May 9 marks the 68th anniversary of Moscow’s Victory Day celebrating the Soviet Union’s triumph in World War II. The anniversary puts President Vladimir Putin on the world stage from Moscow. Arguably the benefactor from America’s “Reset Button,” Putin won an unprecedented third term largely through outmaneuvering his U.S. counterpart thereby fostering resurgent nationalism within Russia. Putin got the better deal in the New START agreement on nuclear arms reduction, has continued to test U.S. resolve with submarine patrols in the Gulf of Mexico and strategic bomber fly-bys off Alaska and Guam, all the while supporting anti-U.S. regimes in Iran, Syria, Cuba and Venezuela. Meanwhile, America has inherited one of Russia’s principal threats: Chechen terrorists. Some “Reset Button.” The Boston Marathon’s IED aka “improvised explosive device” attacks carried out by Tamerlan and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, two ethnic Chechen brothers, should convince Team Obama that we must have closer cooperation on counterterrorism efforts with Russia – and finally get something in return for the “Reset” olive branch. While Russian and U.S. authorities had the Tsarnaev family on their scopes for years, including the assailants’ mother Zubeidat, neither side acted quickly or decisively enough to prevent the massacre. And while Russia shared intelligence with U.S. counterparts, it seemingly scratched the surface of what they knew, and fell woefully short of the cooperation needed to stop such attacks. We must do better. On April 29, 2013, President Putin and President Obama reached an agreement to strengthen contacts between Russian and American security agencies. According to Putin, if Moscow and Washington are able to join efforts, they will be able to successfully combat terrorism in the future and avoid suffering losses. The fact that Russian authorities had informed the FBI in 2011 about connections of Boston bombers to Chechen terrorists shows that Russia wants to cooperate with America in fighting terrorism. Though the FBI did question Tamerlan Tsarnaev, it apparently gave him only a cursory look before wrongly determining he did not post a threat. Perhaps the FBI didn’t pursue him further owing to a lack of trust for Russian security agencies – successors of the long-standing rival Soviet KGB? After all, the KGB had a history of support for terrorist organizations. Or perhaps the FBI didn’t trust Russian counterparts as they believed the fight for Chechen independence was primarily secular in nature, and not inspired by radical Islam? While that was the case early in Chechnya’s struggle starting in 1991 just after the Soviet Union crumbled, the initially secular and ethnic fight to become its own oil-rich nation transformed itself into a jihadist war designed to establish an Islamic state, largely because of a decade of Russian overkill against Chechen civilians that caused at least 100,000 deaths. Such a strong response from Moscow provoked an international jihad, inadvertently turning Chechnya into a breeding ground for terrorists, as thousands of young men flocked from mostly Muslim-majority countries to earn money and taste adventure, in the name of defending fellow Muslims. Moscow itself suffered a series of retaliatory deadly terrorist attacks at apartment buildings, subways, a theater, a school and more. So how can the U.S. and Russia better

cooperate on counterterrorism today? First, they must place more trust in one another on information sharing against potential terror threats. The U.S. should more fully investigate Russian tips, and the Russians should share all their cards. Second, they should work together to promote human rights, greater autonomy and economic freedom in places like Chechnya and Dagestan, which would help foster meaningful alternatives to the jihadist narrative of holy war in order to achieve their goals. Third, they should collaborate more closely with Central Asia republics such as Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan to develop more effective networks to monitor and infiltrate radical Islamists groups. Long before Sept. 11, Central Asian governments recognized the danger of radical Islamists to their own existence. They undertook tough measures against radical Islamists to de-legitimize the strict ideology of Wahhabism and limit its influence on local Muslims, deterring youth from joining terror groups. Today’s shared problems of radical-Islam inspired terrorism gives a chance to Russian intelligence services to seek cooperation with American and other Western intelligence services. Such cooperation matches national interests of both the U.S. and Russia and may help to avoid tragedies like Boston in the future. Read the original article here on Fox News Opinion