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THE EVOLUTION OF HYBRID WARFARE AND KEY CHALLENGES

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THE EVOLUTION OF HYBRID WARFARE AND KEY CHALLENGES

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC, Wednesday, March 22, 2017.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:00 a.m., in room 2118, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. William M. "Mac" Thornberry (chairman of the committee) presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. WILLIAM M. "MAC" THORNBERRY, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM TEXAS, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will come to order. The committee meets today to examine the challenge posed by unconventional forms of warfare. A variety of terms are used to describe it: hybrid warfare, indirect warfare, the gray zone, and others. Americans are used to thinking of a binary state of either war or peace. That is the way our organizations, doctrine, and approaches are geared.

Other countries, including Russia, China, and Iran, use a wider array of centrally controlled, or at least centrally directed, instruments of national power and influence to achieve their objectives.

Whether it is contributing to foreign political parties, targeted assassinations of opponents, infiltrating non-uniformed personnel such as the little green men, traditional media and social media, influence operations, or cyber-connected activity, all of these tactics and more are used to advance their national interests and most often to damage American national interests.

These tactics are not new. Indeed, as Professor Williamson Murray has written, the historical records suggest that hybrid warfare in one form or another may well be the norm for human conflict, rather than the exception. And this committee has examined these issues previously, despite the fact that some of these tactics are much in the news these days.

But I believe these tactics pose a particular challenge for us and our system. So I think it is helpful to shine a light on them, but also help develop ways that the U.S. can better develop capabilities to counter them. That is the topic for today's hearing.

Before turning to our witnesses, I would yield to the distinguished acting ranking member, gentleman from Tennessee, Mr. Cooper.

Mr. COOPER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As you noted, I am standing in for the real ranking member, Adam Smith. And I would like to ask unanimous consent that his statement be inserted for the record.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Smith can be found in the Appendix on page 37.]

Mr. COOPER. I have no opening statement. I am here to hear the witnesses and actually have a real hearing. So I look forward to hearing the witnesses' testimony.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman. We are pleased to welcome Dr. Francis Hoffman, distinguished research fellow from National Defense University; Mr. Andrew Shearer, senior adviser on Asia Pacific [Security] and Director for Alliances in American Leadership Project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies; and Dr. Christopher Chivvis, Associate Director, International Security and Defense Policy Center, senior political scientist, man, y'all got long titles, at the RAND Corporation.

Really, three people I think who can help shine a light and help guide us in these challenging issues. I very much appreciate all of you being with us. Without objection, your full written statement will be made part of the record. And we would be pleased to hear any oral comments you would like to make.

Dr. Hoffman, we will start with you.

STATEMENT OF DR. FRANCIS G. HOFFMAN, DISTINGUISHED FELLOW, NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY

Dr. HOFFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, acting Ranking Member Mr. Cooper, and distinguished panelists and members of this committee. It is an honor to appear before you once again and talk about the threats facing our country. I thank you for this opportunity and also the opportunity to appear with my two expert colleagues here today.

Our joint forces and our country must be able to respond to challenges across the full spectrum of conflict. Partially because of the complexity of this challenge, we are falling behind in our readiness today and in the future.

As the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff has testified, quote, "We are already falling behind in adapting to the changed character of war today in so many ways."

Our tendency as a country to ignore forms of conflict that are not conventional and kinetic in character has impeded our performance in the past and will continue to do so until we grasp the full set of conflict types. Without an explicit recognition and conceptualization and understanding of these types, we are going to remain in a perpetual state of reactive adaptation.

A decade ago, before a subcommittee led by the chairman of this distinguished committee now, I outlined a concept and hypothesis that General Mattis and I had developed about hybrid threats and what we saw as a coming emerging problem.

That threat was based on the expected convergence of irregular forces with advanced military capabilities due to globalization and the diffusion of technology. It also forecasted that states in a unipolar world, the part we got wrong, would come down from high-end conventional capabilities and would try to take us on in the middle conflict spectrum with proxy forces that they would train and equip.

The mixture of irregular methods and conventional tools was not necessarily new, as the chairman has noted. But we did think that

the toxic addition of catastrophic terrorism and criminal behavior fused in the same battle space might present unique challenges for which we are not prepared.

The war between Israel and Hezbollah in the summer of 2006, the evolution of ISIS [Islamic State of Iraq and Syria] over the last few years, with encryption, drones, precision capabilities, and the ongoing bloodshed in eastern Ukraine, suggest that our forecast of hybrid threats in the middle of the conflict spectrum, a violent admixture, was not too far off. Perhaps imperfect, but not too far off the mark.

