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Statement for the Record

Joint Hearing

**House Foreign Affairs Committee, Subcommittee on Terrorism,
Nonproliferation, and Trade**

**House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
Rayburn House Office Building**

December 1, 2015

Chairmen Poe and Rogers, Ranking Members Keating and Cooper, distinguished Members of the House Foreign Affairs and Armed Services Committees, thank you for hosting this hearing and for having me here today. This is a subject on which I previously briefed these same committees, including last year around this time. Since that time, both my staff and my Defense colleagues have worked to keep you and your staffs apprised of work in this area.

Let me begin by saying that the United States does not undertake arms control and disarmament as an end in and of itself. Nor do we look at arms control and disarmament in isolation from deterrence and the general strategic environment, including the changing security environment in Europe. Together, arms control and deterrence help create the conditions for a more durable and predictable form of strategic stability. Therefore, they benefit U.S. national security.

Arms control frameworks are one available and important instrument in our foreign policy toolkit to advance global stability and the security of the United States, our allies, and our partners. This has been true for over four decades, for both Republican and Democratic administrations, for a wide variety of nuclear and conventional security issues of concern. We have worked closely with our Allies

and partners to develop the arms control frameworks we have today, and both we and our Allies and partners continue to see enormous value in these agreements. The United States and its allies are made safer and more secure by such agreements since, for all parties to the agreement, they limit weapons and their destructive potential while providing transparency and predictability.

Arms control has both benefits and challenges, like any other tool in the U.S. toolkit. With regard to concerns about Russian implementation of its arms control obligations, it is a serious matter that must be addressed. When there are violations, these must be raised publicly and forcefully with Russia at the highest levels, as this Administration has done. When there are open questions related to Treaty implementation, these concerns are discussed within the U.S. interagency and then raised with treaty counterparts in various technical-level committees and commissions. The goal is to resolve these issues and, oftentimes, we do.

Over the last three decades, there have been compliance and implementation issues with first the Soviets and then the Russians on a variety of agreements. At the same time, we also have worked together to successfully implement treaties and agreements, such as the original START agreement, that have had enormous historical and military importance and benefits over the ensuing years for bilateral and regional security.

Former officials in both Republican and Democratic administrations and their colleagues in Congress were forced to grapple with many of the same problems we face today – How do we resolve violations when faced by blatant denials? How do we work with allies and partners on these challenges to ensure a unified and proportionate response? These are not easy questions to answer; this is not easy work to accomplish.

Let me assure these committees once again that the Administration takes compliance with all arms control agreements extremely seriously. For this reason, this Administration worked hard to produce a compliance report in July of 2010 – the first delivered to Congress after a five-year lapse – and has produced one every year since, as required by statute. While the State Department has the lead in drafting the report, the Department of Defense contributes and is fully consulted

throughout the process, consistent with the Arms Control and Disarmament Act. Producing the compliance report also requires concurrence from the Intelligence Community and consultation with the Department of Energy. We have diligently kept Congress updated via documents such as the Annual Compliance Report and, the Report on Noncompliance by the Russian Federation with its Obligations Under the INF Treaty required every 90 days by the Ukraine Freedom Support Act of 2014, and ongoing compliance work such as the four annual briefings to Congress on the work of the New START Treaty Bilateral Consultative Commission or BCC.

The focus of today's hearing is Russia's violation of the INF Treaty so I would like to focus my remarks on that important subject.

In May of this year in the unclassified portion of the Annual Compliance Report, the United States repeated its determination that Russia is in violation of its INF Treaty obligations not to possess, produce, or flight-test a ground-launched cruise missile with a range capability of 500 to 5,500 kilometers, or to possess or produce launchers of such missiles. The INF Treaty, negotiated and ratified during the Reagan Administration, eliminated an entire class of ballistic and cruise missiles, capable of delivering nuclear and non-nuclear warheads.

Since 2013, we have raised with Russia our serious concerns regarding conduct that we ultimately determined to be a violation of the INF Treaty and have held senior-level and technical-expert level bilateral discussions with the aim of returning Russia to verifiable compliance with its Treaty obligations. Throughout the course of this year, we have raised this issue with Russian officials on repeated occasions and at various levels and departments within the Russian government in an effort to resolve U.S. concerns. We have made very clear that this is not a technicality, a one-off event, or a case of mistaken identity, but a serious Russian violation of one of the most basic obligations under the INF Treaty. Russian officials have denied violating the Treaty and told us the issue was closed. We do not accept this response. Instead we continue to pursue resolution of U.S. concerns with Russia, as the INF Treaty benefits the security of the United States, our allies, and Russia, and contributes to stability in Europe and the Asia-Pacific regions. We continue to remind Russia why it signed this Treaty in the first place, and why

Russia's continued violation would only lead to a needless and costly action-reaction cycle to the detriment of Russia's security.

