SECTION 2

Core Security Issues

Nuclear Security, Nonproliferation, and Missile Defense

The coming decade should offer promising opportunities for the United States and Russia to bring greater safety and security to their bilateral nuclear relationship, and to radically reduce their nuclear arsenals, thus reinforcing the global nuclear nonproliferation regime. Achievement of these goals, however, will require the U.S. government to definitively break out of the Cold War paradigm, a way of thinking that continues to shape much of U.S. nuclear and security policy toward Russia. Russian policy toward the United States suffers from the same malady, reinforced by the deepening weakness of its conventional forces. While important progress was made in the 1990s in the field of nuclear security, in recent years that progress has largely stalled. It has been said over and over in Washington that whereas the threat from Russia during the Cold War was due to its strength, today the threat stems more from Russia's weakness. Yet U.S. strategic arms policy has never shifted to reflect this fundamentally new condition. It is time for bold initiatives that will set U.S. nuclear weapons posture on a new footing to more effectively ensure U.S. national security. We recommend that the new administration take the following measures:

- Augment the traditional bilateral arms control treaty framework with a broader agenda including unilateral steps to reduce the nuclear arsenal and enhance cooperation on strategic stability and threat reduction;
- Replace the Cold War hair-trigger operational deterrence posture, thus reducing the danger of an inadvertent nuclear strike;
- Double the resources allocated to the dismantlement of Russian weapons systems and the prevention of the proliferation of weapons and fissile materials from the former Soviet Union; and
- Sustain the ABM treaty unless the missile threat environment changes substantially.

Arms Reductions. Under the START II treaty, ratified by both sides but not yet implemented, the United States and Russia have agreed to reduce their nuclear arsenals to between 3,000 and 3,500 strategic weapons by 2007, from current levels of more than 6,000 strategically deployed weapons on each

side. Yet even those lower levels are above what each country requires. Both the United States and Russia should reduce their nuclear arsenals to levels appropriate to the vastly different threat environment each faces today. Only anachronistic targeting practices inherited from the Cold War could justify a U.S. nuclear arsenal of more than 1,000–1,500 warheads in the foreseeable future. The new administration should take the bold step of unilaterally reducing its arsenal to a level commensurate with the changed circumstances. This would mean a complete revamping of the targeting requirements of the Cold War era.

The United States would undertake these reductions with the hope that the Russians would respond with their own reductions. Indeed, the Russians have already proposed that the START III treaty should allow for no more than 1,000–1,500 strategic nuclear warheads on each side. Even if there was no reciprocal response from Moscow, however, a primarily sea-based force of between 1,000 and 1,500 weapons provides the United States with more than adequate deterrence. Nuclear weapons have unfortunately become more important to some Russian security planners because of the tremendous deterioration of the once vaunted Russian conventional forces. Therefore, it may be politically more difficult for Russia to take the initiative in unilateral reductions. Nevertheless, with the rapid aging of Russian forces, the enormous financial constraints on modernization, and the non-adversarial U.S.-Russian relationship, it is exceedingly unlikely that Russia will field a nuclear force of more than 1,000–1,500 warheads in 2010.

During the Cold War, the arms control negotiations and treaties process was needed because of the deep lack of trust in U.S.-Soviet relations. Today, while distrust lingers, there is room and even precedent for less formal security arrangements. The security challenges for each country have changed dramatically. For example, the continued effort by Russia to maintain very large numbers of weapons poses different kinds of security threats to the United States—such as the threats of accidental launch and of the theft of weapons or fissile materials. Remaining stalled in deadlocked START talks is likely to inhibit efforts to address these issues and to reach lower numbers. The United States should feel adequately secure to proceed with implementing both unilateral and cooperative measures without a full-blown negotiated treaty requiring Senate and Duma ratification.

