

**CHAIRMAN ADAM B. SCHIFF
HOUSE PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON
INTELLIGENCE
OPENING STATEMENT
OPEN HEARING ON THREATS TO U.S. NATIONAL
SECURITY
MARCH 8, 2022**

The Committee will come to order. Thank you all for joining us today. Without objection, the chair may declare a recess at any time.

Before we start, I want to address some housekeeping matters. First, today's open portion is being broadcast live and streamed on the Committee's website. It will be conducted entirely on an unclassified basis. All participants are reminded to refrain from discussing classified or other information protected from public disclosure. We will reconvene for the classified portion of the hearing this afternoon.

I'll now recognize myself for an opening statement.

We are holding this Worldwide Threats hearing amid an international crisis. As we sit here today, Russia is continuing its unprovoked war against Ukraine, that has resulted in thousands

of casualties, millions of refugees, and a conflict that seems to be only escalating in severity.

In the past two weeks, the Administration has led a massive international campaign to ensure Putin and his oligarchs feel the cost of this horrific, brutal war. As Democrats and Republican, as Americans, we stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine in their heroic struggle.

As we work to help Ukraine defend themselves and to make Russia face the consequences of its aggression, we are in a stronger position today because of the extraordinary work of the Intelligence Community. The IC has provided exceptional insight into the potential of a Russian invasion over the past several months. The IC has helped expose Putin's playbook for policymakers, our allies, and our partners in Ukraine. And to a degree unprecedented in my time on this Committee, we have also made public highly sensitive intelligence to disrupt Russia's planning and malign activities.

Our ability to prepare the Ukrainian government to defend itself and to rally the international community around imposing unprecedented economic consequences on Russia, and the military assistance to Ukraine, would not have been possible without the IC's work.

This hearing is an opportunity for you all to highlight the threats we face in a more complex and dangerous world.

We are witnessing the largest military conflict in Europe since World War II. The Administration has made it clear we are not placing U.S. military forces into the conflict in Ukraine. As a result, we'll have to rely on other capabilities and increase our cooperation with our NATO allies.

We also face numerous other strategic challenges, from the rise of an increasingly bellicose and belligerent China, to the threats posed by Iran and North Korea.

Among the challenges from these nation-states, as well as from non-state actors, is the use of cyber operations that continue to target both the U.S. government as well as the private sector. Offensive cyber operations present a significant risk to our homeland, and as the crisis in Ukraine continues, we must be extremely watchful.

While some of these risks, such as climate change or pandemic disease, are framed as so-called “soft” threats, the reality is they are anything but. The nearly one million Americans who have died from COVID-19 demonstrate that.

Furthermore, climate change is becoming the most urgent matter that the United States and the rest of the world must address. In

October of last year, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence released a report on climate change in which they assessed “that climate change will increasingly exacerbate risks to U.S. national security interests as the physical impacts increase and geopolitical tensions mount about how to respond to the challenge.” That’s putting it mildly.

In the midst of all these threats, there is a global struggle between democracy and autocracy. Authoritarian governments are emboldened, using force and technology to enforce their will, while ignoring human rights and fundamental freedoms, and spreading dangerous misinformation. To meet any of the threats before us today effectively, the United States must remain committed to our values and to the promotion of democracy and fundamental human rights.

Thank you for your service and for appearing here today. I will now yield to the Ranking Member for any opening statement he might wish to make.