

RELEASE IN FULL

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**From:** McHale, Judith A <McHaleJA@state.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 6, 2010 8:48 AM  
**To:** H; Sullivan, Jacob J  
**Subject:** FW: NHL scores big PD win in St. Pete!

At the end of the day, it's all about sports.....

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**From:** Mellott, Joseph  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 06, 2010 8:43 AM  
**To:** McHale, Judith A; DIMartino, Kitty  
**Subject:** NHL scores big PD win in St. Pete!

**First-Ever NHL-CHL Exhibition Game Helps Break International Ice in St. Petersburg:** Thanks to U/S Judith McHale who brought National Hockey League VP Ken Yaffe to Moscow under the auspices of the U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission for an icebreaker with Continental Hockey League representatives, St. Petersburg's beloved SKA hockey team hosted the Carolina Hurricanes for an exhilarating exhibition game at the Ice Palace. From the opening ceremony featuring both the U.S. and Russian national anthems, the capacity crowd of 4,500 – including St. Petersburg Governor Valentina Matviyenko, SKA owner and Gazprom Chairman Alexey Miller, Hurricanes owner and Compuware Corporation CEO Peter Karmanos, Jr., and U.S. Consul General Sheila Gwaltney – cheered the two teams on. The heart-pounding, high-scoring game included dazzling play by the 'Canes Eric Staal and Jeff Skinner (Carolina's game MVP) plus SKA favorites Alexei Yashin (SKA's game MVP) and Maksim Sushinski. With Rossiya TV announcing that “we've waited 20 years for this,” SKA broke the second period tie and led their team to a 5-3 victory over the 'Canes in the last period. SKA's enthusiastic organ player rocked the crowd with themes from “Ghostbusters” and “The Addams Family” – plus Tina Turner's “Simply the Best” – and helped the Russian crowd give their home team their traditional electrifying support. Continuing the “sports diplomacy” after the game, dozens of avid Russian hockey fans waited patiently by the team buses and were elated when 'Canes Goalie Cam Ward signed autographs and posed for photographs with them. The Russian crowd's enthusiasm for this match as well as their admiration for the American team were ice-crystal clear from the capacity crowd (the stadium only sells out for championship matches or games against their arch rival Moscow team), their cheers for the Hurricanes, plus the extensive media presence, including live nation-wide coverage on Rossiya TV.

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