

*4.27.16 Air Force Association, Reserve Officers Association and National Defense Industrial Association
Capitol Hill Forum with James Acton, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; and Thomas Karako,
Center for Strategic and International Studies, on
“Missile Defense and Deterrent Issues Facing NATO and Europe”*

MR. PETER HUESSY: Good morning, everybody. My name is Peter Huessy and on behalf of the Air Force Association Mitchell Institute and the Reserve Officers Association and the National Defense Industrial Association, welcome to this next in our series of seminars on “Missile Defense, Nuclear Deterrence, Arms Control and Proliferation.

Thank you to our sponsors, our military guests and our colleagues from a number of our allies here today. Just a few notes, next week we have three events. Our China brief will be on the 4th with Gordon Chang and Rick Fisher and Mr. Bosco from CSIS. Frank Rose is speaking on the 5th, and as he told me yesterday he is going to be talking about the Western Pacific, Korea, China and missile defense in that part of the world, and Japan. He will make some reference to Europe, NATO and the Polish site that is meant to be initialed next week, but his concentration will be on the Pacific. Then on the 6th we have General Wilson, who is coming in from STRATCOM.

The following week Rebeccah Heinrichs and Steve Pifer are going to talk about INF issues. Ilan Berman will speak on the 11th and he is going to update his book in Iran. Instead of just counting the beans about what Iran is doing in the nuke and missile area, he'll try to look at their objectives and goals. Frank Miller will speak on the 13th of May.

Following that we'll have some announcements on space issues. On the 19th Congressman Bridenstine is speaking here. He will go through his new space initiative. On the 23rd NASA Administrator Mr. Bolden will speak. We don't definitely have a venue yet, but that's going to be a Space Foundation event.

On June 10th we have an event here already, but we're going to have one at 10:30 to 11:30 at ROA, and that's going to be with Congressman Schiff from California on space issues. We are hosting on July 15th Uzi Rubin. Later that day we will host a group of European space experts and we will let you know the details soon. It will be on international space cooperation.

Our two speakers today are going to talk about BMD and Europe issues. They are, Jim Acton and Tom Karako. Jim, as you know, is with Carnegie and Tom runs the CSIS program on nukes and missile defense, which he has been putting together. Yesterday, he had an excellent session with General Weinstein and LRSO. That is a good and emerging program.

With that, would you give a warm welcome to our first speaker today, Jim Acton?

(Applause).

MR. JAMES ACTON: Thank you for that warm introduction, Peter. It's always good to be here. Thank you for all the very hard work you do putting this series together every year.

Peter asked us to offer a few thoughts about the role of missile defense in NATO and Russia. There are three issues that I want to highlight this morning. The first is the potential role for missile defense in deterring Russian conventional forces in Europe .

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Second is the potential role of missile defense in dealing with the INF violation. Third is the interlink age between missile defense against Iran and missile defense against Russia.

I guess my basic message this morning is that missile defense does play an important role in European security today, but a holistic approach would recognize the potential for arms control over the long term and so we should develop an approach to missile defense that is consistent with arms control goals that also supports security interests. So dealing firstly with the issue of Russian conventional forces in Europe, I very much subscribe to the analysis that there is a genuine problem here. NATO is conventionally stronger than Russia in Europe as a whole, but NATO is conventionally weaker around the Baltics. That creates the risk, to my mind, of -- let me put it this way, I would not exclude the possibility of a Russian fait accompli if you like, but was then backed up by Russian nuclear threats to try to deter NATO counter intervention to get back the Baltics.

The basic approach the administration has taken to this problem, which I think is the right approach, has been to bolster conventional forces in Europe, albeit on a rotational basis so far. Preventing the possibility of a Russian fait accompli in the first place, I think is both more effective and more desirable from any number of perspectives than a nuclear response. But any, I think, plausible conventional strategy in Europe is going to rely on the ability to deploy forces to Europe relatively quickly in the event of a crisis, in spite of additional presence in Central and Eastern Europe. And that, I think, creates a genuine need to protect key transport nodes and deployed equipment in Europe from Russian missiles.

From that perspective, I think point missile defenses that are optimized to defend relatively small targets, play a very important role in deterring Russia. Obviously one can't rapidly deploy troops to Europe if the key transport nodes you use, if the pre-positioned equipment that's there, has been destroyed. So point missile defenses, I think, play a very important role in that context.

And I think such deployments should not just take place by themselves, though. They should be accompanied by offers of arms control. Now I'm not naïve about this. The Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty is effectively dead. It's not going to be revived anytime soon.