The proposal for unilateral reductions will strike many in the arms control community as a dangerous departure from the established bilateral arms control framework because it may result in the loss of the verification regime that has

been essential in both promoting reductions and building trust. We propose below, however, that the United States and Russia take extensive measures to provide far greater transparency in the bilateral nuclear relationship in order to both enhance strategic stability and reduce the threats that each country faces. These measures should include steps to further protect each country from the dangers of accidental or inadvertent launch as well as measures to further secure the weapons and fissile materials facilities in each country. Such measures could, in effect, provide confidence similar to that provided by verification regimes that were created as part of bilateral reduction treaties in the Cold War.

Enhancing Nuclear Safety and Security. Political rapprochement has radically reduced the likelihood of premeditated massive nuclear attack, but economic distress and societal trauma in Russia have raised concerns about the safety and security of that country's nuclear weapons complex. Stories abound in the U.S. and Russian press about personnel with responsibility for the Russian nuclear weapons complex going months on end without salary. In the summer of 1998 the governor of Krasnoyarsk Krai in Siberia, retired General Alexander Lebed, threatened to take over local Strategic Rocket Forces facilities if the federal government did not pay soldiers. Since the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991, this kind of nightmare scenario involving Russia's loss of control of its weapons complex has not been just fodder for Hollywood films; it is a real threat to U.S. and global security.

Even if the new U.S. administration and the Putin government take advantage of the opportunity to dramatically reduce both the U.S. and Russian arsenals to no more than one-tenth of their Cold War peaks, nuclear deterrence will still define the core of the U.S.-Russian strategic relationship for the foreseeable future. However, there is no good rationale for maintaining Cold War hair-trigger alert rates and operational conditions enabling delivery of a massive counterstrike on a few minutes' notice. This operational deterrence mode developed in the specific historical conditions of the Cold War. Those conditions have radically changed in the last decade to the point where a premeditated first strike by one side is unimaginable, but changes in operational deterrence practices by the United States and Russia have lagged strikingly behind. The most compelling danger now and for the remainder of this decade will be inadvertent or accidental nuclear conflict. Since no other nation today has the capacity to deliver a massive first strike, Washington and Moscow should more assertively promote the principle of "safety first" in their nuclear relationship. The two countries can go a long way with unilateral and bilateral measures to enhance safety before deterrence is compromised.

The United States and Russia should take the initiative together to effectively increase the amount of time required to launch a nuclear strike from minutes to hours and then from hours to days. This will entail a series of negotiated measures to de-alert and de-target land-based nuclear weapons that will significantly reduce the danger of accidental or inadvertent launch as well as mitigate false warnings. Unlike nuclear reductions, this process must take place on a bilateral basis since the negotiations, while painstaking, will greatly contribute to building transparency and trust in U.S.-Russian strategic relations. The U.S. Strategic Command and Russian Strategic Rocket Forces, for example, should build on the foundation established in exchange visits and joint discussions in the late 1990s. The June 2000 shared early warning agreement and the accord to establish in 2001 the Joint Data Exchange Center, through which Russians and Americans will share information about missile launches around the world, are significant steps forward in fostering cooperation to reduce the likelihood of inadvertent nuclear conflict. Since the deterioration of the Russian early warning system increases the danger of Russia initiating a nuclear attack on the United States because of false warning, this agreement is a model of how U.S. security assistance can enhance U.S. security.

If China were to fundamentally alter its nuclear posture and develop a first-strike capability, both the United States and Russia would have to reexamine the above agreements that reduce their capacity for prompt retaliation.

Threat Reduction and Nonproliferation Cooperation. The risk of nuclear proliferation increased dramatically with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the erosion of the ability of Russia and other new states in the region to maintain control of their nuclear security infrastructure. The danger that small states or terrorist groups might exploit the lack of effective safeguards over nuclear materials in the former Soviet Union to acquire nuclear weapons has increased, even as the threat of deliberate nuclear exchanges has diminished. In the past decade the United States has undertaken dozens of programs costing hundreds of millions of dollars a year involving cooperation with the former Soviet states to address these threats.