While the United States is engaging diplomatically with Russia as noted above, we have devoted a great deal of attention in 2015 to consulting with our Allies and partners in the interest of pursuing a coordinated response to Russia's violation. Our Allies have made clear their interest in preserving the INF Treaty, and their continued wish that the United States remain in the Treaty and seek to bring Russia back into compliance. Let me repeat the language from the NATO Summit in Wales, where Allies noted: "it is of paramount importance that disarmament and non-proliferation commitments under existing treaties are honored, including the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, which is a crucial element of Euro-Atlantic security. In that regard, Allies call on Russia to preserve the viability of the INF Treaty through ensuring full and verifiable compliance."

Outreach with key allies involves several important lines of effort: explaining the requirements of the INF Treaty and the nature of the Russian violation, highlighting the importance of the Treaty to regional security, sharing more available information with key allies and partners on the Russian violation and Moscow's underlying reasons for developing such a system, updating allies and partners on our continued engagements with Russian officials, and informing allies and partners of progress on potential response options. All of these efforts will continue as we focus on potential response options that will be endorsed by our allies.

Russia continues to be unwilling to acknowledge its violation or address our concerns. We have shared more than enough information with Russian officials for them to look through their own records and identify the relevant program; their denials and counteraccusations clearly attempt to deflect attention from their own violation. Therefore, we continue to study and work closely with allies on a series of diplomatic, economic, and military measures to protect the interests of the United States and our Allies.

I assure this committee that the Obama Administration is committed to bringing Russia back into compliance with the INF Treaty, and has worked diligently to that

end throughout the last year. At the same time, the Administration will continue its work to identify and implement appropriate response options to ensure our security and that of our Allies is maintained should Russia continue its violation of the INF Treaty. Ultimately, the security of the United States and its allies is not negotiable, particularly when there is a serious violation of one of the cornerstone arms control agreements for European and Asian security.

While our public determination and diplomacy has yet to lead Russia to return to compliance, our announcement of Russia's violation and reaffirmation of the continuing U.S. commitment to the Treaty has imposed significant costs on Russia. Its covert GLCM program has been exposed, and Moscow is not free to pursue this effort unconstrained, as this would risk confirming for the world that Russia has been violating an agreement that has been a key instrument of stability and security for nearly three decades.

Additionally, I'd like to underscore the actions taken by the United States to address Russia's non-compliance with the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty; and our continuing questions about Russia's adherence to the Open Skies Treaty.

The Russians are in violation of the Conventional Armed Force in Europe (CFE) Treaty; Russia unilaterally "suspended" its implementation of CFE in 2007. The Treaty does not provide for such an action. Russia's action has had a serious impact on military transparency and confidence in Europe. The United States and NATO Allies made several diplomatic efforts to bring Russia back into compliance after 2007.

Finally, as a legal countermeasure, in 2011 the United States ceased implementing CFE vis-à-vis Russia. This action was taken in solidarity with our 21 NATO Allies who are also CFE States Parties, as well as Georgia and Moldova, who joined us in ceasing implementation of CFE vis-à-vis Russia.

The United States continues to maintain a cessation of implementation of certain CFE Treaty obligations (notifications, data exchange, and inspections) vis-à-vis the Russian Federation due to Russia's ongoing nonperformance of its obligations to

the United States under the CFE Treaty. This measure was closely coordinated with NATO Allies, Moldova, and Georgia, who also implemented similar steps in their respective national capacities. Russia has not challenged this action. The United States continues to perform its obligations under the CFE Treaty vis-à-vis all other States Parties.

We continue to have concerns with Russia's implementation of the Open Skies Treaty, in particular, with Russia's continued denial or restriction of observation flights over portions of Russian territory. We are redoubling our efforts to raise these issues with Russia, both in bilateral dialogue, as well as through the Open Skies Consultative Commission, along with other States Parties, as we sustain strict implementation of the Treaty.

Both of these treaties have made enormous contributions and are critical to European security, and we continue to raise issues of concern with Russia while coordinating with our European allies.

Thank you for your partnership in this effort, and I look forward to answering your questions.