But as a matter of policy, I think conventional arms control in Europe is manifestly a win-win thing if it's done well. If Russia feels conventionally inferior in Europe as a whole, and we feel conventionally inferior around the Baltics, there is a clear long-term mutually beneficial accord to be had. And so I think we should be willing to identify which missile defenses we would be willing to take back under a future arms control arrangement -- subject to Russia taking steps to visibly and verifiably bolster the security of Eastern European members of NATO -- and which of those missile defenses would have to remain there forever.

The second issue I want to flag up is the potential role of missile defense and arms control in dealing with Russia's INF violation. This is a point I've made here before and many of you will have heard it before, but I think it is a valid use for missile defense.

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I think there is a kind of combined diplomatic missile defense strategy for dealing with Russia's INF violation.

The first thing is right now Russia is getting diplomatically off scot-free because there's no pressure on Russia because we haven't been able to release any information about the INF violation. I understand there are sources and methods concerns about releasing such information, but I think the first step is really to start to put diplomatic pressure on Russia.

Secondly, as many of you are aware, Russia has complained about the deployments of Aegis Ashore in Europe on the grounds that when these launchers are on naval vessels they do have the capability to launch cruise missiles, and so when deployed on land, they could potentially be considered cruise missile launchers under the INF Treaty. Now to my mind, this is not a ridiculous objection. The Pentagon has said it's wrong because the systems deployed on land won't have the capability to launch cruise missiles, but it's not prima facie a ridiculous objection, unlike Russia's other counteraccusations over INF.

I think there is a mutually beneficial arms control offer to be made here once again. If Russia is willing to provide NATO with access to the offending missile, and to verifiably demonstrate that it doesn't have the capability to violate INF limits or has been modified in a way that prevents it violating such limits, then NATO should be prepared in return to offer Russia access to the missile defense deployments in Europe to verify that they are incapable of launching cruise missiles.

It would be great if Russia took up this offer. I don't expect it to, but it would be great if it took up this offer. I think if Russia said no, it would pave the way for a more muscular response, and I think here some form of improved cruise missile defense in Europe would be a reasonable and proportionate way of responding to Russia's INF violation.

As some of you know, I previously advocated for the deployment on a test basis of JLENS to Europe. I think apparently the blimp heard me and decided it wanted to get as far away from Europe as it possibly could.

(Laughter).

So I'm not necessarily advocating that as the right system anymore, but as a matter of principle we should be willing to do more cruise missile defense in Europe.

The final issue that I want to address is the Aegis Ashore deployments and the current and future Standard Missile 3 deployments in Europe. The Iran deal, which I very much consider myself a firm supporter of, did not address Iran's ballistic missile program, which continues. I think that is a valid and legitimate reason to continue with the first three phases of the EPAA in Europe.

This system is not capable of intercepting Russian nuclear-armed missiles, as the administration has said repeatedly. But I think it is very much in NATO's interest to try to make the credible case that these interceptors are about Iran and they're not about

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Russia. Ultimately I think getting into an offense-defense race with Russia over nuclear missiles is not one we want to get into, because offense is always likely to have the advantage in this space.

Of course, at the moment I'm certainly not advocating not pursuing the EPAA since Iran's missile program continues. But as a matter of policy I think what the Obama administration should do is simply go back to what the Bush administration policy was. The Bush administration policy about missile defense in Europe was actually very clear. If the threat from Iran goes away the U.S. will respond with missile defense deployments in Europe appropriately. In the Bush administration there was always a clear declaratory policy link between the deployments in Europe and the Iranian missile threat.

The Obama administration, I think, has not been able to elucidate a clear policy line on this. There have been some Obama administration statements that suggest that the two are linked -- the EPAA deployments in Europe and the threat -- and there has been some Obama administration statements that there's no link between the two and that under any circumstances the U.S. will pursue all phases of the EPAA.

I think everyone in here is aware of the reasons it's not completely impossible that domestic politics may be playing some minor role in the difference of the positions between those two administrations. As a matter of policy, I don't necessarily expect the Iranian missile program to go anywhere. But as a matter of policy, I think we should be prepared, if it does, to respond by halting or scaling back the EPAA as appropriate. I think that the Obama administration and future administrations should be prepared to say so.

That was kind of a quick tour of some of the missile defense issues that face Europe at the moment and my take on them. I guess my bottom line is that robust missile defense scaled to the threats and arms control approaches are not in any way inconsistent and can in fact be mutually complementary. I very much look forward to hearing Tom's remarks and maybe having a discussion with him and everyone else later, but for the time being thank you for your attention.

(Applause).

