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Putin Decrees 2014 as Year of British Culture

By The Moscow Times

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With an eye on further improving ties with Britain, President Vladimir Putin has signed a decree designating 2014 as the year of British culture in Russia.

The decree, which is aimed at fostering closer relations between the two countries, also calls for a celebration of Russian culture in Britain next year, the Kremlin said in a statement Tuesday.

The head of the organizing committee on the Russian side will be Deputy Prime Minister Olga Golodets, Interfax reported. Committee members will include Culture Minister Vladimir Medinsky, Kremlin cultural aide Mikhail Shvydkoi, and the heads of the Bolshoi and Mariinsky theaters and the Pushkin and Hermitage museums.

Relations between Russia and Britain have shown a revival in recent months after falling to a low point after Moscow's refusal to extradite State Duma Deputy Andrei Lugavoi

in connection to the 2006 poisoning death of Kremlin critic Alexander Litvinenko in London.

The Russian Foreign Ministry announced in mid-March that Russia and Britain had agreed to set aside 2014 as a year to celebration of the other country's culture.

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