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Putin's United Russia Signs Cooperation Agreement With Far-Right Austrian Party

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Austrian far-right Freedom Party (FPOe) presidential candidate Norbert Hofer and his wife Verena wait for the first projections in his office in Vienna, Austria, Dec. 4, 2016. **Leonhard Foeger / Reuters**

Russia's ruling United Russia Party has signed an agreement on cooperation with Austria's right-wing Freedom Party.

According to the agreement, the two parties will consult each other and exchange views on key issues such as international relations and "regulatory affairs."

"It seems to me extremely important for there to be inter-party and inter-parliamentary dialogue in connection with the fact that today there is a substantial lack of trust [between Russia and the EU]," said State Duma Deputy Speaker Pyotr Tolstoy.

Tolstoy also said that "in today's politically correct world it is important to find points of agreement through frank dialog."

In turn, Freedom Party of Austria Chairman Heinz-Christian Strache said that his party does

not support the European Union's sanctions against Russia.

"We need diplomatic solutions rather than a continuation of the conflict," he said.

He also claimed that Russia had played an important role in countering international terrorism and preserving "traditional values."

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