MR. THOMAS KARAKO: Good morning. Thanks to Peter and to all the sponsors. After James' ringing endorsement of Bush administration missile defense, I'm going to say some nice things about the Obama administration. Our topic is NATO and missile defense and extended deterrence. As the 2010 BMDR observed, regional missile defenses make an important contribution to regional deterrence. So I'm going to focus on what I'll suggest is a more robust NATO and European air and missile defense as a contributor to deterrence.

Although I think you're going to hear a lot of agreement between James and me on this topic, more broadly there is a significant unwillingness to broach this topic in the way we're talking about today. My thesis is that our relatively modest proposals do not actually represent that big of a change -- would not represent a major change in policy. So in part what I'm going to try to do is remind us and tease out some of what U.S. and NATO policy on missile defense has been, and has not been, along the way.

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Of course missile defense all along has always been virtually inseparable from larger issues of deterrence and our deterrence relationship with Russia. For years, across multiple administrations, the United States has said that missile defense is not about undermining our strategic deterrence relationship with Russia. The nuclear forces of the United States, strategic and non-strategic, provide the primary means for deterrence, backed up other things. That basic relationship, I believe, should not change.

But this summer NATO will have its Warsaw Summit and, among other things, will talk about how other activities might change. My suggestion is that it's time to have a conversation about non-strategic missile defense that squarely takes account and admits that we have a problem. We have a Russia problem, meaning Russia's activities of the past few years. And so as not to bury the lede, I'll just say I mean non-strategic integrated air and missile defense for NATO against aircraft and cruise missiles, and some limited but significant defenses against short-range ballistic missile threats.

This kind of modification is not a radical change from where we've been over the past two administrations, but is rather an adaptation of current principles to changed circumstances. As I like to point out, the first “A” in PAA stands for adaptive. So over the next few years the next administration is going to have to look at several new documents, revising documents: the BMDR being one of them; a new charter for the Missile Defense Agency, directive 5134.09, its charter; possibly a new NATO Strategic Concept; and perhaps if not that, a DDPR update.

I'll suggest that air and missile defense, oriented towards the east, ought to be a key topic for each of those three reviews. We've seen leaders from the Baltics -- the president of Poland, for instance, recently talking about air and missile defense in a much more explicit way in light of threats from that direction. Let me suggest that if you go back and really look again at the policy statements that have been carefully wrought and carefully stewarded over the years, I think you'll see some potentialities that perhaps can be actualized in both U.S. and NATO policy in light of these changed circumstances.

Take, for instance, the BMDR and its prioritization of policy goals. I probably don't expect perhaps that much of a difference in a future BMDR in terms of these actual goals. The first and second goals, for instance, are above all to defend the United States homeland, and second to defend regional threats to U.S. forces, whatever their source, and protecting allies and partners and enabling them to defend themselves.

So a future 2017 BMDR is going to look at the resurgence of precision guided cruise missiles that seem to be making a kind of comeback, or at least resurgence. It's going to be looking -- or ought to be looking at the resurgence of Russia, but also the Ukraine occupation and the INF violations that James talked about. Whether we like it or not, geopolitical and strategic competition is back, and I think it would be wrong not to take account of that squarely and upfront.

But we would be remiss not to acknowledge that we are slow and very reluctant to do this. You take a look at the first reference to Russia in the Strategic Concept, it's in the context of missile defense, and it's pushing them apart, saying these things are not

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connected. Really? Really, they're not connected? Likewise in DDPR.

We have an unwillingness to put Russia and missile defense in the same sentence. Of course the DDPR in particular in 2012 reaffirmed and saw no role for ballistic missile defense vis-à-vis Russia. That may have seemed good in 2012 when, after all, it had been at least four years since Russia had invaded one of its neighbors.

We've also spent a great deal of time trying to persuade Russia that, as James mentioned, the EPAA and Aegis Ashore are not about Russia's strategic deterrent. They are not. Everybody really knows that but it doesn't stop them from complaining about it or us expending a great deal of energy denying it.

But the United States has never said we won't defend NATO against any threats. Again, that second priority of the BMDR is to defend against limited threats from whatever source. The NATO Strategic Concept, furthermore, talks about missile defense as a core alliance mission. It doesn't specify Iran, but neither does it say that it's only about Iran, or that it's not about anyone else.

Russia's INF non-compliance, the latest in a long string of treaty violations on the part of Russia, is not merely about ground-launched cruise missiles. If you're the Poles, if you're the Baltics, you may not care all that much whether the threat incoming is from the sea or from the air or from land. My inclination on this is not to use missile defense as a bargaining chip, but if we believe that there is a real threat and that missile defense can contribute to deterring that threat, then while we would very much like to get Russia back into compliance, I would be very slow to trade it away on that basis. I think James' endorsement of cruise missile defense on that basis I would agree with.

