

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY / MIDDLE EAST UPDATE
April 9 - 16, 2014

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1. [NATO Leader Emphasizes Defense Cooperation](#) (04-15-2014)

Washington — NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen said April 15 that the Ukraine crisis has amplified the need to strengthen cooperation between NATO, the European Union and close partners.

“We need to train and exercise more together, for instance the NATO Response Force and the EU Battlegroups, so that we stand ready for whatever the future may bring,” he said as he arrived for talks with EU defense ministers in Luxembourg. NATO reported his comments in an April 15 press release.

The secretary-general discussed the crisis in Ukraine with the EU defense ministers. He expressed his deep concern over the continued violence committed by small groups of separatists and Russia's continued military pressure on Ukraine's border. “I call on Russia to de-escalate the crisis, to pull back its troops from Ukraine's borders, to stop destabilizing the situation in Ukraine and make clear that it doesn't support the violent actions of pro-Russian separatists,” he said. “Russia should stop being part of the problem and start being part of the solution.”

Rasmussen told the EU ministers about measures NATO has already taken and will take to strengthen collective defense at sea, in the air and on land. “These measures will follow three tracks: re-enforced defense plans, enhanced exercises and appropriate deployments,” he said.

Rasmussen met with Prime Minister Xavier Bettel and Marc Angel, chairman of the Luxembourg Parliament's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, while in Luxembourg. He thanked the prime minister for his country's commitment to the alliance, noting contributions to missions in Kosovo and Afghanistan and funding to support the Afghan Security Forces. He also commended Luxembourg's support for projects to develop NATO's military capabilities.

"As we prepare for our Wales Summit in September, we have to ensure that we continue to invest in our security," Rasmussen said. "Every ally has a part to play in this effort. NATO keeps us all secure and we must all continue investing to keep NATO strong. Russia's aggression against Ukraine shows that we cannot simply take our security for granted."

2. Statement from Beijing Conference on Nuclear Nonproliferation (04-15-2014)

Following is the text of a joint statement issued by the People's Republic of China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States at the conclusion of the P5 Beijing Conference: Enhancing Strategic Confidence and Working Together to Implement the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Review Outcomes, Beijing, April 14-15, 2014, the fifth such conference since 2009.

Joint Statement on the P5 Beijing Conference: Enhancing Strategic Confidence and Working Together to Implement the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Outcomes

1. The five Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) nuclear-weapon states, or P5, met in Beijing on April 14-15, 2014, under the chairmanship of the People's Republic of China, to build on the 2009 London, 2011 Paris, 2012 Washington, and 2013 Russian-hosted Geneva P5 conferences. The P5 reviewed progress towards fulfilling the commitments made at the 2010 NPT Review Conference (RevCon), and continued discussions on issues related to all three pillars of the NPT – disarmament, nonproliferation, and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The P5 also had a useful discussion with representatives of civil society during the Conference.
2. The P5 reviewed significant developments at the 2013 Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) for the 2015 NPT Review Conference and in the context of the NPT since the 2013 Geneva P5 Conference. The P5 reaffirmed that the NPT remains the essential cornerstone for the nuclear nonproliferation regime and the foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament, and they remain committed to strengthening the NPT. They emphasized the importance of continuing to work together in implementing the Action Plan adopted by consensus at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, and reaffirmed their commitment to the shared goal of nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament as provided for in Article VI of the NPT. The P5 intend to continue to seek progress on the step-by-step approach to nuclear disarmament, which is the only practical path to achieving a world without nuclear weapons and in keeping with our NPT obligations.
3. The P5 intend to strengthen P5 engagement to advance progress on NPT obligations and 2010 NPT Review Conference Action Plan commitments. The P5 advanced their previous discussions on the issues of transparency, confidence-building, and verification, and welcomed the achievement under France's leadership of P5 consensus on a reporting framework. They introduced to each other their national reports consistent with this reporting framework and Actions 5, 20, and 21 of the 2010 NPT RevCon Final Document,

with a view to reporting to the 2014 PrepCom. They encourage other NPT States Party to submit reports, consistent with Action 20 of the NPT RevCon Final Document.

4. The P5 reviewed the work carried out by the Working Group on the Glossary of Key Nuclear Terms under China's leadership, and in this regard, noted the success of the Second Experts' Meeting of the Working Group held on 26-27 September 2013, in Beijing, which established milestones for the completion of the first phase of the Glossary effort for the 2015 RevCon. The progress made in this effort provides a solid foundation for the Working Group to submit its outcome on the terms currently under discussion to the 2015 NPT Review Conference. The P5 stressed again the importance of this work, which is increasing mutual understanding and will facilitate further P5 discussions beyond 2015 on nuclear issues.
5. The P5 had an exchange of views on their nuclear doctrines, strategic stability, and international security from their individual country perspectives to gain better understanding and build strategic trust. They also discussed the importance of verification in achieving progress towards further disarmament and ensuring the success of nonproliferation efforts. The P5 welcomed briefings by the Russian Federation and the United States on aspects of the New START Treaty's implementation, as well as on implementation of the Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Russian Federation Concerning the Disposition of Highly-Enriched Uranium Extracted From Nuclear Weapons, signed in Washington, D.C. on 18 February 1993, and its related Protocol on HEU Transparency Arrangements. The P5 shared further information on their respective experiences in verification and resolved to continue such exchanges.
6. The P5 visited the Chinese National Data Centre for the implementation of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), as an endeavor to enhance transparency and mutual understanding. They recalled their commitment in the 2010 NPT RevCon Final Document to promote and take concrete steps towards early entry into force of the CTBT and its universalization. They called upon all States to uphold their national moratoria on nuclear weapons-test explosions or any other nuclear explosions, and to refrain from acts that would defeat the object and purpose of the treaty pending its entry into force. The P5 intend to continue their cooperative work to strengthen the CTBT verification regime. The P5 confirmed their support for the ad referendum arrangement for collaborative work by their CTBT technical experts towards improved critical on-site inspection techniques and technology.
7. The P5 supported efforts to revitalize the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and continue to be concerned with the impasse at the CD. They discussed efforts to find a way forward in the CD and reiterated their support for a comprehensive program of work, which includes the immediate start of negotiations in the CD on a legally binding, verifiable international ban on the production of fissile material (Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty or FMCT) for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices on the basis of CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein. The P5 participated fully in the first session of the UN Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on FMCT, established in UNGA/A/RES/67/53, and look forward to further engagement in this group.
8. In reaffirming the historic contribution of the pragmatic, step-by-step process to nuclear disarmament and stressing the continued validity of this proven route, the P5 also emphasized their shared understanding of the severe consequences of nuclear weapon use

