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Statement for the Record
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NOTIONAL “The State of Arms Control with Russia”
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Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Menendez, and distinguished members of the Committee: thank you for hosting this hearing and welcoming me here today. The subject of this hearing—the state of arms control with Russia—is of critical importance to U.S. and allied national security, and a timely issue to discuss with the Committee today.

The 2018 Nuclear Posture Review states, “progress in arms control is not an end in and of itself, and depends on the security environment and the participation of willing partners.” The value of any agreement is derived from our treaty partners maintaining compliance with their obligations, and avoiding actions that result in mistrust and the potential for miscalculation. Russia continues to violate a series of arms control obligations that undermine the trust the United States can place in treaties, including some that have served U.S. and allied security interests for years.

We seek to utilize a strong military deterrent in combination with arms control to maintain strategic stability with Russia. Arms control measures have benefited the United States by providing mutual transparency and predictability, constraining certain weapons of immense destructive potential in the Russian arsenal, and enhancing strategic stability. The Department of Defense concluded in the National Defense Strategy, and as reflected in the Trump Administration’s National Security Strategy, that great power competition is reemerging. We need to be creative and flexible in how we approach and manage our strategic competition with Russia, and that includes an evaluation of where we stand with respect to our arms control agreements, and their interrelationship with our deterrence and defense requirements.

As you know, Russia has taken actions over the past few years that have posed real challenges to our bilateral relationship and widened the deficit of trust we have with Russia. Russia has used chemical weapons in the United Kingdom and tacitly approved of the Assad regime’s abhorrent use of chemical weapons against its own people—even while protecting that regime from accountability for these atrocities. It has also violated its obligations under the INF Treaty and undertaken aggressive actions in outer space while proposing agreements to constrain others. Russia’s response to each of these situations is to employ its standard playbook of distraction, misinformation, and counter-accusations. It has sought to blame the United Kingdom and other European countries for the Salisbury incident and supported Syrian claims alternatively blaming “terrorists,” Turkey, and the United States for Assad’s years of chemical weapons use. Similarly, Russia has falsely accused the United States of not complying with the INF Treaty in order to distract from its own INF violation. The Trump Administration has challenged Russia’s systematic misconduct a number of ways. However, it remains in our interest to maintain strategic stability with Russia, and continue arms control agreements that meet U.S. and allied national interests.

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I will briefly touch on a few key issues in our arms control relationship with Russia, and will close with a few remarks regarding the Department's implementation of Section 231 of the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act of 2017.

Strategic Arms Control: New START and INF Treaty

I will start with the New START Treaty. The United States will continue to implement the New START Treaty and verify Russian compliance. We benefit from the Treaty's 18 annual on-site inspections of strategic nuclear warheads and delivery systems, bases, and infrastructure; the comprehensive biannual data exchanges which record the disposition and numbers of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), and heavy bombers; and, the almost 16,000 notifications we have exchanged over the life of the Treaty which give us a good idea of where these nuclear weapons are at a given moment in time. The types of weapons that are accountable and limited under New START make up the gross majority of Russia's current and foreseeable strategic nuclear arsenal.

We are committed to implementing the Treaty and ensuring Russia stays in compliance. In February of this year, both countries confirmed compliance with the Treaty's central limits on ICBMs, SLBMs, and heavy bombers and their associated warheads. I know this Committee has sought the Trump Administration's view of extending the Treaty. A decision has not been made at this time. Among issues to consider will be Russia's decision to manufacture compliance issues regarding U.S. weapons, and the uncertainty of whether or not Russia's recently announced strategic nuclear weapons will be held accountable under the Treaty. Any decision on New START will take into context Russia's stance on these issues, its behavior in other arms control agreements, and the security needs of the United States and its allies. And it goes without saying: Russia's continued compliance with New START is a requirement for any potential extension of the Treaty.

Meanwhile, Russia has persisted in its violation of the INF Treaty through Russia's SSC-8 ground-launched cruise missile program. The Trump Administration has utilized diplomatic, military, and economic measures to pressure Russia to return to compliance. On the diplomatic front, the Administration has sought dialogue with Russia, both at the expert level in the Special Verification Commission, the implementation body for the Treaty, and in bilateral formats, as well as raising the issue at the political level. We have worked closely with our allies and partners in Europe and in Asia to raise the profile of Russia's violation and continued non-compliance. In the area of military responses, the Department of Defense continues to pursue Treaty-compliant research and development on a ground-based missile system that, if completed, would be noncompliant with INF. This system is designed to be a direct counter to Russia, and the United States has made it clear that we will cease pursuing its development if Russia returns to compliance with the Treaty. On the economic line of effort, the Administration added two entities involved in the SSC-8's development and production, Novator Design Bureau and Titan Central Design Bureau, to the Department of Commerce Entity List in December 2017. This action imposes a license requirement for the export, re-export, or transfer of any items subject to the Export Administration Regulations (EAR) to these entities. Any such license applications will be reviewed with a policy of presumption of denial. This prior review will enhance the U.S.