These efforts, which go under the name in the United States of cooperative threat reduction (and more familiarly known as the Nunn-Lugar program after its Senate sponsors), have shown that the two countries are able to work together in sensitive areas to reduce the dangers these weapons, materials, and technologies

pose. Thus far, these programs have resulted in the deactivation of delivery systems for almost 5,000 nuclear weapons, the denuclearization of three former Soviet republics, improved security over hundreds of tons of nuclear materials, and employment for thousands of underfunded and underemployed former weapons scientists. Cooperative threat reduction, which accounts for less than one quarter of 1 percent of the U.S. defense budget, is an extraordinarily cost-effective investment in enhancing U.S. security.

If the United States is prepared to spend tens of billions of dollars over the next 10 to 20 years to construct a national missile defense system to counter a threat that does not yet exist, the United States should be more than ready to spend a fraction of that to contain the most dangerous threat already in existence.

Even after years of effort and experience, however, the dangers of global proliferation emanating from the Russian nuclear complex remain unacceptable. The pace of progress in addressing this threat is inadequate, and the resources allocated do not match either the urgency of the problem or the opportunities available. Russia's nuclear weapons complex remains oversized and underfunded. Less than one-sixth of Russian plutonium and highly enriched uranium (HEU) is housed in facilities fully outfitted with modern security and accounting systems. Seven years after the agreement to buy blended HEU from dismantled Russian warheads, less than one-fifth of the excess HEU in Russia has been blended into forms that cannot be used in weapons. If the United States is prepared to spend tens of billions of dollars over the next 10 to 20 years to construct a national missile defense system to counter a threat that does not yet exist, the United States should be more than ready to spend a fraction of that to contain the most dangerous threat already in existence. From 1992 to 1999, the United States allocated through the Defense, Energy, and State departments about $3 billion to increase the security of Russian nuclear weapons, material, and personnel. We recommend that such spending be increased to the level of $1.5 billion per year for the next five years.

Challenges that require the greatest attention include: measures to secure, consolidate, and eliminate Russian nuclear materials outside of actual nuclear weapons (some 650–750 metric tons of plutonium and HEU); programs to downsize the Russian nuclear weapons complex by encouraging commercial job development in the nuclear cities (directly reducing Russia's ability to reverse nuclear reductions); and continued support for the elimination of nuclear delivery platforms and related systems.

Successful security cooperation to mitigate the proliferation dangers of the Russian nuclear complex requires far more than simply increasing funding. Considerable political interests in both Russia and the United States are deeply suspicious of a whole range of nuclear security activities, from arms reductions and enhanced transparency to threat reduction cooperation. The downturn in overall U.S.-Russian relations over NATO expansion, Kosovo, national missile defense, and other issues, as well as the uproar over alleged efforts by China to steal nuclear secrets, has slowed progress and resulted in increased secrecy and more limited access to nuclear facilities in both Russia and the United States by each other. Reinvigorated cooperation in this domain will require much greater attention from the highest levels of the U.S. government. We endorse the Russian-American Nuclear Security Advisory Council's recommendation that the president appoint a senior official with direct presidential access and full-time responsibility to develop and oversee implementation of a strategic plan that coordinates the diverse efforts of U.S. government agencies to promote greater security of the Russian nuclear weapons complex.

A successful expansion in cooperation will also require sustained leadership from the highest levels of the Russian government. President Putin launched his presidency with a visit to the nuclear laboratory city of Snezhinsk, formerly known as Chelyabinsk-70, where he announced his support for a rational and well-planned restructuring of the Russian nuclear complex. Despite that, the Russian bureaucracy lacks the high-level political cover needed to go from identification of the problem to actual action toward a solution, such as facilitating international cooperation in this area. Only support from President Putin and the top levels of his government will make possible the procedural and administrative changes necessary to accelerate threat reduction cooperation in Russia.

