

## **Barack Obama urges Donald Trump to 'stand up' to Russia**

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**Washington:** US President Barack Obama has warned Donald Trump he should be willing to stand up to Russia as president and also talked about his expectations for the president-elect's actions concerning key US policies and international commitments.

Speaking from Berlin on Thursday at a joint news conference with German Chancellor Angela Merkel during his final trip abroad as president, Obama said that while he doesn't expect Trump to follow his administration's blueprint, he expects him to act in US interests, CBS News reported.

Â Â Â *"My hope is that the president-elect, coming in, takes a similarly constructive approach -- finding areas where we can cooperate with Russia, where our values and interests align -- but that the president-elect is also willing to stand up to Russia where they are deviating from our values and international norms," Obama said.*

He suggested it would be harmful if Trump takes a "realpolitik approach" where the US cuts deals with Russia "even if it hurts people, or even if it violates international norms or even if it leaves countries vulnerable."

Obama reiterated that he was "encouraged" by Trump's "insistence" he won't change the US commitment to NATO, which the president said Trump made clear to him during a 90-minute meeting at the White House last week.

"His full commitment to NATO as the foundation for our international security is, I think, very important," Obama said.

Obama is on his last foreign trip, which also includes stops in Greece and Peru.

While both leaders met privately, Obama said they discussed efforts to keep the US and Germany economically competitive, negotiations resulting from Brexit -- Britain's decision to leave the European Union (EU), the threat of climate change and implementing the Paris agreement, ensuring Iran continues to abide by its nuclear deal, countering cyber threats and the importance of maintaining sanctions against Russia.

- (With IANS inputs)