and their resolve to continue to give the highest priority to avoiding such contingencies, which is in the interests of all nations.

9. The P5 shared their views on topical proliferation issues and remain concerned about serious challenges to the nonproliferation regime. They pledged to continue their efforts in different formats and at various international fora to find peaceful diplomatic solutions to the outstanding issues faced by the nonproliferation regime. As they did previously, and looking ahead to the 2014 PrepCom, they called on the states concerned to fulfill without delay their international obligations under the appropriate UN Security Council resolutions, undertakings with the IAEA and other appropriate international commitments.
 10. The P5 shared their views on how to prevent abuse of NPT withdrawal (Article X). They resolved to make efforts to broaden consensus among NPT States Party on the withdrawal issue at the 2014 PrepCom, thus making a further contribution to the NPT Review Process.
 11. The P5 reviewed their efforts to bring about the entry into force of the relevant legally binding protocols of nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties as soon as possible. They also reiterated their support for the early convening of a conference, to be attended by all the States of the Middle East, on the establishment of the Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the states of the region.
 12. The P5 discussed issues related to strengthening the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards system. They stressed the need for strengthening IAEA safeguards including through the promotion of the universal adoption of the Additional Protocol and the development of approaches to IAEA safeguards implementation based on objective state factors. The P5 also discussed the role of the nuclear-weapon-states, in conformity with the provisions of the NPT, in assisting the IAEA in cases involving possible detection of nuclear weapon programs in non-nuclear weapon states.
 13. The P5 noted that they are now more engaged than ever in regular interactions on disarmament, arms control, and nonproliferation issues. The P5 pledged to continue to meet at all appropriate levels on nuclear issues to further promote dialogue and mutual confidence. In addition to meeting at all appropriate levels, the P5 intend to hold a sixth P5 conference. The P5 welcomed the offer by the United Kingdom to host this conference in London in 2015.
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3. Kerry to Meet with Foreign Ministers on Ukraine Crisis (04-14-2014)

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — Secretary of State John Kerry will meet with Ukrainian, Russian, European Union and Swiss counterparts in Geneva April 17 to discuss ways to resolve the rising crisis in Ukraine.

The meeting was slated after President Obama and Russian President Vladimir Putin spoke by telephone and agreed to keep talks open.

Kerry is continuing efforts to de-escalate the crisis in Ukraine and curb further tensions, State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said in an April 11 announcement. “The United States is

committed to mobilizing the international community in support of Ukraine, and helping the Ukrainian people build a stable, democratic and prosperous country,” Psaki said.

Meanwhile, the White House announced that Vice President Biden will travel to Kyiv April 22 for meetings with government leaders and civil society representatives. “The vice president will discuss the latest developments in eastern Ukraine, where pro-Russian separatists, apparently with the support of Moscow, continue an orchestrated campaign of incitement and sabotage to destabilize the Ukrainian state,” Biden’s office said in a statement.

Biden will consult on the latest steps to enhance Ukraine’s short- and long-term energy security needs. He is also expected to meet with various Ukrainians to hear their views and to deepen the partnership between the United States and Ukraine.

“The vice president will underscore the United States’ strong support for a united, democratic Ukraine that makes its own choices about its future path,” the White House said. He is expected to discuss efforts now underway to strengthen the Ukrainian economy and to assist the country on constitutional reform, decentralization, anti-corruption efforts, and free and fair elections set for May 25.

This comes as the U.N. Security Council met April 13 in a rare Sunday session after armed forces seized government buildings in six eastern Ukrainian towns the day before and then seized several more on April 13, mirroring tactics Russian forces used in the early stages of the Crimean intervention, says U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Samantha Power.

Power told Security Council members that for the Geneva talks to be successful, Russia will have to explain why it is massing at least 40,000 combat troops with armored tanks, assault helicopters and artillery on its Ukrainian border, and it will have to come with constructive ideas on how to de-escalate and resolve the armed attacks on buildings in eastern Ukraine.

“The synchronized, surgical seizure of buildings yesterday occurred in towns along the main highway, followed by armed roadblocks — almost as if a coordinated barrier was being formed between Kyiv and the major eastern cities of Donetsk and Luhansk,” Power said.

On April 14, Treasury Secretary Jack Lew and Ukrainian Finance Minister Oleksandr Shlapak met in Washington to sign an agreement on a \$1 billion U.S. loan guarantee for Ukraine that will complement Ukraine’s International Monetary Fund (IMF) reform program. The loan-guarantee program is designed to bolster Ukraine’s energy security.

Related Articles:

[Evidence of Russian Support for Destabilization of Ukraine](#)

[Additional Assistance for Ukraine](#)

4. NATO on Russia’s Accusations: Setting The Record Straight (04-14-2014)

Russia’s aggression against Ukraine has led to Russia’s international isolation, including NATO’s suspension of all practical cooperation with Russia. To divert attention away from its actions, Russia has levelled a series of accusations against NATO which are based on misrepresentations of the facts and ignore the sustained effort that NATO has put into building a partnership with Russia. Russia has also made baseless attacks on the legitimacy of the Ukrainian authorities and has used force to seize part of Ukraine’s territory. This document sets the record straight.