There are also reports of Russian planned or deployed Iskanders in Kaliningrad. They have a legal right to do so, but likewise so do its neighbors have a right to respond. I think it's especially important in a future BMDR and a future NATO review -- although ballistic missile defense had pride of place -- to look anew at cruise missiles in particular.

NORTHCOM Commander Gortney, for instance, has underscored Russia's Kaliber tests into Syria as, above all, a demonstration to us that they can do this, that they have this. Admiral Winnefeld this past year actually went so far as to say in the homeland cruise missile defense, in his mind, is taking and ought to take precedence above regional ballistic missile defense. That, for any future administration, I think, is going to get a lot more attention.

Let me just go back to a couple of these other policy documents and remind us why this would not be that big of a policy change. The 1999 National Missile Defense Act, "It's the policy of the United States to defend against limited ballistic missile attacks, whether accidental, unauthorized or deliberate." It doesn't talk about a source. In fact, at the time, it presupposed a rogue Russian problem.

Two quotes that I'm very fond of is, first, from Condi Rice saying that the GMD system is not Star Wars, "it's not the son of Star Wars," in fact, she said, "it's not the grandson of Star Wars." It is very much a limited thing. Likewise, Undersecretary of State Rose Gottemoeller, quote, "Our limited number of defensive systems," talking

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about GMD, “cannot even come close to upsetting the strategic balance.” So when I talk about the limited character -- just to emphasize again -- I’m not talking about changing that.

The broad European interest in missile defense, not merely for Aegis Ashore and EPAA, I think is reflected by the French, the German, the Italian, and now the Polish interest in buying PATRIOT. Let me pull out a couple of other things from the BMDR: that the United States would continue to reject any negotiated restraints on missile defense; that we would continue to engage with Russia’s neighbors as fully independent and sovereign states; that we would be hedging against potential changes in the threat given the uncertainty associated with missile capabilities; that we would defend U.S. deployed forces from regional missile threats, and protect our allies and partners and enable them to defend themselves. And if the threat grows quantitatively, PAA would be able to grow as well.

And it said, interestingly enough, and I’m not really pushing on this for this talk because I’m talking about NATO, but the BMDR, I think people forget, actually emphasized that GMD homeland missile defense could be used against Russia, that it would be employed to defend the United States against limited missile launches from any source.

It then goes on to say that of course it does not have anything near the capacity to deal with large scale attacks, but there is nothing in policy that says that we’ll be looking to see whether the missile has Russian characters on the side before we intercept or do not intercept.

Then finally, there is the NATO Strategic Concept, which clearly prioritizes ballistic missile defense but also talks about missile defense, as a core NATO mission. The appearance or more recent demonstrations of new PGMs, cruise missiles and other threats, perhaps not predicted in 2010, may very well be here now. The DDPR of 2012 is in some ways a bit more problematic, on the one hand reaffirming that missile defense is an integral part of the alliance’s defense posture, at the same time saying that NATO missile defense is not oriented against Russia.

It then goes on to say, nor does it have the capability to undermine Russia’s strategic deterrent. The latter part is very consistent. It’s this phrase oriented towards or aimed at, right? Those are the tricky ones, and that I think are perhaps a little bit more looser formulations. It may very well make sense to orient limited short-range cruise and ballistic missile defenses against Russian threats, air and missile threats.

That, I think is really the change. Are we willing to talk about reorienting air and missile defense --, at least to ourselves admit that -- and then go about doing something about it? Just to repeat, what I’m talking about is in a way lower tier than what we’ve been doing already in terms of SM 3s.

So maybe this means a lot of PATRIOTS, OR things lower tier than PATRIOT. Maybe this is JLENS-type things, as James mentioned. Or maybe this is THAAD, or maybe this is UAV-based. Maybe this is some mix of European-devised air defenses.

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There's likely to be a big mix of solutions for this. But I think that this ought not to be as big of a policy obstacle as I think it is perceived to be. Nor do I believe it would be destabilizing -- that favorite euphemism of opponents of all things air and missile defense. As Undersecretary Gottemoeller pointed out in 2014, Russia has its own radars. Russia has its own air and missile defenses, and they're not shy about saying that it's about NATO or the United States. Russia and China constantly issue the same press release, that they're opposed to THAAD or to Standard Missiles in South Korea, in Japan, in Poland. I mean, it's just a constant refrain of any little defense is destabilizing. Yet we don't seem to have the same problem about their air and missile defenses, whether it's in Russia or Belarus. Perhaps the United States ought to be getting a little bit more deeply into the A2AD game for ourselves.

