

Vladimir Putin had a meeting with Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, Director of the Foreign Intelligence Service Sergei Naryshkin and Director of the Federal Security Service Alexander Bortnikov.

President of Russia Vladimir Putin: Tragic news has arrived from Turkey, where Russian Ambassador to Turkey Andrei Karlov was brutally murdered.

First of all, I would like to express my deepest condolences to the family and friends of our departed colleague.

I ask the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to award Mr Karlov a state decoration posthumously and to make proposals on how best to honour his memory. He died in the line of duty.

This was an outstanding diplomat who was highly regarded in Turkey and had very good relations with Turkish top officials and other political forces, who respected him.

Mr Karlov was a very intelligent, gentle and kind man. I knew him personally. During my last trip in Turkey this autumn he was constantly by my side.

This crime is undeniably a provocation aimed at derailing the normalisation of Russian-Turkish relations and the peace process in Syria, which is actively promoted by Russia, Turkey, Iran and other countries interested in the settlement of the internal conflict in Syria.

There can be only one response – stepping up the fight against terrorism – which the criminals will find out firsthand.

Russia's Investigative Committee has already opened a case on the murder, and has been tasked with forming a working group which will promptly leave for Ankara to take part in the investigation of this crime together with Turkish partners. This was just agreed during a telephone conversation with the President of Turkey. We must find out who directed the killer's hand.

Security must be tightened at Turkish diplomatic missions in Russia, the embassy, and other missions, and the Turkish side should provide assurances on security at Russian diplomatic offices in accordance with Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

I also ask you to introduce coordinated proposals on tightening security measures at Russian diplomatic missions abroad.