NATO - Russia relations

Russia claims that NATO has spent years trying to marginalise it internationally.

Since the early 1990s the Alliance has consistently worked to build a cooperative relationship with Russia on areas of mutual interest, and striven towards a strategic partnership.

Before the fall of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, NATO began reaching out, offering dialogue in place of confrontation, as the London NATO Summit of July 1990 made clear (declaration here). In the following years, the Alliance promoted dialogue and cooperation by creating new fora, the Partnership for Peace (PfP) and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), open to the whole of Europe, including Russia (PfP founding documents here and here).

As a sign of Russia's unique role in Euro-Atlantic security, in 1997 NATO and Russia signed the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security, creating the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council. In 2002 they upgraded that relationship, creating the NATO-Russia Council (NRC). (The Founding Act can be read here, the Rome Declaration which established the NRC here.)

Since the foundation of the NRC, NATO and Russia have worked together on issues ranging from counter-narcotics and counter-terrorism to submarine rescue and civil emergency planning. No other partner has been offered a comparable relationship.

Far from marginalising Russia, NATO has treated it as a privileged partner.

NATO's continuation and enlargement

Russian officials say that NATO should have been disbanded at the end of the Cold War, and that the accession of new Allies from Central and Eastern Europe undermines Russia's security.

NATO was not disbanded after the Cold War because its members wanted to retain the bond that had guaranteed security and stability in the transatlantic area, as the London Declaration makes clear: "We need to keep standing together, to extend the long peace we have enjoyed these past four decades". Upholding the values that have always guided it, NATO became more than a powerful military Alliance: it became a political forum for dialogue and cooperation.

NATO's Open Door policy has been, and will always be, based on the free choice of European democracies. When Ukraine decided to pursue a "non-bloc policy," NATO fully respected that choice. Russia's long-time assertion that NATO tried to force Ukraine into its ranks was, and remains, completely false.

NATO has fulfilled the terms of Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty (available here) which states that Allies "may, by unanimous agreement, invite any other European State in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area to accede to this Treaty."

On six occasions, between 1952 and 2009, European countries made the choice to apply for membership based on a democratic process and respect for the rule of law. NATO Allies made the unanimous choice to accept them.

NATO and EU enlargement has helped the nations of Central and Eastern Europe to tackle difficult reforms, which were required prior to accession. It has helped their citizens enjoy the benefits of democratic choice, the rule of law, and substantial economic growth. These efforts have moved Europe closer to being whole, free, and at peace than at any other time in history.

Russia also subscribed to this vision in the Founding Act. It committed to “creating in Europe a common space of security and stability, without dividing lines or spheres of influence,” and to “respect for sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all states and their inherent right to choose the means to ensure their own security.”

Contrary to those commitments, Russia now appears to be attempting to recreate a sphere of influence by seizing a part of Ukraine, maintaining large numbers of forces on its borders, and demanding, as Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov recently stated, that “Ukraine cannot be part of any bloc.”

Russian claims that NATO promised not to enlarge

Russian officials claim that US and German officials promised in 1990 that NATO would not expand into Eastern and Central Europe, build military infrastructure near Russia’s borders or permanently deploy troops there.

No such pledge was made, and no evidence to back up Russia’s claims has ever been produced. Should such a promise have been made by NATO as such, it would have to have been as a formal, written decision by all NATO Allies. Furthermore, the consideration of enlarging NATO came years after German reunification. This issue was not yet on the agenda when Russia claims these promises were made.

Allegations about NATO pledging not to build infrastructure close to Russia are equally inaccurate. In the Founding Act, NATO reiterated “in the current and foreseeable security environment, the Alliance will carry out its collective defence and other missions by ensuring the necessary interoperability, integration, and capability for reinforcement rather than by additional permanent stationing of substantial combat forces. Accordingly, it will have to rely on adequate infrastructure commensurate with the above tasks. In this context, reinforcement may take place, when necessary, in the event of defence against a threat of aggression and missions in support of peace consistent with the United Nations Charter and the OSCE governing principles, as well as for exercises consistent with the adapted CFE Treaty, the provisions of the Vienna Document 1994 and mutually agreed transparency measures.”

NATO has indeed supported the upgrading of military infrastructure, such as air bases, in the countries which have joined the Alliance, commensurate with the requirements for reinforcement and exercises. However, the only combat forces permanently stationed on the territory of the new members are their own armed forces.

Even before the Ukraine crisis, the only routinely visible sign of Alliance forces in the new members were the NATO jets used in the Baltic States for the air policing mission. These minimal defensive assets cannot be described as substantial combat forces in the meaning of the Founding Act.

Since the crisis, NATO has taken steps to increase situational awareness and bolster the defences of our Eastern members. This, too, is entirely consistent with the Founding Act and is a direct result of Russia’s destabilizing military actions.

Finally, the Act also states, “Russia will exercise similar restraint in its conventional force deployments in Europe.” Russia’s aggression against Ukraine is a flagrant breach of this commitment, as is its unilateral suspension of compliance with the CFE Treaty.

Russian claims that NATO has ignored its concerns over missile defence

NATO has not ignored Russia’s concerns. On the contrary, the Alliance has consistently sought cooperation with Russia on missile defence. At the Lisbon Summit of 2010, NATO Heads of State and Government “decided to develop a missile defence capability to protect all NATO European populations, territory and forces, and invited Russia to cooperate with us” (declaration here).

This was reiterated at the Chicago Summit in May 2012 (here), where leaders underlined that NATO “remains committed to cooperation on missile defence in a spirit of mutual trust and reciprocity”, and stated explicitly that NATO missile defence “will not undermine Russia’s strategic deterrence capabilities”. NATO also proposed a transparency regime including the creation of two NATO-Russia joint missile-defence centres. Russia has declined these offers.