Russia also presents a proliferation threat because of its deliberate overt and covert export of ballistic missile and nuclear technologies. Iran continues to be the most significant recipient, but India and Libya have also benefited from Russian trade and assistance in this area. Clearly, the Iranian missile program has

made progress thanks to Russian support, and Russian sales of nuclear technology to Iran may in the same way accelerate the Iranian nuclear weapons program. There is also concern about the transfer of biotechnologies and chemicals with military applications being provided by Russia to Iran. The current U.S. practice of denying assistance to Russian entities known to be proliferating weapons and missile technologies should be continued, and intelligence resources to track the problem should be augmented.

Separating out deliberate, state-sanctioned proliferation activities from proliferation activities that take place without state sanction and effectively outside of state control is a very difficult problem in the chaotic post-Soviet Russia. Many unclassified, unconfirmed reports tell of Russian scientists and technology experts who have left Russia to work in North Korean, Chinese, and Iranian laboratories, institutes, and factories. There are also reports of Russians providing assistance to these and other weapons programs by electronic means while they remain in Russia. In some cases it may be convenient for the state to have "plausible deniability" for these activities, and in other cases they may really be outside state control. This problem accentuates the importance of providing assistance for unemployed or underemployed Russian weapons scientists and technology experts as well as the need for greater U.S. human and technical intelligence assets to monitor the situation.

The missile and nuclear proliferation problems demand further intergovernmental attention as well as support for nongovernmental groups that promote unofficial discussions with the goal of achieving greater mutual understanding of the nature of the threat and how to meet it. The Putin-Clinton agreement of June 2000 to hold discussions on the missile proliferation threat is a useful step in this direction, and it suggests that the Russian policy may be changing as a result of a broader reassessment of military threats emanating from regions south of Russia.

U.S. and Russian policy makers must also fully appreciate the potential impact of U.S. and Russian behavior on the global nuclear nonproliferation regime. If the United States and Russia do not make substantial progress in nuclear arms reduction, for example, the nonproliferation regime will be badly damaged even beyond its current precarious state. When coupled with the Senate's failure to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and a growing national sentiment to scrap the ABM treaty, the U.S. reluctance to consider going below 2,000 warheads either in a START III agreement or in a unilateral measure raises serious and legitimate concern about Washington's commitment to the

nonproliferation regime. Rhetorical support for the regime has not been matched by policy in recent years, and U.S. credibility has been damaged to the point where international scholars and officials in the nonproliferation field openly refer to the United States as a "rogue superpower." Without clear and effective U.S. leadership, the nonproliferation regime is unlikely to outlive the decade. While the regime does not have a perfect record over its 30-year history, its demise would only increase the likelihood that proliferation would occur more rapidly. This would be a very dangerous and unpredictable outcome which the United States and Russia bear the most responsibility for preventing.

National Missile Defense. The national missile defense (NMD) issue had been a rapidly moving target in the past year until President Clinton decided in September 2000 to defer the decision to deploy a system to the next administration. That decision provided a welcome breathing spell for U.S.-Russian relations. The issue is far too wide-ranging to cover comprehensively in a brief report focused on U.S.-Russian relations, so we will limit our discussion to a few key points.

Any missile defense system that the United States might deploy in the next 10 to 15 years, be it the system proposed by the Clinton administration, a boost-phase system, or some other configuration, will not seriously undermine or erode Russia's nuclear deterrent, even if the Russian nuclear arsenal drops to 1,000 weapons. Russian concerns with the system under development in the last few years of the Clinton administration, however, stem from the planned creation of a space- and ground-based tracking infrastructure which, together with the later production of larger numbers of interceptors, could threaten Russia's strategic deterrent. The Russians fear that a compromise now on their part might only be the first in a series of compromises that could ultimately undermine their strategic deterrent capability. The Putin government resisted reaching an agreement on the modification of the ABM treaty, but has agreed to discuss possible treaty amendments with the United States. The Putin government has also responded with active diplomatic efforts to mobilize international resistance to U.S. NMD deployment as well as an intriguing diplomatic foray to North Korea to try to broker a deal to shut down Pyongyang's missile program. Putin has proposed cooperation with the United States on boost-phase systems as well since Russia's sheer size would prohibit any boost-phase system from ever threatening Russia's ICBMs.