Today, European military analysts and some Americans pushed by Russia's examples and behavior, have embraced the hybrid threat as a feature of contemporary conflict. Yet the NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] interpretation, which is pretty predominant now in the literature, is broader and different than the methods that General Mattis and I had originally depicted.

They see it as a mixture of military means with nonmilitary tools, including propaganda and cyber activity directed at below the threshold of armed conflict. And this mixture of tools, Mr. Chairman, is what I said is commonly referred to as gray zone conflicts in this country.

And the distinction between indirect gray zone conflicts and the violent methods posed by the original depiction of hybrid threats should be noted as the key distinction, the use of violence.

The European version of hybrid represents a return to Cold War tactics as I understood them when I was trained and educated and was commissioned in the 1970s.

We rely on traditional and legitimate forms of influence and competition, but our adversaries are applying more ambiguous, illegitimate, and nontraditional instruments of statecraft consistent with their culture and previous practices, going back almost a century with respect to Russia.

Such autocratic states have far more options than democracies. Mr. Kennan, the architect of containment who knew something about the Russians, noted decades ago that "The varieties of skullduggery which make up the repertoire of totalitarian governments, are just about as unlimited as human ingenuity itself and just about as unpleasant."

So Kennan's understanding of the problem was informed by a very deep lifelong study of Russia and its preference for indirect methods, which I think we see today. Kennan himself used the term "measures short of war," which I think is a fairly good term to understand where Russia is coming from, and its expertise in this area.

And I have used the same term now in my research at NDU [National Defense University] supporting both the intelligence community and the chairman. And I think measures short of armed conflict or measures short of war relates very well to Russia, which has a history of a form of operation they call "active measures." And it parallels today's activity pretty well.

Measures short of war and hybrid conflict have some combinations and some common aspects, and particularly the combination of methods. Where I see hybrid threats in the middle of the conflict

spectrum is mixing active regular conventional capabilities with irregular methods with irregular tactics and crime.

Measures short of armed conflict is combinations of economic corruption, propaganda, disinformation, you know, nonmilitary kinds of capabilities combined in a time and place. The hybrid threats also use combinations, but it is mostly about violent methods being kind of mixed.

I think an historical case study might help eliminate the distinction between some of the terminology. I see the competition between Russia, the West, and the EU [European Union] over Ukraine's independence as a gray zone kind of conflict, a measure short of conflict from 2010 to 2014.

Mr. Putin attempted to apply indirect forms of influence including economic tariffs, corruption, political subversion, and disinformation, but Russia failed to be successful at intimidating Ukraine's people. And thus Putin had to shift up the conflict continuum and use more violent means to be more successful, thereby seizing Crimea and invading Ukraine itself.

The ongoing violence in eastern Ukraine, I see as an archetype of what I had imagined as hybrid warfare. An integrated design that has produced a costly conflict by mixing Spetsnaz special forces, separatists that are basically militia or untrained military. We see electronic warfare, we see drones, we see long range rockets, and we see some light armor, all fused and mixed in the same time and place.

We also see economic corruption, criminality, control over food and employment in the areas as intimidating and terrorizing the population. So I see that as a representative of a hybrid warfare kind of example, as I saw it a decade ago.

But today's challenge is recognizing the competition for influence that exists in peacetime using measures short of armed conflict. In Europe and Asia we are now competing with major revisionist powers that are seeking influence and trying to undermine the international rules of order and the norms and behavior that we have come to establish and tried to be the guarantor of for the last two generations.

We are also competing for the retention of a coalition network and a basing structure that we have used for two generations to gain and sustain access to key markets and key regions of the world and friends, as part of our power projection system.

Our adversaries continue to use illegitimate instruments of statecraft. Seizing disputed rocks, seizing and disordering borders, to undermine our credibility, to dilute the cohesion of our alliances, and to prevent us from sustaining international order, on which our core interests and economic prosperity benefit from and should continue to benefit from.

Overall, I think, we are prepared for the violence of hybrid threats now after 15 years of fighting irregular warfare. But we are not ready for the more indirect methods that we need to think about. How do we ensure that forms of subversion and disinformation here and abroad are neutralized?

Who operationalizes our responses to indirect conflict, and who counters the propaganda designed to undercut our democratic institutions? Who designs and integrates strategic approaches in meas-

ures short of armed conflict? The NSC [National Security Council], the State Department, the CIA [Central Intelligence Agency], or our theater commanders? In short, how do we organize ourselves to address this challenge?