These Summit declarations are more than political promises: they define NATO’s policies. Rather than taking NATO up on cooperation, Russia has advanced arguments that ignore physics as well as NATO’s expressed policies. Independent Russian military experts have made clear that NATO’s missile defence programme could not pose any threat to Russia or degrade the effectiveness of its strategic deterrent forces. The Russian government has used missile defence as an excuse for accusations rather than an opportunity for partnership.

Russian criticism of the legitimacy of NATO military actions – Libya

In seeking to defend its illegal actions in Crimea, Russia has attacked the legitimacy of some of NATO’s operations.

This includes the NATO-led operation of 2011 to protect civilians in Libyan. The NATO-led operation was launched under the authority of two UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR), UNSCRs 1970 & 1973, both quoting Chapter VII of the UN Charter, and neither of which was opposed by Russia. President Putin recently accused NATO of violating the resolutions by bombing Libya. This is entirely inaccurate.

UNSCR 1973 authorized NATO “to take all necessary measures” to “protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack”, which is what NATO did, with the political and military support of regional states and members of the Arab League.

After the conflict, NATO cooperated with the UN International Commission of Inquiry on Libya, which found no breach of UNSCR 1973 or international law, concluding instead that “NATO conducted a highly precise campaign with a demonstrable determination to avoid civilian casualties.”

Russian criticism of the legitimacy of NATO military actions – Kosovo

The NATO operation related to Kosovo followed over a year of intense efforts by the UN and the Contact Group, of which Russia was a member, to bring about a peaceful solution. The UN Security Council on several occasions branded the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and the mounting number of refugees driven from their homes as a threat to international peace and security. NATO’s Operation

Allied Force was launched despite the lack of Security Council authorisation to prevent the large-scale and sustained violations of human rights and the killing of civilians.

Following the air campaign, the subsequent NATO-led operation, KFOR, which initially included Russia, has been under UN mandate (UNSCR 1244), with the aim of providing a safe and secure environment for Kosovo. This led to nearly ten years of diplomacy, under UN authority, to find a political solution and to settle Kosovo's final status, as prescribed by UNSCR 1244.

The Kosovo operation was conducted following exhaustive discussion involving the whole international community dealing with a long-running crisis. In Crimea, with no evidence of a crisis and no attempt to negotiate any form of solution, Russia bypassed the whole international community, including the UN, and simply occupied a part of another country's territory.

Russian claims that the Ukrainian authorities are illegitimate

The current Ukrainian president and government were approved by an overwhelming majority in the Ukrainian parliament (371 votes out of 417 registered) on 27 February 2014, including members of the Party of Regions.

That parliament was elected on 28 October 2012. The Russian Foreign Ministry at the time declared that the elections were held "peacefully, without any excesses and in line with generally-accepted standards" and "confirmed Ukraine's commitment to democracy and the rule of law." (The statement can be read in Russian [here](#).)

The parliament which Russia called legitimate then can hardly be called illegitimate now.

Russian claims that the so-called referendum in Crimea was legal

Russian officials claim that the so-called referendum in Crimea on 16 March was legal.

The referendum was illegal according to the Ukrainian constitution (available in Ukrainian [here](#), Russian [here](#), English [here](#)), which states that questions "of altering the territory of Ukraine are resolved exclusively by an All-Ukrainian referendum." Crimea, as part of Ukraine, has the status of an autonomous republic, but any issues about its authority have to be resolved by the Ukrainian parliament (article 134) and its constitution has to be approved by the Ukrainian parliament (article 135).

Additionally, the so-called referendum was organized in a matter of weeks by a self-proclaimed Crimean leadership that was installed by armed Russian military personnel after seizing government buildings.

Russian claims that the annexation of Crimea was justified by the opinion of the International Court of Justice on the independence of Kosovo

Russian leaders claim that the precedent for the so-called declaration of independence of Crimea was the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the independence of Kosovo ([online here](#)).

However, the court stated clearly that their opinion was not a precedent. The court said they had been given a "narrow and specific" question about Kosovo's independence which would not cover the broader legal consequences of that decision.

The court highlighted circumstances in which claims for independence would be illegal. This would include if “they were, or would have been, connected with the unlawful use of force”. An example of “an unlawful use of force” would be an invasion and occupation by a neighbouring country – which is exactly what Russia has done.

Furthermore, the process leading to Kosovo’s declaration of independence spanned years and included an extensive process led by the United Nations. Russian claims ignore all of these facts.

5. De-escalation starts on the ground (04-13-2014)

Article by the NATO Secretary General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen

My first speech as NATO Secretary General in 2009 was called "NATO and Russia: A New Beginning." My aim was to develop a true strategic partnership with Russia, extending practical cooperation in areas where we share security interests, while insisting that Russia should fully comply with its international obligations, including respecting the territorial integrity and political freedom of its neighbours.

Through the years, we made significant progress, working together on areas such as counter-terrorism, counter-piracy and security in Afghanistan. But Russia’s annexation of Crimea ended that new beginning, and undermined the very basis of the partnership we had built with such great efforts.

Today, Russia is speaking and behaving not as a partner, but as an adversary.

While tens of thousands of combat-ready Russian troops stand poised on Ukraine's border, Russia is also waging a propaganda war the like of which we have not seen since the end of the Cold War. Its purpose is to pervert the truth, divert attention from Russia's illegal actions, and subvert the authorities in Ukraine.

In recent weeks, Russian officials have accused NATO of breaking its promises, interfering in Ukraine’s internal affairs, and escalating the crisis. It is time to see these claims for what they are: a smokescreen designed to cover up Russia's own broken promises, interference and escalation.