In addition, the Russians claim that they have some technologies to bring to the table that will be useful in developing boost-phase systems. If true, this represents an opportunity for U.S.-Russian cooperation. Presidents Clinton and Putin agreed in June 2000 to discuss cooperation in the development of missile defense technologies, and discussions on cooperation on theater missile defense have been ongoing for a couple of years. These discussions should be continued by the new administration.

The missile defense issue will likely surface early in the new administration. Unfortunately, it has often suffered from heavily politicized debates that have not served to advance U.S. national interests. The potential international repercussions of deploying any NMD system must be evaluated very carefully. In the past year, America's closest allies have advised against NMD deployment, and America's most significant *potential* adversaries, China and Russia, have also warned that deployment will have a highly destabilizing impact. The Chinese and Russian positions would have a great deal more credibility, however, if Beijing and Moscow were not also the two biggest exporters of ballistic missile technologies.

A new administration should first conduct a fresh assessment of the current and future threat of missile proliferation with capabilities to hit U.S. territory. The administration should redouble its bilateral and multilateral diplomatic efforts to stem missile proliferation. The work of former Secretary of Defense William Perry and others in the past two years with North Korea to curtail its missile program, while not yet fully successful, point to the value that hard-boiled, persistent diplomacy can have even with the most intransigent of regimes. The U.S.-Russian agreement to work together to strengthen the Missile Technology Control Regime, for example, exemplifies the kind of efforts that need cooperative, multilateral promotion. The new U.S. administration should then consider whether and what kind of defensive systems appear most technologically feasible and economically affordable.

The United States may choose to continue efforts to negotiate ABM treaty modifications with Moscow that will allow for deployment of an NMD system with clearly limited capacity to protect against small-scale launches of up to 50 missiles as well as accidental launches. But unless and until the missile proliferation threat assessment changes significantly due to, for example, another North Korean missile test or an Iranian test of an intercontinental ballistic missile, the United States should not unilaterally defect from the ABM treaty. The treaty has served the cause of strategic stability well for nearly 30 years, and although the

conditions under which it was negotiated have changed markedly, the current status of the missile threat does not warrant discarding the treaty at this time. If substantial evidence suggested imminent and significant change in the threat and America's most important Asian and European allies concurred, then the United States would have adequate grounds to consider developing a defensive system outside of the ABM framework without the agreement of Russia.

As noted above, however, Russia is hardly the only consideration for the United States in deliberations over NMD deployment. Even the deployment of a highly limited system with the capacity to defend against up to 50 missiles would neutralize the Chinese nuclear deterrent since China's forces now number only about 20-25 ICBMs capable of reaching U.S. territory. China may expand and certainly will modernize its forces anyway, but NMD deployment would likely compel Beijing to do so more rapidly, as well as trigger a chain reaction in which India and then Pakistan augment their arsenals and delivery capabilities. Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee stated explicitly during his recent visit to Washington that India would be forced to respond to major Chinese steps. Unilateral defection from the ABM treaty absent further evidence of changes in missile threat assessment would also deeply damage relations with America's NATO allies. Instead of plunging ahead with a decision to deploy a national missile defense, the new administration should thus weigh exceedingly carefully the security benefits of a deployed system with the security costs in alliance damage, alienation of other major powers, provocation of regional arms races, and damage to the nonproliferation regime. Much of the rest of the world may regard a hasty and dubiously founded decision on missile defense as the United States' "crossing the Rubicon" of global unilateralism, and the repercussions would likely be far-reaching and possibly destabilizing.