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ability to prevent the use of items subject to the EAR contrary to U.S. national security or foreign policy interests.

The lack of any meaningful steps by Russia to return to compliance diminishes our hope that Russia has any interest in preserving the INF Treaty, despite Moscow's public statements to the contrary. Russia has not acknowledged its violation, although last year it acknowledged for the first time that the missile system in question exists. Russia has not attempted to negotiate in good faith and has done nothing to satisfy our concerns or those of our allies. This complete lack of willingness to engage in a meaningful manner leads us to conclude that Russia has no interest in returning to compliance, which presents a new threat to the security of our allies in Europe and Asia. The fact that the United States complies with the treaty and Russia does not is untenable.

Chemical Weapons Convention: Syria and Russia

Regarding chemical weapons issues, Russia's destabilizing behavior is also evident. Russia has stood in the way of every effort the United States, our allies, and our partners have taken to compel the Assad regime to stop using chemical weapons. Russia's actions are a betrayal of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and UN Security Council Resolution 2118, as well as its commitments to the United States as a framework guarantor.

Russia continues these obstructionist actions with current efforts to delegitimize the June 26, 2018 Decision of the Fourth Special Conference of the States Parties. Eighty-two responsible States voted to provide the OPCW Technical Secretariat with additional tools to respond to chemical weapons use, including the means to identify the perpetrators of chemical weapons attacks in Syria.

Russia, too, is a perpetrator of chemical weapons use with its brazen assassination attempt against the Skripals in Salisbury, UK, in March using a novichok chemical agent. Multiple British citizens have been exposed to this same substance as a result of this deplorable attack, one of whom ultimately died from exposure to the military-grade nerve agent. Independent reports issued twice by the OPCW, most recently on September 4, confirmed the UK assessment in identifying the chemical nerve agent, novichok. Russia's use of a novichok has made it extraordinarily clear that Russia only eliminated its *declared* chemical weapons stockpile and further substantiates the U.S. finding that Russia itself is in non-compliance with their obligations under the CWC. Rather than accepting responsibility for its actions and changing its harmful and destructive behavior, Russia offers only denials and counter-accusations to deflect attention from its culpability. No one, including Russia, should think they can murder people with chemical weapons and get away with it. As you know, we imposed the first round of sanctions on Russia required by the Chemical and Biological Weapons Control and Warfare Elimination Act of 1991. Following the fifteen day Congressional notification, these sanctions took effect on August 22nd. We have been clear with Moscow that we will continue to execute our mandate under this law and that it must take action to disclose its chemical weapons activities. We are under no illusion, however, that Russia will take the steps necessary to rescind these sanctions.

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Conventional Arms Control

The United States and our NATO Allies, as reinforced in the 2018 Brussels Declaration, remain committed to preserving, strengthening, and modernizing the existing Euro-Atlantic conventional arms control regimes and confidence and security building mechanisms. We remain concerned about specific compliance and implementation issues that limit full territorial access over Russia – a fundamental Treaty principle. While recently Russia has resolved one violation of its obligations, and has made overtures that suggest it could resolve another, Russia remains unwilling to lift its illegitimate limits on the distance Open Skies Treaty parties can fly over the strategically sensitive region of Kaliningrad. In September 2017, we made clear our commitment to addressing Russia’s continued noncompliance with the Treaty when we established several reasonable, treaty-compliant measures designed to encourage Russia to resolve its violations. These measures are in effect and will impact any Russian flights over the United States; they will be reversed if Russia returns to full compliance.

Despite efforts by the United States and our Allies to effect a reversal of Russia’s 2007 decision to unilaterally “suspend” its implementation of the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty, the status quo unfortunately persists. The United States does not recognize Russia’s “suspension” of the CFE. We continue to hold Russia responsible for its obligations under the Treaty and, as a countermeasure, together with our Allies and partners have ceased implementing CFE vis-à-vis Russia. Russia’s disregard for the Treaty’s provision on host-nation consent for the stationing of military forces in places like Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine is a destabilizing element that challenges the basic underpinnings of the existing Euro-Atlantic security architecture. Nonetheless, we believe the Treaty still provides valuable transparency about other military forces in Europe that are of interest to the United States and our Allies and partners.

The United States continues to be a leading voice in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). We are championing, along with many of our Allies, several proposals to modernize the 2011 Vienna Document (VDoc), politically-binding confidence and security building measures that contribute to openness and transparency concerning military forces in Europe. However, since 2014, Russia has been increasingly exploiting gaps in the arrangement, especially with regard to large-scale, short-notice exercises and military activities near its borders. Furthermore, Russia has refused in recent years to engage on these issues and professes to see no current need for enhancing military transparency. The proposals for which we and our Allies are advocating aim to address these activities and increase military transparency. Our goal is to demonstrate the value of the VDoc and the commitment of a majority of OSCE participating States to fulfill existing VDoc measures and to improve the effectiveness of the VDoc to rebuild trust.

