

THE INTERESTS OF THE TWO NATIONS INTERSECT

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On Sochi:

It is truly unfortunate that there are a number of American commentators who seem to be almost hoping that Sochi will fail. It is our responsibility as common members of the international community, and as nations who all want our Olympic athletes to succeed, to work together to make the Sochi Olympics a success.

Because the Games are so important to both President Putin and the Russian state, I believe that all possible precautions will be taken to try to ensure that the Olympics are a safe experience for everyone, and that disasters are avoided.

While there are a number of human rights, environmental, and corruption-related problems in Russia right now that are associated with the Games, we need to realize that these are ongoing issues to be resolved over the long run, and that they are not specific only to the Games themselves (nor are they specific only to Russia).

On the U.S.-Russia Relationship:

The U.S.–Russia relationship matters because the interests of the two nations intersect:

- Both will interact for the foreseeable future in the north as the Arctic ice cap recedes, and in Central Asia as the aftereffects of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan unfold.
- Both retain veto power in the UN Security Council.
- Both contend with immense nuclear stockpiles, and the difficulties of crafting sensible plans for nuclear security.
- Both face economic challenges through the G-20 and the WTO.

Two steps by the United States could help further the achievement of common interests:

- First, relations with Russia should be depoliticized at home. Exaggerating the importance of problems in the relationship for domestic political gain hinders their resolution.
- Second, Washington should recognize that the economic interests of competing domestic political factions drive much of Russia's foreign policy, including in the security sphere. Finding ways to satisfy those export and foreign investment interests may lead to creative problem solving.

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