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NATO and Europe

Because of its size, military power, socioeconomic difficulties, and complicated mix of shared interests and tensions with the West, Russia clearly does not fit easily into the evolving Euro-Atlantic security architecture. Russia's cultural identity for centuries has been torn between admiration and disdain for Europe's economic and political achievements. Russia has never been able to fully resolve whether it wants to join a "common European home," as former President Mikhail Gorbachev put it, or remain aloof in its vast and unique Eurasian splendor. To further complicate its near-schizophrenia about the West, in the past decade Russia has experienced the most precipitous drop in national power of any great power in peacetime in modern history, and Europe is where Russian foreign policy elites feel the repercussions of the Soviet collapse most acutely.

At the outset of the 1990s, Moscow had high hopes that the United States and Russia would cooperate as the two chief pillars of a "new world order," and that, in Europe, the Commission for Security and Cooperation in Europe (now the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the OSCE) would emerge as the most influential institution in a new European security architecture. Nearly ten years later, Russians feel betrayed by a NATO that has expanded into former Warsaw Pact countries and is considering further expansion, including into territory formerly part of the Soviet Union. The majority of the Russian foreign policy community believes that NATO's expansion of mission, as exemplified by its intervention in Kosovo, and its increasing military cooperation with former Soviet republics through the Partnership for Peace program contravene Russian national interests. Rather than being more integrated into a new European security architecture, Russian foreign and security policy elites see Russia as more isolated from Europe than during the Cold War. Although the United States and Russia broadly share common interests in promoting peace and stability in Europe, during the 1990s Moscow and Washington experienced their most pointed differences over issues of European security.

Despite the bitterness and disappointment of recent years, U.S. policy makers and analysts of Russia must not entirely discount the hard-won achievements that support the view that a more cooperative approach between the Euro-Atlantic alliance partners and Russia will be essential to maintaining and promoting European security. In the face of tremendous domestic opposition, the Russian government, in the person of former Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin (and

former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari), helped to negotiate a conclusion to the fighting in Kosovo. Russia has participated in peacekeeping activities in Bosnia and Kosovo. The conclusion of the NATO-Russia Founding Act in 1997 and the establishment of the Permanent Joint Council also provide a framework for strengthening NATO-Russian relations and European security more broadly. President Putin has expressed the desire that Russia cooperate with NATO, and even has said that Russia may desire membership some time in the future.

NATO is not the only security institution in Europe, but it is clearly the most significant for the United States, though the institutional architecture of European security is somewhat in flux. NATO is expanding its membership and mission. Several European countries, including Germany and France, are exploring the idea of new European security institutions. The OSCE seeks to play a more prominent role in conflict prevention and conflict resolution as well as a host of security-related issues. Whatever these changes portend, NATO will remain the preeminent Euro-Atlantic security institution for at least the next decade, and Russians know this. Most Russian foreign policy elites also pragmatically recognize that relative isolation or creating some kind of pale imitation of the Warsaw Pact with Belarus and possibly a few other weak former Soviet states will not advance the interests of Moscow. Since it is impossible to imagine a secure Europe existing side-by-side with an insecure Russia, NATO and Russia must find a modus vivendi.

To promote Russia's deeper integration into the Euro-Atlantic security community, we recommend the following:

- NATO should not consider expansion of membership to states on the territory of the former Soviet Union before 2005;
- NATO must make every effort to build a strong foundation for positive relations with Russia by finding new areas of common interest that could include opening NATO arms markets to Russian producers, stabilizing Central Asia and the Caucasus, and other initiatives; and
- Euro-Atlantic security institutions and nongovernmental organizations should broaden and deepen cooperation with Russia to address emerging security issues of mutual concern including environmental degradation, crime, and corruption.