Broken promises

Russia accuses NATO of breaking a 1990 promise that it would never expand into Central and Eastern Europe. At different times, Russian leaders have attributed the promise to private statements by Germany’s former Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, and then-U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.

But in 1990, the only discussion was about the reunification of Germany. NATO enlargement was not on the agenda, as the Warsaw Pact only dissolved a year later. Moreover, any such pledge would have had to lead to a change of NATO's founding treaty made by consensus of all Allies.

The reality is that no such pledge was ever made, and Russia’s leaders have failed to produce a single document to back up this oft-repeated claim. Since it was founded, NATO has embraced sovereign states who made their free choice to join the Alliance. That is the spirit of democracy.

Over the past seventy years, Russia has repeatedly promised to respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all states. It did so, for example, when it signed the United Nations Charter of 1945, the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 and the NATO-Russia Founding Act of 1997.

Russia is now violating Ukraine's territorial integrity by occupying Crimea, and violating Ukraine's sovereignty by trying to impose a federal system. Russia has broken its word. It has done damage to its reputation that will take years to heal. Blaming NATO will not make that better; it will make it worse.

Interference

Russian leaders also claim that NATO has interfered in Ukraine's internal affairs by pushing the country towards membership.

NATO's track record shows how false that is. When Ukraine expressed the aspiration to join the Alliance ten years ago, we welcomed Ukraine's aspiration. When Ukraine opted for non-bloc status, five years ago, we respected Ukraine's decision. When Prime Minister Yatseniuk recently visited Brussels, he made clear that membership "is not on the radar." That is Ukraine's sovereign choice - and NATO fully respects it.

Meanwhile, Russia has repeatedly tried to define, even dictate, Ukraine's course. Top officials have demanded that the constitution be rewritten to create a federal state. They have demanded that Ukraine declare itself neutral, to safeguard Russia's security.

This contradicts one of the fundamental principles of Euro-Atlantic security: that each state is free to choose its own alliances. The Soviet Union accepted that principle when it signed the Helsinki Accords in 1975; Russia inherited the obligation.

Only Ukraine can decide what is best for Ukraine - in full respect for all the people of Ukraine, whatever language they speak. Other countries may help to facilitate dialogue, but they cannot decide on Ukraine's behalf.

If Russia is sincere about a dialogue, the first step should be to pull back the tens of thousands of troops it has deployed on Ukraine's border without any justification. Otherwise, any talks would not be a dialogue, but diktat.

Escalation

Russian officials allege that NATO has escalated the crisis by moving military forces to Central and Eastern Europe and publicly condemning Russia's actions. Foreign Minister Lavrov even wrote that "de-escalation starts with rhetoric."

The reality is that actions speak louder than words: escalation and de-escalation both start on the ground.

Since the crisis began, Russia has occupied Crimea with thousands of troops and staged a rigged referendum. That is clearly escalation. NATO has offered to support the Ukrainian government's defence reforms and boost the transparency and democratic control of the armed forces. That is clearly not escalation.

Russian forces have seized Ukrainian military bases and warships. That is escalation. NATO has sent civilian experts to advise Ukraine on the security of critical infrastructure. That is not escalation.

Russia has moved some 40,000 troops to Ukraine's border, backed up by tanks, fighters, artillery and attack helicopters: escalation. NATO has launched AWACS radar aircraft flights over Poland and Romania and sent six extra aircraft to the Baltic States to protect Allied airspace: not escalation.

Dispelling the smokescreen

The Russian propaganda against NATO and the West is nothing but smokescreen to cover up its own illegal actions. Dispel the smokescreen, and the truth on the ground is clear: Russia has annexed Crimea at the barrel of a gun, in breach of all its international commitments..

Russia is now isolated in the world, its international credibility in tatters. This is not in Russia's interest.

Russia faces a choice: to stop blaming others for its own actions, pull back its troops, step back into line with its international obligations and start rebuilding trust.

Otherwise, Russia will only face deeper international isolation. That is in nobody's interest, and will make our world only more dangerous and unpredictable.

I call on Russia to de-escalate. There are concrete steps to be taken.

6. Author Robert Service on 'Putin's Czarist Folly' (04-11-2014)

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Putin's Czarist Folly By Robert Service

Oxford, England — Russian school textbooks praise Peter the Great as an industrializer and cultural visionary who turned his country into a European power. Russia became feared but also respected by its neighbors, and Peter is the official czar-hero of Russian history.

Vladimir V. Putin himself is much more like another czar, Nicholas I, who stumbled into military conflict with the British and French and rejected calls for the basic reforms needed to enable Russia to compete with the world powers of the day. Nicholas had a cramped perspective and arrogant personality. Always attentive to the armed forces and the secret services, he overlooked the broader necessity to modernize Russia's economy and society. His country paid dearly for this when his army was humbled in the Crimean War of 1853-56.

Russian foreign policy under Mr. Putin displays an equally gross lack of foresight. On Ukraine, he made much of the threat to ethnic Russians from West Ukrainian "fascists" who were influencing political developments in Kiev. It is true that Ukraine's right-wing coalition known as the Right Sector includes some decidedly insalubrious extremists. But not every partisan who waged the war of independence against the Soviet Army in the 1950s was a fascist; and by seizing the Crimean

peninsula, Mr. Putin has set up a classic temptation for Russian patriots to extend to the whole of Ukraine.

One-eighth of the Crimean population, moreover, consists of Tatars, whom Joseph Stalin deported to Central Asia in 1944 and who were allowed to return to their native peninsula only in the late 1980s. They largely abstained from voting in the recent referendum on incorporation in the Russian Federation. Most are Muslims, and some of their young people could now become recruits for a jihad against Russian imperialism.

