



CHECHNYA PEACE FORUM

PRESS STATEMENT

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OBAMA MUST HOLD MEDVEDEV TO ACCOUNT AND ENCOURAGE AN ERA OF MORE RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOUR

Ahead of the G20 summit and the first meeting between Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and his US counterpart, Barack Obama, Ivar Amundsen, Director of the Chechnya Peace Forum, said:

“As Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and his newly elected US counterpart, Barack Obama meet for the first time in London this week, it is a chance for both leaders to move beyond the tensions of recent years and forge a new relationship. It should be hoped that this opportunity is taken because some of the most important challenges we face – economic progress, regional stability and energy security – require at the very least a common strategic approach by the international community.

“However, it is crucial that this new association is entrenched in the basic principles of respect for democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Despite very real concerns about the global economic crisis, Iran and missile defence systems, President Obama must not shy away from the diplomatic efforts needed to change the power dynamic of relations with Russia, and encourage an era of more responsible behaviour – all important for ensuring global peace.”

ENDS

Notes to editors:

1. Ivar Amundsen is Director of the Chechnya Peace Forum, a human rights organisation based in London which seeks to promote the cause of democracy and human rights in Chechnya by bringing the humanitarian crisis there to greater international attention.