NATO-Russian relations will certainly be tested in the years ahead, perhaps as early as 2002 when the next round of expansion is scheduled to take place, with

the possibility of states formerly part of the Soviet Union being considered for membership. One or more of the Baltic states will seek entry, and it is quite possible that they will be qualified in terms of the existing military and political criteria. NATO ultimately should not discriminate against the Baltic states because they happened to be annexed by the Soviet Union 60 years ago. However, expansion of NATO into former Soviet territory should not take place before 2005. The NATO-Russian relationship incurred tremendous damage during the last decade, and it needs time for both sides to *try* to build a far stronger foundation of cooperation and mutual understanding than exists today. While there is no guarantee that NATO and Russia will be able to develop a cooperative working relationship, expansion into the Baltic states as early as 2002 would virtually guarantee deep-rooted and long-term Russian enmity towards the West—an outcome that will not serve the interests of Russia, the West, *or* the Baltic states. The expansion of NATO in the first round took place prematurely. There was no imminent and compelling security threat to Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic that required such early consideration for NATO membership before the organization had time to build what could have been a better foundation of trust and mutual understanding with Russia. NATO must not make the same mistake again.

NATO should take Putin at his word and work more actively to promote security cooperation with Russia through the Partnership for Peace, the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council, and other, perhaps new, institutions. NATO should also be more explicit that not only is the door open for eventual Russian membership, but that NATO truly desires this outcome and will allocate resources to assist Russia in making it happen. One measure NATO countries could take is to seriously explore purchasing Russian-made military hardware and collaborating on new conventional technologies and production facilities. Doing so would help to promote interoperability between NATO and Russian forces that would be useful whether or not Russia becomes a member of the alliance. It is also conceivable that NATO member countries can find common interests with Russia in cooperating to bring greater social, economic, and political stability to the weak states of Central Asia and the Caucasus, as discussed in the next section. Despite a long history of conflict and competition, Turkey and Russia, in particular, share a common interest in stable, secular regimes in Central Asia. And even with Slobodan Milosevic out of power in Serbia, the former Yugoslavia will continue to present security challenges that will require cooperation between Russia and the rest of Europe for years to come.

Despite some of Putin's public proclamations about NATO, Russian foreign policy elites maintain at best a fundamental ambivalence towards the institution. Soviet policy in Europe sought to promote cleavages between the United States and Europe, echoes of which still exist today in Putin's foreign policy in Europe—on the missile defense question, for example. While U.S. officials should push NATO to embrace Russia more actively, there is obviously no guarantee of a positive response on Russia's part. There is no question that Russia should not hold veto power, either implicitly or explicitly, over future membership questions. Nor should the United States encourage NATO to promise that there will be "no more Kosovos." Russia was most opposed to the Kosovo operation because it viewed the NATO engagement as a violation of international law since the UN Security Council had not explicitly endorsed it. The conflict between national sovereignty and human rights is not easily resolvable and does not lend itself to straightforward recommendations. To the extent that Russians (and the Chinese) feel more confident about their own national territorial stability, there is greater likelihood that they will develop greater mutual understanding with the West in cases where respect for national sovereignty and concern for human rights contradict.

At a time when traditional security risks associated with great power rivalry in the Euro-Atlantic region have dramatically declined, disputes over NATO in the 1990s undermined cooperative efforts to address growing nontraditional security problems. It is certainly understandable that the tremendous shift in the global balance of power has caused alarm among those responsible for foreign and security policy in Moscow. But today, and also tomorrow, problems like state weakness, environmental degradation, epidemic diseases, safety and security of nuclear materials, migration flows and adverse demographic trends, crime and corruption, attacks on information infrastructures, and other issues present far more immediate threats to Russian security than maintaining a balance of power in Europe. At the same time, many of these threats are transboundary in nature and so present an immediate threat to the Euro-Atlantic region at large. Policy-making communities, nongovernmental organizations, and scholars need to devote far more resources and time to address these shared problems with shared solutions.