By snatching 4.5 percent of Ukrainian territory, Mr. Putin has performed the unlikely feat of wrecking his own dream of forming a “Eurasian Union” under Russia’s leadership. He once planned to keep President Viktor F. Yanukovich as his puppet ruler in Kiev. Now Mr. Yanukovich is a refugee somewhere in Russia, and Ukraine’s government is strengthening cooperation with the European Union.

This is a disaster for Mr. Putin’s foreign policy. Although he is concealing this from the public through his control of TV channels, he will not be able to fool all the people all of the time.

His biggest miscalculation is about Russia itself. The emergency over Ukraine has jolted the Russian superrich to ship even more of their wealth to the West. Up to \$70 billion has left the country this year alone.

Mr. Putin prided himself on bringing stability after the tumultuous years of Boris N. Yeltsin’s rule. Capital flight on this scale tells a different story. The World Bank is sounding the alarm about a halving of Russia’s growth rate if Mr. Putin continues with his Ukrainian obsession.

Just as worrisome for the Russian president should be the phenomenon of human flight. Hundreds of thousands of the brightest young Russians have packed their bags and left for Silicon Valley, New York and London. This has been happening since the collapse of Communism, but Mr. Putin has done nothing to arrest the trend.

Young people leave out of exasperation with bully-boy administrators and violent entrepreneurs. They want to live in a meritocracy where talent alone is what counts. Their model is Google’s Sergey Brin, not the seedy ministers and businessmen of Mr. Putin’s court.

For the expatriates to want to go back to Russia, things have to change — and this is the true test of Mr. Putin’s effectiveness as a president. First elected in 2000, he has done little to clean up corruption. He spectacularly punished a handful of so-called oligarchs, only to redistribute their fortunes to political cronies. The rule of law is feebly enforced whenever the men of power see their interests at risk.

Nor has Mr. Putin done enough to diversify and open up Russia’s economy. For years — indeed, since Mikhail S. Gorbachev’s perestroika period — Russian and foreign economists have highlighted the need for the country to move beyond its reliance on the petrochemical exports. Prime Minister Dmitri A. Medvedev has always understood this, but he lacked the authority to rectify the situation.

Russia needs to pump out high-technology goods, not just oil and gas. And the rival power it ought to keep in sight is not to the west but to the south. Since the mid-1970s, China’s rulers have prioritized the diversification of their economy. This would be the minimal requirement to ensure

Russia's status as a Eurasian power. Instead, the Chinese are set to become a superpower while the Russians fall away.

Moscow's opportunities to compete have always depended on cooperation with Western states with advanced technology. Mr. Putin's impulsive action in tiny Crimea has rendered this a distant prospect. He has lost his place at the Group of 8 industrialized countries.

There was always skepticism about Mr. Putin's good intentions in Eastern Europe; now there is outright hostility. Even Germany's reliance on Russian gas imports has not stopped Chancellor Angela Merkel from rebuking Mr. Putin. The European Union is actively considering how to wean itself off dependency on Russian fuel.

Mr. Putin started the year with a display of Russian "soft power" at the Sochi Winter Olympics, where the closing ceremony presented a country of stylish, inoffensive sport and culture. The very next day, he sent troops to Crimea. And now the World Bank suggests Russia may suffer economic recession by the end of the year.

The signs are that Mr. Putin and Foreign Minister Sergey V. Lavrov are starting to appreciate the implications of their self-inflicted geopolitical blunder. Mr. Lavrov has at least begun to talk to Secretary of State John Kerry.

Western powers are not going to start a second Crimean war, but they have more opportunities to exert pressure on Russia than Mr. Putin imagined. He would do well to consider the precedent of Czar Nicholas I.

Robert Service, a professor of Russian history at St. Antony's College, Oxford, is the author, most recently, of *A History of Modern Russia: From Tsarism to the Twenty-First Century*.

7. Transatlantic Security Challenges: Central and Eastern Europe (04-10-2014)

*Testimony by Victoria Nuland, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs
Statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee*

Chairman Murphy and Ranking Member Johnson – I am honored to be here today to testify on the security challenges facing the Transatlantic community in Central and Eastern Europe. Let me begin by thanking you for your leadership in the passage of the Support for the Sovereignty, Integrity, Democracy and Economic Stability of Ukraine Act. This legislation, which was supported by every member of this subcommittee, will enable the United States to provide needed help to Ukraine as the country undertakes its difficult transition.

I would also like to thank you for your visits to the region. I know that Chairman Murphy and Senator McCain have traveled to Kyiv twice in the past 5 months, and that Senator McCain -- along with Ranking Member Johnson, Senator Barrasso, and others -- will travel to the Baltic states and Moldova this weekend. This engagement demonstrates America's continuing bipartisan support for a Europe whole, free and at peace.

For over 20 years, the United States and our European Allies have worked to integrate Russia more closely into the Euro-Atlantic community through our bilateral engagement and organizations like the OSCE, the WTO and the NATO-Russia Council. Russia's actions in Ukraine are an affront to this effort and fundamentally change the security landscape of Eastern and Central Europe. Today I

appreciate the opportunity to discuss the impact of Russia's actions on Ukraine, our policy response to their actions and other challenges in the region.

Russia's occupation of Crimea, rubberstamped by an illegitimate referendum conducted at the barrel of a gun, has tarnished its credibility and diminished its international standing in the eyes of Ukrainians and the world. Reports of human rights abuses in Crimea since the Russian occupation have shocked the conscience. Russia has also attempted to intimidate Ukrainians by amassing more than 40 thousand troops and quick strike aircraft along the border, and with trade blockades and gas price hikes of 80 percent.

This week's violent occupation of government buildings in Kharkhiv, Donetsk, and Luhansk deepen our concern. Far from a spontaneous set of events, these incidents bear all the hallmarks of an orchestrated campaign of incitement, separatism and sabotage of the Ukrainian state, aided and abetted by the Russian security services.

