

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION



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Beginning of the Meeting with UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour, February 23, 2006, The Kremlin, Moscow

PRESIDENT VLADIMIR PUTIN:

Good afternoon, dear colleagues, dear Madam High Commissioner!

I am very glad to meet with you once again in Moscow. I know that you have visited various regions of the Russian Federation.

I hope that we will be able to exchange opinions on the human rights situation in the regions you visited. And on the human rights situation in general, both in our country and in the world. We recognize that of course first and foremost the responsibility for the human rights situation within a given country lies with the state. But we highly value international cooperation in this area and the activities of international organizations, especially those such as the United Nations.

Welcome.

UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS LOUISE ARBOUR:

Thank you very much.

Mr President, first of all I would like to apologise for my voice. It seems that I have left part of my voice in the Chechen Republic.

And I would also like to use this opportunity to congratulate you on today's holiday, Defenders of the Fatherland Day.

And even though it is very painful for me, I would nevertheless like to congratulate the Russian hockey team on their victory over the Canadians.

I would once again like to express my gratitude and sincere thanks for the opportunity to meet with you a second time and for your special invitation to visit the northern Caucasus.

And I would also like to use this opportunity to thank your Government for the help it has given our department. In particular for the financial payment that Russia made into our extrabudgetary fund.

