



Statement before the Senate Armed Services Committee

“GLOBAL CHALLENGES AND U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY”

A Statement by:

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January 21, 2015

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Mr. Chairman and Members of this distinguished Committee:

Thank you for the invitation to address you. I will be very brief. My hope is that your deliberations will shape a bipartisan national security strategy. Such bipartisanship is badly needed, given the complexity and severity of the challenges that America faces in Europe, in the Middle East, and potentially in the Far East. Together, they pose an ominous threat to global stability.

In Europe, Putin is playing with fire – financing and arming a local rebellion, and occasionally even intervening directly by force – in order to destabilize Ukraine economically and politically, and thereby destroy its European aspirations. Given that, the current sanctions should certainly be maintained until Russia's verbal commitments to respect Ukraine's sovereignty are actually implemented.

In the meantime, NATO (and especially the US) should make some defensive weaponry available to Ukraine, something that I have been urging since the outset of the crisis. Not to provide them simply increases Russia's temptation to escalate its intervention. At the same time, I have also advocated, and do so again today, that we indicate to the Kremlin that the US realizes that a non-NATO status for a Europe-oriented Ukraine could be part of a constructive east-west accommodation. Finland offers a good example.

The preservation of peace in Europe also requires enhanced security for the very vulnerable Baltic states. In recent years Russia has conducted menacing military maneuvers near their borders and also in its isolated Kaliningrad region. One of these exercises involved even a simulated nuclear attack on a neighboring European capital. That speaks for itself.

Accordingly, the only credible yet peaceful way to reinforce regional stability is to deploy now in the Baltic States some trip-wire NATO contingents (including of course from the US). Such deployments would not be threatening to Russia but they would reduce its temptation to recklessly replay the scenario that transpired recently in Crimea. Prompt prepositioning of US/NATO military equipment in nearby Poland would also significantly contribute to enhancing regional deterrence.

Turning to the Middle East, we should try to avoid universalizing the current conflict in Europe into a worldwide collision with Russia. It is both in America's and in Russia's interest that the escalating violence in the Middle East does not get out of hand, containing it is also in China's long-range interest. Otherwise, regional violence is likely to spread northward into Russia, and northeastward into Central Asia, to the direct detriment both of Russia and of China.

America, Russia, and China should jointly consult about how they can best support the more moderate Middle East states in pursuing either a political or military solution. In different ways, America, Russia, and China should encourage Turkish engagement, Iranian cooperation, Saudi restraint, Egyptian participation in seeking – if possible – some form of compromise in Syria and the elimination of the regional extremists. And the three major powers should bear in mind that there will be no

peace in the Middle East if “boots on the ground” come mainly from the outside, i.e. the US. The era of colonial supremacy in the region is over.

Finally, with the President soon embarking on a trip to India, let me simply express the hope that the US will not intensify concerns in Beijing that the US is inclined to help arm India as part of a de facto anti-Chinese Asian coalition. That will only discourage the Chinese from becoming more helpful in coping with the volatile dangers that confront us in Europe and in the Middle East.

To sum up, global stability needs discriminating and determined but not domineering American engagement.