At the bottom I think this is a kind of syllogism. Missile defense for NATO is for regional missile threats and not about negating Russia's strategic deterrent. But, Russia has become a regional threat and Russia is using ballistic and cruise missiles to threaten and to intimidate its neighbors. So it is time to take that into account, first to ourselves and then publicly, avow a non-strategic limited but more comprehensive approach to missile threats from the East.

Thank you,

(Applause).

MR. HUESSY: Because my speakers have been so efficient with their time, I'm going to have Jim talk for another three minutes, kind of go over some of the things that Tom said, and then Tom gets the last word for a couple of minutes. At quarter of, we'll go to Q&A.

MR. ACTON: Thanks, Peter. I thought it would be helpful to identify where I think Tom and I disagree and where I think we disagree as a way of kind of facilitating debate.

(Laughter).

I have to say this is a slightly cheap shot, but I'll take it anyway. Everyone always forgets -- if I remember correctly, this could be embarrassing if I mis-remember -- the 1999 Missile Defense Act actually contained two clauses to it. There's the missile defense part, but there's also the other part that commits the United States to a policy of reductions. I think when we read the Missile Defense Act we ought to be reading it holistically.

In terms of where I think Tom and I agree, I am actually quite as bullish about short-range air and missile defense in Europe as Tom is. I think that for protecting military installations in Eastern and Central Europe against Russian ballistic and cruise missiles, those kinds of point defenses, are an infinitely preferable way forward compared to trying to lean more heavily on nuclear weapons to deter Russia aggression. I very much agree with him on that.

I'd highlight two areas where I think we disagree, one where I'm certain we

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disagree and one where we may disagree. The area in which we disagree is about being willing to withdraw long-range cruise missile defenses from Europe, not the point defenses, if Russia comes back into compliance with INF. I think just as nuclear weapons can be tools for assurance, arms control is also a very important tool for assurance of European states.

There are many European states that place a very high value on arms control treaties. For that matter, I think the U.S. should also value the INF Treaty very highly. But assurance is both something that can be provided by nukes, and it's also something that can be provided by arms control. I think over the long run bringing Russia back into compliance with INF is very, very important for assurance, as well as for European security.

If we're going to go down this route of cruise missile defense in Europe as a response to INF, Russia has no incentive to come back into compliance with the treaty unless we're willing to stop doing what we did to try and make them come back into compliance with the treaty. So if the goal is actually to bring Russia back into compliance with the INF Treaty, and I believe that should be the U.S. policy goal, then I would say that we should be willing to remove, in principle, long-range cruise missile defenses if Russia comes back into compliance.

Thirdly, and this is where I think we disagree but I'm not certain, my sense is -- I don't want to put words in Tom's mouth here -- but my sense is that Tom thinks that the Russian objections to missile defense, the Aegis Ashore SM-3s, are fundamentally manufactured. Russia knows they're not a threat to Russia, but it just keeps on bleating on about them anyway. I think Russian -- I'm not going to say every Russian analyst and official is on the same page about this -- but I actually think there is honest and genuine concern in Russia about missile defenses. There's a belief, amongst the informed Russian experts, not that the SM-3 IIA per se poses a threat, but that over the long run it is a stepping stone to a broader more robust defense that is designed to target Russia's strategic forces.

That is, I believe, A) it's a fear that's genuine, and B) it's a fear that's not in our interest for the Russians to have. I would argue that especially after New START expires the idea that we might be in a new arms race with Russia is not impossible. I mean, with Russia's new heavy ICBM, it could have the capability to build up nuclear forces pretty quickly when New START expires. And I'd simply say here, as an aside, imagine how scary Russia's modernization would look right now if New START was not in place. But when New START expires, the idea that we could be in a new arms race with Russia that's driven to some extent by offense-defense concerns, I have as a genuine concern.

So as a matter of policy, I think we should be making genuine efforts to try to ease Russia's concerns about strategic missile defenses. Do I think we will succeed? Not necessarily, it's very hard to do. But as a matter of policy, I think we should try to while using short-range air and missile defense to protect key military assets in Europe -- I think is in no way inconsistent with renewed, and I would argue we need reinvigorated efforts -- to convince Russia that strategic missile defenses don't pose a threat to Russia.