Space Security

More recently, as the Director of National Intelligence noted in February of this year, Russia is continuing to pursue antisatellite, or ASAT, weapons as a means to reduce U.S. and allied military effectiveness. Russia aims to have nondestructive and destructive counterspace

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weapons available for use during a potential future conflict. The U.S. intelligence community assesses that, if a future conflict were to occur involving Russia, it would justify attacks against U.S. and allied satellites as necessary to offset any perceived U.S. military advantage derived from military, civil, or commercial space systems. Military reforms in Russia in the past few years indicate an increased focus on establishing operational forces designed to integrate attacks against space systems and services with military operations in other domains. In addition, Russian destructive ASAT weapons probably will reach initial operational capability in the next few years, and Russia probably has ground-launched ASAT missiles in development and is advancing directed-energy weapons technologies for the purpose of fielding ASAT weapons that could blind or damage sensitive space-based optical sensors, such as those used for remote sensing or missile defense.

Of particular concern, Russia has launched “experimental” satellites that conduct sophisticated on-orbit activities, at least some of which are intended to advance counterspace capabilities. Some technologies with peaceful applications—such as satellite inspection, refueling, and repair—can also be used against non-cooperative spacecraft in a hostile fashion.

These activities are occurring in spite of the fact that Russia is continuing to publicly and diplomatically promote international agreements on the nonweaponization of space and “no first placement” of weapons in space. However, the Russian proposals are crafted to allow Russia to continue their pursuit of space warfare capabilities while publicly maintaining that space must be a peaceful domain.

The Department of State continues to lead efforts to push back against Russia’s troubling behavior in space and its hypocritical proposals. As Assistant Secretary Poblete noted at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva a little over a month ago, the Russian Ministry of Defense is undertaking outer space activities that appear contrary to the provisions of Russia’s own draft treaty and its political commitment not to be the first to place weapons in outer space. She noted that, in October of last year, the Russian Ministry of Defense deployed a space object they claimed was a “space apparatus inspector.” But its behavior on-orbit was inconsistent with anything seen before from on-orbit inspection or space situational awareness capabilities, including other Russian inspection satellite activities. Russian intentions with respect to this satellite are unclear and are obviously a very troubling development – particularly, when considered in concert with statements by Russia’s Space Force Commander who highlighted that “assimilate[ing] new prototypes of weapons [into] Space Forces’ military units” is a “main task facing the Aerospace Forces Space Troops.”

CAATSA Sanctions

I would also note that our sanctions policy is an important element in maintaining pressure on Moscow to abandon its malign activities, and that Section 231 of the Countering America’s Adversaries Through Sanctions Act of 2017, or CAATSA, is an important tool in our sanctions toolkit and in our strategic competition with Russia. Arms sales are not only an important source of revenue for Moscow, but also a means of maintaining or growing its political and military influence around the world. Ending those sales not only applies pressure to Russia

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to change its behavior, but also helps to curb Russia's access in places where it seeks to maintain or forge such ties. By mandating sanctions on those who are engaging in significant transactions with Russia's defense and intelligence sectors, CAATSA provides us with leverage in working with our partners and allied states, so that they reduce their military ties to Russia, a country that has become an increasingly unreliable and risky security partner. Thus far, we assess that our global campaign to implement CAATSA has denied Russia's defense sector several billion dollars in lost sales as states abandon pending arms deals with Moscow. The Department of State remains committed to the ongoing full implementation of CAATSA Section 231, including through the imposition of sanctions as appropriate.

Conclusion

In all, the destabilizing actions Russia has taken are not isolated to interference in the domestic affairs of the U.S. and allies, its activities in Ukraine and Syria, or threatening our allies and partners in Russia's near-abroad, but include significant transgressions in its adherence to international obligations – namely, arms control treaties and agreements. The value of any agreement to the United States is derived from our treaty partners maintaining compliance with their obligations, and avoiding actions that result in mistrust and the potential for miscalculation. Russia, unfortunately, has created a trust deficit that leads the United States to question its commitment to arms control as a way to manage and stabilize our strategic relationship and promote greater transparency and predictability in how our countries address weapons of mass destruction issues and policies. The more benign environment of much of the post-Cold War period allows us to see that there was a better, more effective way to exist than merely relying solely upon massive nuclear armaments, with huge risks for miscalculation and accidental conflict. Russia's actions in recent years raise the specter of a return to the ugly years of cutthroat arms competition. I hope Russia can be reminded of these lessons in the near future so we can find ways to shift our relationship to a more stable path. I thank you for convening this important hearing, and look forward to your questions.

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