So today Ukraine is a frontline state in the struggle for freedom and all the principles the Transatlantic community holds dear. The United States stands with Ukraine in its efforts to forge its own path forward to a more free, peaceful, and unified future. Our approach includes four pillars: first, our bilateral and multilateral support for Ukraine; second, the costs we are imposing on Russia for its aggressive actions; third, our efforts to deescalate the crisis diplomatically; and fourth, our unwavering commitment to the security of our NATO Allies who also live on the frontlines of this crisis. Let me address the first three briefly. Assistant Secretary Chollet will address the fourth in his testimony.

First, we support the Ukrainian people and the transitional government in the courageous steps they are taking to restore economic health, democratic choice and internal stability and security to the country. The Rada has passed landmark anti-corruption measures, deficit reduction measures and taken difficult steps to reform the energy sector. These necessary reforms will require painful sacrifices from all Ukrainians. But they also open the way to an IMF package of up to \$18 billion in support.

The United States stands ready to help as the country addresses its immense challenges. Our \$1 billion loan guarantee, in conjunction with IMF and EU assistance, will help implement these reforms and will cushion some of impact on the most vulnerable in Ukrainian society.

And we have approximately \$92 million in FY 2013 State/USAID funding and an anticipated \$86 million in FY 2014 State/USAID funding for assistance to Ukraine in areas such as strengthening anti-corruption efforts, revising public procurement legislation, introducing agriculture and energy sector reforms, deepening privatization efforts, improving the transparency and quality of higher education and helping Ukraine prepare for free, fair elections on May 25th.

We are also working with the international community to push back against Russian propaganda, lies and efforts to destabilize Ukraine's regions. The OSCE has already deployed more than 120 monitors in ten locations throughout Ukraine as part of a special monitoring mission and the mandate allows the mission to grow to 500. The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights will also play an essential role by sending 1000 observers for the Presidential election, one of its biggest missions ever.

Second, Russia is already paying a high price for its actions, and that cost will go up if its pressure on Ukraine does not abate. Across the board, Russia has found itself isolated. The United States along with all other G-7 members declined to attend the Sochi G-8 Summit and suspended

participation in G-8 activities. Instead, the G-7 will meet in Brussels. On March 27th, the United States and 99 other countries in the UN General Assembly reaffirmed the unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. Only 11 voted against. Along with our Allies, we have suspended practical cooperation between NATO and Russia. We have suspended most bilateral economic and military cooperation and much of the work of the U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission. The President signed two Executive Orders authorizing sanctions against those responsible, and finding that the actions and policies of the Russian government undermine democratic process and institutions in Ukraine; threaten its peace, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and contribute to the misappropriation of its assets. These sanctions have been carefully coordinated with the EU and other global partners. And today we are considering further measures in response to Russia's continued pressure on Ukraine.

And the financial markets are reacting. The ruble has fallen. Capital flight from Russia is at a high not seen in years. And Russia has been downgraded by major credit rating agencies on account of its actions.

These costs will only increase if Russia does not change course.

At the same time, we want to try to de-escalate the crisis. Secretary Kerry has met three times with Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov in recent weeks, with the support of the Ukrainian government at a time when Russia would not meet directly with Ukraine. Earlier this week, Russia agreed to sit down next week with Ukraine, the EU and U.S. to discuss de-escalation, demobilization, support for elections and constitutional reform. Between now and then, we have made it clear that Russia needs to take concrete steps to disavow separatist actions in Eastern Ukraine, pull back its forces outside the country, and demonstrate that they are prepared to come to these discussions with the goal of de-escalating the conflict.

So Russia has a choice—to work with the international community to help build an independent Ukraine that can meet the hopes and aspirations of all Ukrainians, or Russia can face greater isolation and economic cost.

We are also concerned about the pressure this crisis is putting on Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and other neighbors of Ukraine. Moldova in particular has been the victim of economic pressure from Russia, intense Russia-sponsored propaganda against its choice to associate with the EU and renewed separatist efforts in Transnistria and Gagauzia. As you know, we have intensified U.S. political and economic support to Moldova, and other states of the region in recent months and this effort will be sustained.

The Ukraine crisis highlights another deep and growing challenge in the Euro-Atlantic space. The Maidan protestors had many grievances. But one of the most galvanizing across Ukraine was the pervasive corruption that has infused every aspect of Ukraine's politics, economy and social fabric for too long. And as Secretary Kerry highlighted at the Munich Security Conference, we are seeing a similar disturbing trend in too many parts of Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans now "where the aspirations of citizens are ... being trampled beneath corrupt, oligarchic interests" who "use their money and influence to stifle political opposition and dissent, to buy politicians and media outlets, weaken judicial independence and the rights on NGOs."

We are also seeing a growing league of oligarchs and corrupt politicians work together, including across national lines, to protect and help each other maintain that influence, and keep the cash flowing that feeds their preferred system. Corruption of this kind doesn't just rot democracies from the inside, it also makes them vulnerable to corrupting influences outside country who seek undue

economic and political influence over state policies and decision-making. In other words, in many parts of Europe, fighting corruption needs to be a higher national priority in order to protect and defend democracy AND state sovereignty.

As we look to shore up the security, prosperity and values that are vital to our shared aspiration for a Europe whole free and at peace, therefore, fighting corruption must be a more central line of effort. Over the coming year, you will see our focus on this intensify in the work we do across the Balkans, and Central and Eastern Europe, in close collaboration with the with EU, to help these countries promote clean, accountable government, a lively and free civil society, and media independence and to help governments and citizens expose and root out corruption wherever it hides.

Similarly, the Ukraine crisis is a wake-up call to accelerate other work we have been doing to promote a stronger, more prosperous Transatlantic community. As Assistant Secretary Chollet will discuss, the renewed need for security vigilance along NATO's Eastern border means our European Allies must reverse the downward trend of shrinking defense budgets.