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MR. KARAKO: Great. So, the 1999 Missile Defense Act: yes, it talks about reductions. That's fantastic. It also has some provisions in there about how it would be financed. That was the context for it, too. I'm not objecting to any of that, but if I'm not mistaken it is Russia that has walked away from discussion of reductions of non-strategic nuclear weapons. I'd be happy to talk about that.

The second point, which I think is the biggest one, is the question of, whether we would withdraw cruise missile defenses that don't really exist yet from Europe if Russia was to come back into compliance? On that point I would say while I profoundly agree that INF noncompliance is a big deal, and while I agree that we have a big interest in getting Russia back, and I think I would entertain a lot of ideas about what we might be willing to do for that in a way we can be too INF-centric. I think it's possible to have a little too much tunnel vision on this particular arms control point.

The INF violation is part of a larger pattern and it's part of a larger problem. This is why I emphasized that even if they were to actually get rid of every GLCM, if you're Russia, if you're the Baltics, you may not care whether it is a SLCM or an ALCM or a GLCM, whether it's launched from air and sea or whether on land. The former is INF compliant, the latter is not.

And so really the problem that you're trying to solve is the Russia problem and their intent and provocations. Russia is making provocations, not really overt provocations, not with GLCMs, but rather Russia is making provocations with air intrusions. Russia is making provocations with INF-compliant missiles when it threatens to deploy things in Kaliningrad.

So I'm also a little bit surprised, as I mentioned before, about pre-emptively offering to pull something out that we don't really have yet. And again, I think this would actually be a decision for the several nations themselves. If Poland or the Baltics decide that they want to have a cruise missile defense, I don't think we should be in the business of telling them they shouldn't or offering up Poland's vulnerability to cruise missiles in exchange for Russian statements that they will come back into compliance. So if you want to solve the INF problem, first you have to decide whether you've gotten at the larger Russian problem and the larger missile problem, INF-compliant or not.

On the third point which James raised about Aegis Ashore, I think I agree with that. I'm not saying that Russia's objections to Aegis Ashore do not have some basis in the fact that a Mk-41 launcher can launch various things, of course. There may very well be measures that we could take to assuage that concern. I don't think that anybody really doubts that Russian paranoia is a real thing. So I don't think I disagree with that.

But then I would raise the point again, what would it take to truly assuage that paranoia? What would it take to really satisfy Russia? I mean, they don't even like PATRIOT, okay? The root thing there that cannot be satisfied with any sort of technical declaration about a Mk-41 launcher is that this is their perceived backyard and we're in it. I'm not sure that I would be comfortable ceding half of NATO, giving Russia what it would really take, for that paranoia to be satiated.

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(Applause).

MR. HUESSY: Why don't you both come up here for questions?

MR. IAN BRZEZINSKI: This is a question concerning NATO's emergent force posture in Central Europe. At Warsaw the alliance is likely to make decisions that will lead to probably battalion-level elements being placed in each of the Baltic states, and brigade-level elements in Poland. How does that change the requirement for air and missile defense? Are these forward-based units going to need that kind of coverage?

Second, it's easy to call for an air and missile defense capabilities, but how do you pay for them, because they're very expensive? How do you see the burden of air and missile defense being distributed across the alliance? Are we going to be expecting Estonia to buy Patriot systems, or are they relying on the Germans, the United States and others to carry that weight?

MR. KARAKO: I think the first part of your question about -- look, if you put conventional forces over there should you defend them? I think the point about having especially point defenses for your coming in and your debarkation points makes a lot of sense. I guess you first have to decide, are you willing to direct your policy in that direction and is it something that's important?

If you really think that this will contribute to having those forces over there in the first place is important to deterrence, and if having some kind of defenses for them in order to credibly have a plan to get them where you might want them, then I think that makes a lot of sense. That may not be quite so onerous as we might suppose in terms of the number of places. But in terms of the last point about costs, I think you have to decide whether this is -- you know, what is the price of deterring aggression on NATO? I don't know.

In terms of bulk buys and in terms of creative sharing arrangements, I think those could make a lot of sense. One path forward is for every eastern NATO nation to do this purely unilaterally. That is a more pricey option.

I think one thing that has been mentioned is a combined Baltics air defense or Baltics/Poland kind of sharing. But probably if you're going to have U.S. forces there and you're going to have U.S. systems in the near-term, that's probably going to also fall to the United States. So I guess if we're going to have a reassurance package for NATO, some of that is going to come our way too. But there's also a shortage of how many PATRIOT battalions we have now.

