.

“July 2011 will mark the beginning of a process, not the date when the U.S. heads for the exits and turns out the lights,” Petraeus said. “We’ll need to provide assistance to Afghanistan for a long time to come.”

Petraeus, the commander of the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), which is responsible for military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, was nominated by the president to assume command of U.S. forces and the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan from Army General Stanley McChrystal, who recently resigned. Petraeus addressed security goals during a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing June 29, and is expected to win quick Senate approval to the post.

“We cannot allow al-Qaida or other transnational extremist elements to once again establish sanctuaries from which they can launch attacks on our homeland or on our allies,” Petraeus testified. “Achieving that objective, however, requires that we not only counter the resurgent Taliban elements who allowed such sanctuaries in the past,” but “we must also help our Afghan partners develop their security forces and governance capacity so that they can, over time, take on the tasks of securing their country and seeing to the needs of their people.”

In addition to the U.S. forces, the ISAF coalition forces come from 46 countries, while many other nations provide economic assistance.

Once an additional 9,000 forces from other nations are fully committed to Afghanistan, there will be 50,000 non-U.S. forces in the ISAF mission, Petraeus said. The addition of 30,000 U.S. forces, already in progress, will be

completed within months, bringing the total number of U.S. troops to 100,000 by the end of August.

“Complementing the military buildup has been the tripling of the U.S. civilian structure in Afghanistan, with substantial additional numbers still deploying,” he said. The civilian structure is essential for the campaign in Afghanistan to be a fully integrated civil-military effort, one that includes commitments from all U.S. government elements, allied forces and the U.N. assistance mission, and with the support of the Afghan government, Petraeus said. It works, he said, because it worked well in Iraq, where he commanded allied forces.

Petraeus, as the CENTCOM commander, said that he was directly involved in the current strategy that is being used in Afghanistan and that was recommended by his predecessor, McChrystal, to the president.

“As [Afghan] President [Hamid] Karzai has recognized and as a number of allied leaders noted at the recent G20 Summit, it is going to be a number of years before Afghan forces can truly handle the security tasks in Afghanistan on their own,” Petraeus testified.

“The commitment to Afghanistan is necessarily, therefore, an enduring one, and neither the Taliban nor the Afghan and Pakistani partners should doubt that,” he said.

Petraeus acknowledged that tough fighting against a resurgent Taliban force will continue and may become more intense in the next few months. As allied forces take away the insurgents’ safe havens and reduce their freedom of movement, they will fight back, he said.

Swedish-American Alliance Tells a Good Story

Trans-Atlantic partnership exchanges green technology and policy know-how

By Karin Rives
Staff Writer

Washington — In Swedish, the word “saga” means a fairy tale, an imaginary story that used to spread from person to person long before the Internet revolutionized global communications. When the Swedish-American Green Alliance uses the acronym SAGA, however, the term carries special weight.

“Just like the old Nordic sagas were told and spread, so must our sustainable success stories be told,” Matthew Barzun, the U.S. ambassador to Sweden, told America.gov in a recent interview. “President Obama has on numerous occasions called on countries to join the U.S. in a global engagement, and what could be a better global engagement than to lower carbon emissions and building a more sustainable future? We think SAGA will be connecting, sharing and helping stories spread.”

The alliance's frequently updated blog, which is published by U.S. Embassy Stockholm, focuses on environmental news and green technology exchanges between the two countries. The Swedish-American Green Alliance builds on the "One Big Thing" initiative launched during the Bush administration in 2007 to speed up technological invention and investments in renewable energy. That partnership yielded some \$200 million in cross-Atlantic commercial partnerships. Under Barzun, who was sworn into office in August 2009, the initiative has been broadened to include bilateral cooperation in every area of sustainability and clean technology, including urban planning and water conservation.

"The United States and Sweden have a lot to learn from each other. Why invent the wheel over and over again when we can work together?" said Ola Alterå, state secretary at Sweden's Ministry for Enterprise, Energy and Communications. "The cooperation between Sweden and the U.S. is unique, and the fact that we have established research projects where we learn from each other across the Atlantic has inspired many others." The European Union is among organizations that have praised the two countries' collaboration on green topics, he said.

Portland, Oregon, a city renowned for its green policies in the northwestern corner of the United States, recently hooked up with the Swedish capital of Stockholm for what both parties hope will be a fruitful relationship. Portland wants to learn how Stockholm gets so many of its residents to bike and how it developed its waterfront. Stockholm is interested in Portland's successful system of streetcars and vibrant citizen involvement.

"We have the highest number of bikers in the United States and we're looking very aggressively to get the number up to 25 percent within the next decade or two," said Noah Siegel, Portland's director of international affairs. "In Stockholm they're already over 20 percent. We're looking at the kinds of things they do to encourage people to make those choices."

Americans have also traveled to Sweden to study the country's use of biomass. In May of this year, for example, a group of students from Northern Michigan University (NMU) in the United States traveled to Växjö, a town of just under 80,000 residents in southern Sweden, to learn how biomass can be used for co-generation and heating of homes. NMU and Linnaeus University in Växjö have formed a partnership to foster such student and faculty exchanges.

"Sweden has been concentrating on alternative energy and sustainability for several decades, so we have much to learn from their experience. Swedes can learn how [their technologies and environmental policies] might be applied on a larger scale," said Michael Roy, NMU special

projects consultant.

During the past 40 years, Sweden went from being one of the world's most oil-dependent nations to becoming a leader in alternative energy sources and greenhouse gas emissions reduction. The country of 9 million depends on hydropower and other renewable sources for 44 percent of its energy consumption. It also has one of the world's most stringent auto emissions standards. Between 1990 and 2008, Sweden reduced greenhouse gas emissions by nearly 12 percent while at the same time increasing its gross domestic product (GDP) by 48 percent.

"It's easy to come to the green capital of Stockholm and think that it was always like this, but Sweden went from worst to first," Barzun said. "Sweden has shown that you can go from a very high dependency on oil to a sustainable energy model."

Embassy Stockholm, meanwhile, wants to practice what it preaches. The embassy, which spearheaded the U.S. Department of State's League of Green Embassies, has switched to heating provided by a company specializing in renewable energy sources.

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