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**Letter from M. Jacques CHIRAC, President of the Republic, to Mr Vladimir PUTIN, President of the Russian Federation, following the murder of the four russian diplomats held hostage.**

Paris, 29 June 2006

President Putin, [handwritten] Dear Vladmiir,

I was extremely horrified to learn of the murder of the four members of the Russian embassy staff in Iraq who had been held hostage.

In this terrible ordeal, France stands at the side of Russia and her people. My thoughts go especially to the victims' families, hit so hard by this tragic event. I want to express to them my feelings of sympathy and solidarity.

(complimentary close, with handwritten addition)

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