MR. ACTON: I've got very little to add to Tom's response. I think for me it's clear, as I've said actually a couple of times this morning, that there's no point deploying troops and having the potential to deploy more if the assets you need are not protected. From that perspective, point air and missile defenses I think play a valuable role. As always with defense cooperation, the more countries cooperate the cheaper it becomes. Whether you can overcome the political barriers to cooperation is the real challenge there. But I very much agree with almost all of what Tom said.

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MR. GREG THIELMANN: Greg Thielmann, Arms Control Association. Both of our speakers agree on the need for more robust defense against the ballistic missile threat in Europe. What I'm confused about, and have been ever since the Lisbon Declaration was made, the Lisbon Summit Declaration, what is the U.S. message to the people of Europe? What is NATO's message to its own population about defending Europe against all nuclear attacks? It seems like the Lisbon Declaration calls for the territorial defense of Europe. So are we actually implying that we can defend Lisbon and Barcelona and London against Russian nuclear ballistic missile attack?

MR. ACTON: I think underlying your question is the reality that, as with all summit declarations, it was kind of a political hash-up that was -- you know, one sacrifices coherency in many of these kinds of declarations for consensus. The idea is a nice thing to say, but you're right, the reality is, especially if Russia decided to nuke Europe, there's not a great deal we could do about it. This brings me actually -- I'm slightly piggybacking here, but this is where I think the INF Treaty is so important.

Tom is absolutely right that you may not care if you're in Eastern Europe whether you're attacked by a sea-launched cruise missile or a ground-launched cruise missile. You probably do care, though, if there are medium-range and intermediate-range nuclear and conventional ballistic missiles being installed in Europe. The INF Treaty is not just about cruise missiles, it's about cruise missiles and ballistic missiles, nuclear and conventional, all land-based.

And so part of the reason why I place such a high value on the INF Treaty and would be willing to withdraw missile defenses that I've put in place -- if I actually could do this -- to try and bring Russia back into compliance, is precisely because it is a way of defending Europe against a particular class of nuclear threats. I think Russia may very well choose to go down that line if the treaty collapsed, which is to put in medium- and intermediate-range ballistic missiles. And I'd also point out that the idea of offering to withdraw something you haven't yet deployed was exactly how we got the INF Treaty in the first place. So it's not an entirely unprecedented approach for dealing with that threat.

MR. HUESSY: But we did deploy those missiles.

MR. ACTON: Right, and I am saying that if Russia doesn't come back into compliance with the INF Treaty, I would absolutely support long-range cruise missile defenses for Europe, under the condition that if Russia comes back into compliance with the treaty then I would remove them. I mean, it's straight out of the Reagan playbook.

MR. HUESSY: I think 50 percent out.

MR. KARAKO: I think, again going back to Greg's question first about the declaration, missile defense is still young and missile defense for NATO is still very young. I'm not surprised in the least that a policy statement put down in 2010 has still pretty thin capabilities that have been actualized. That doesn't surprise me in the least. I think the question is, where to go from here?

The short answer to your question is no, of course, if Russia really and truly

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wants to attack Lisbon, they can find a way to do it. Of course they can. I think James has raised a very interesting point. Of course we did have INF deployments. before we didn't, in Europe. I didn't endorse that specific deployment, but I do think that perhaps the interesting swap to consider here, and the interesting bargaining chip to consider here, is not getting ahead of ourselves to trade away cruise missile defenses we don't yet have, but I wonder if it's not a little bit more of an apples-to-apples things.

Going back to your point about nuclear reductions and about offensive strike, I think whether it's ground-based or whether it's something else -- you alluded to CFE -- I suspect that precisely because the Russians are truly concerned about those launchers for what non-missile defense things can go into them, that perhaps we should be considering a move to some kind of greater strike capabilities, whether it's on land or sea or air, more than we have now. There's ways, in other words, to counter the INF problem other than missile defense and other than with INF violators. And frankly that might be of more interest. I don't know, but I think it's conceivable, at least, that having a firmer hand on that might be better to trade away later than missile defenses strictly for INF. But I think that's an interesting point.

MR. HUESSY: Rachel?

MS. RACHEL OSWALD: Rachel Oswald of Congressional Quarterly. This question is for James, because I've already asked it of Tom. It's a two-parter.

In talking to and interviewing Russian experts about what their actions will be when the Romanian site and then the Poland site are activated, I've heard we will withdraw from INF, we will not negotiate a New START Treaty, and of course the old threat, we'll deploy forces in Kaliningrad. First of all, do you think those threats are serious, looking at each of those? I mean, I think the Kaliningrad thing is more likely than the other two. But do you believe that that is just Russian hot air to scare America? And then the second part of the question is, if the Russians, if Putin's proxies are saying we will pull out of INF and not negotiate a New START successor, are the Aegis Ashore sites in Romania and Poland worth it, overall, to NATO's security?