And even as we revitalize our transatlantic security ties, we must also strengthen our economic ties and accelerate the growth and job creation on both sides of the Atlantic by completing an ambitious Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership agreement. The work that Eurozone countries are doing to strengthen the banking system and institute other reforms will also give investors confidence.

Finally, we must do more together as a Transatlantic community to strengthen Europe's energy independence and internal market including guaranteeing reverse flow capabilities; ensuring greater diversity of supply; enhancing storage capacity and developing a deeper network of import terminals and interconnectors throughout the continent.

So this crisis has intensified our focus not just on Central and Eastern Europe but on a broad set of transatlantic security challenges – and opportunities—on the road to a Europe whole, free and at peace.

We are grateful for the bipartisan and very active support of this subcommittee in that effort. I look forward to your questions.

Related Articles:

[Assistant Secretary Nuland's Remarks on Ukraine](#) (04-09-2014)

8. DOD Officials Update Congress on Nuclear Weapons Program (04-09-2014)

By Karen Parrish
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, April 9, 2014 – The United States should press on with cutting nuclear stockpiles under the New START treaty with Russia, even as U.S. and NATO planners must reconsider their options following Russian aggression in the Ukraine, Pentagon experts told Congress yesterday.

Andrew C. Weber, assistant secretary of defense for nuclear, chemical and biological defense programs, testified as part of a panel of witnesses before the House Armed Services Committee's

strategic forces subcommittee on fiscal year 2015 atomic energy defense and nuclear forces. Elaine Bunn, deputy assistant secretary of defense for nuclear and missile defense policy, also testified.

Weber said the 2015 budget request for Defense Department nuclear forces programs would support DOD and Energy Department efforts to modernize and sustain “a safe, secure and effective nuclear weapons stockpile.”

However, “stark budget realities continue to stress our efforts to update an aging stockpile and infrastructure,” he cautioned the subcommittee. During January visits accompanying Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel to nuclear and research laboratories, Weber said, he heard Hagel emphasize while speaking with the nuclear workforce “that we are going to invest in the modernization required to maintain an effective deterrent.”

The department’s most vital modernization efforts include life-extension programs for the W76-1 submarine-launched ballistic missile warhead and the B61-12 gravity bomb, Weber said. The W76 was manufactured from 1978 to 1987, and the B61 reached full production in 1968.

Life-extension programs repair or replace components of nuclear weapons to meet military requirements. According to National Nuclear Security Administration officials, extending the time that a weapon can safely and reliably remain in the stockpile helps to maintain a credible nuclear deterrent without producing new weapons or conducting new underground nuclear tests.

“The B61 life-extension program, which Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey referred to as ‘a bright note’ is currently undergoing development engineering, and prototypes are being assembled for early testing,” Weber said.

“Due to sequestration impacts, the schedule for first production has been revised to the second quarter of 2020,” he said. “This will just” -- with emphasis on “just” -- “meet U.S. Strategic Command and NATO operational requirements.”

The B61-12 program, Weber said, will replace the four current models of the bomb with one, and “enable the retirement of the B83, the last megaton bomb in the stockpile.”

Stable funding for the B61 life-extension program is necessary to keeping the B2 strategic bomber viable and to maintaining U.S. commitments to NATO allies, Weber told subcommittee members.

“The world is safer today from the threat of full-scale nuclear war than it was during the Cold War,” he said. “While the role and numbers of nuclear weapons are being reduced, maintaining a safe, secure and effective nuclear stockpile is critical to deterring potential adversaries and assuring U.S. allies and partners. We ask for your support for the president’s fiscal year 2015 budget request.”

Bunn’s opening remarks yesterday followed Weber’s, and she zeroed in on Russia after telling members she meant to go beyond her prepared statement.

“Russia’s unexpected and dangerous aggression in Ukraine, in violation of international law, compels us to revisit our expectations about future Russian behavior and to reassess a number of U.S. and NATO policies on Russia,” she said.

But two national policies will remain unchanged, she noted: “First, strengthening NATO’s collective defense.”

NATO is seeking “all options” to build collective defense capacity among member nations through expanded defense plans, exercises and deployments, she noted.

Second, Bunn told committee members, “this administration, like its predecessors, has sought a stable, strategic nuclear relationship with Russia -- especially during times of turbulence elsewhere in the relationship.”

“We will continue to implement the New START treaty ratified by the Senate in December 2010, ... because it’s in our national interest,” she said. “The inspections and notifications under the treaty give us a window into Russian strategic forces and limits them for the duration of the treaty.”

Bunn outlined the department’s plan, announced yesterday, for its strategic nuclear force structure under the New START limits. The new limits will take effect by February 2018, and will maintain the U.S. nuclear triad of sea-, land- and air-based nuclear delivery platforms.

“Our 700 deployed strategic forces will look like this: 400 deployed intercontinental ballistic missiles, 240 deployed submarine-launched ballistic missiles, and 60 deployed nuclear-capable heavy bombers,” she said.

The United States also will maintain 100 nondeployed launchers and bombers, Bunn said, including 54 ICBM launchers backed by 50 “warm” ICBM silos -- which she described as “empty, but still functional” -- 40 submarine launch tubes and six bombers.

The structure provides “flexibility, survivability and responsiveness of our nuclear forces,” she said, and ensures “an array of options is available under a broad range of scenarios.”

Bunn noted the plan preserves a “just-in-case upload capability” for each leg of the triad.

Returning to the subject of Russia, the policy chief said Moscow seems as determined as Washington is “to preserve the strategic nuclear stability embodied in the New START treaty.”

Biographies:

[Andrew C. Weber](#)

[Elaine Bunn](#)

Related Sites:

[Fact Sheet on U.S. Strategic Force Structure under New START](#)

[New START Implementation Report](#)

[National Nuclear Security Administration Life Extension Programs](#)

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