MR. ACTON: Could you just say the last part of the question again?

MS. OSWALD If indeed Russia is being truthful in warning that it will pull out of the INF completely and not negotiate a New START follow-on, are the missile defense sites in Romania and Poland still worth it?

MR. ACTON: Okay, the first thing to say is I don't believe that Vladimir Putin knows what Vladimir Putin will do over the INF deployments in Europe. I mean, one can hear a lot of theories from Russians about what they would do, but I would firstly question whether Russia yet knows itself what it's going to do. In terms of the options, there has certainly been a debate in Russia about INF withdrawal. I think for the time being Russia has decided it will formally remain bound by the treaty. But, there are clearly elements of the Russian state that want to withdraw from the treaty.

I don't think that was fundamentally motivated by the EPAA in Europe. I think that was fundamentally motivated by a whole load of other factors. I think the EPAA in

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Europe is a convenient excuse, not the real reason why Russia is doing its INF violation.

I mean, indeed, the timing doesn't work. It appears that this missile has been under development from before the EPAA was announced. So I think Russia may or may not withdraw from the INF Treaty in the future. I don't think it will be because of the EPAA, but the EPAA could be an excuse.

I don't know where we're going to go. I'm deeply skeptical about -- I'm very, very worried about what's going to happen with arms control after New START. I mean, again, I think not having a strategic arms control treaty in place between the U.S. and Russia would be a very bad thing. Russia, I suspect might become a bit more pliable, when New START expires, because Russia has historically not wanted an unregulated relationship. But whether Russian demands will become more reasonable, whether we can get a replacement to New START, whether it could get through the Senate here, I have no idea. Again, I think missile defense will be one factor in that, but there's going to be a lot of other factors that go into the New START decision. I'm not sure I have anything particularly intelligent to say about whether Russia will respond by putting nuclear weapons in Kaliningrad. I mean, I wouldn't exclude it as a possibility. I wouldn't automatically assume it's going to happen. I just don't know.

In answer to the second part of the question, and this kind of also responds to something Tom said, having expressed a desire to try and satisfy Russia on issues of missile defense and to convince Russia that strategic missile defenses are not designed and can't undermine Russia's deterrent, doesn't mean that I would do anything to do that. Right? It would be very easy to satisfy Russia just by ceasing all money for missile defense tomorrow. That would be a really bad tradeoff and not one that I support.

So again, I wouldn't trade away the Romania and Poland sites merely to ease Russian concerns. But that said, I would be more forward leaning on many of these issues. Part of the irony is the Bush administration made some quite proactive proposals for dealing with the Russians, including allowing Russia to monitor U.S. missile defense tests with Russian equipment so it could measure the burnout velocity of U.S. interceptors. Now again, maybe domestic politics plays a reason in why similar offers can't be made to Russia today. But to say that I want to ease Russian concerns doesn't mean that I would do anything to ease those concerns. Sorry, that was kind of a lengthier answer than I intended.

MR. PETER SHARPE: Peter Sharpe with Mitre. A couple of observations, first in terms of easing Russian concerns, having a NATO summit in Warsaw has a bigger impact on the Russian psyche than all of our military tweaking and deployments. It is the right thing to do. Given that that is what we are doing, easing Russian concerns and making Putin relax and say I have nothing to worry about after all, is simply not (going to happen ?).

Secondly, the way to negotiate coming back into compliance with the INF Treaty is to tell the Russians we would like them to come back into compliance and let them say what they want us to do in exchange and then negotiate from there. We should not be pre-emptively offering something and advising them to say, how would you like to raise

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your price and no I'm still not sure I want to make a deal.

The third observation is that through the history of the Cold War the major determinant of the course of history was NATO sticking together. The major Soviet objective, which they failed to achieve, was to divide NATO in such a way that Article V became a dead letter. I believe that is Putin's objective today. Declaratory policy should be driven by the objective of holding NATO together rather than by the objective of having something that is intellectually coherent.

MR. KARAKO: Can I just respond real quick? Russia hasn't yet even admitted it's in violation of INF so I'm not sure how we're going to ask them to tell us what it would take for them to come back into compliance.

MR. SHARPE: We should tell them what they need to do to come back into compliance. And if they say, we were in compliance, we say good, we'd like to clarify that.

MR. HUESSY: That was an extraordinary exchange between you two and very helpful. I'm going to have a hard time reading it and trying to get it all clear in my mind, but we'll have the transcript for you within a couple of days. Would you give a great round of applause to our two guests?

(Applause).