We shouldn't underestimate our adversaries. This is not an existential form of conflict. But it can create the conditions that if we do actually get into a war with somebody after an extended period of hybrid threat, that we will fight with fewer friends in a position of geographic disadvantage, or a coalition that is not as cohesive and effective as it should be. So it could set up the conditions for failure in America's interest.

So again, we shouldn't underestimate our adversaries. They're full spectrum, we need to understand that conceptually, and we need to become full spectrum ourselves consistent with our values and democratic principles.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear today. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Hoffman can be found in the Appendix on page 38.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Mr. Shearer.

STATEMENT OF ANDREW SHEARER, SENIOR ADVISER ON ASIA PACIFIC SECURITY, DIRECTOR, ALLIANCES AND AMERICAN LEADERSHIP PROJECT, CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Mr. SHEARER. Chairman Thornberry, acting Ranking Member Cooper, and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. Like Russia and China—and Iran, rather, China is fusing both conventional and unconventional capabilities and tactics to waken liberal norms and institutions to erode U.S. influence and to impose its own security preferences on its neighbors.

Left unchecked, this trend will undermine the regional and global order, endangering the security and prosperity of the United States and its allies. China's hybrid warfare strategy draws on many of the elements also employed by Russia and Iran, exploiting the gray zone created, as the chairman said, by the West's binary notion of war and peace.

Primarily, using paramilitary coast guard and militia organizations, while keeping regular military forces back over the horizon and combining all of the instruments of national power, including sophisticated cyber operations, economic incentives and sanctions, and legal and political warfare. Or as the Chinese call it, lawfare.

And over the past decade and particularly since President Xi Jinping took office 4 years ago, China has ramped up its assertiveness in the Western Pacific.

By exploiting ambiguity and asymmetry, this incremental salami-slicing approach has enabled China to achieve much of its political and territorial agenda in East Asia without triggering a forceful military response from the United States and its allies.

Beijing calculates that it lacks the military capabilities, at least for now, to prevail in an outright conflict at an acceptable cost. Instead, it uses capabilities where it has a comparative advantage,

such as maritime militia and law enforcement vessels, some of which are larger than U.S. Navy cruisers.

And it targets objectives like small offshore islands in which it believes Washington has little direct stake. Backed by its expanding suite of advanced access-denial capabilities, the intent of China's creeping militarization of the South China Sea is to give itself the ability to restrict U.S. maritime forces' traditional ability to project power and support allies within the first island chain running from Japan in the north through to the Philippines in the south.

The effect is to complicate U.S. military planning, undermine the confidence of regional countries in American security commitments, and ratchet up pressure on the U.S. alliance system in Asia.

Sometimes you hear people say that China's facilities in the South China Sea aren't such a problem because they would be an easy target in a major conventional conflict. With respect, that is not the point.

We are confronting a profoundly different Asia-Pacific region if the United States has to contemplate fighting its way back into the South China Sea, a vital international waterway that carries $5.3 trillion worth of trade annually, $1.2 trillion of it American.

To respond effectively to this complex challenge, the United States needs to invest in adequate nuclear and conventional military capabilities to maintain a favorable military balance in the region capable of deterring escalation, including attacks against U.S. or allied forces. Credible military forces are also vital for resisting coercion and shaping a benign regional security environment.

Rather than reacting piecemeal to each event, the United States needs a considered proactive counter-coercion strategy that is part of a broader coherent Asia strategy.

Continuing to deter any further move at Scarborough Shoal is particularly important. China's modus operandi is to target weak points. Any further significant change in the status quo in the South China Sea would feed doubts in the region and increase pressure on America's vital alliances in Northeast Asia.

However, an effective U.S. strategy must extend beyond military might and overcome the bureaucratic and military scenes needed to match China's comprehensive national approach. The starting point has to be recognition that the United States is already engaged in an intense competition both of interest and values in the Western Pacific.

The outcome will shape not only the future of the region, but the United States' long term security and prosperity. By building what Dean Acheson called "situations of strength," the United States can increase the cost to China of pursuing its gray zone strategy.

It should strengthen existing alliances and network them more closely, as well as working with allies to build maritime capability and resilience in Southeast Asian countries. The United States also needs to continue to champion the rule of war in fundamental principles, such as freedom of navigation.

Secrecy and deniability are part of Beijing's strategy. So wherever possible the United States should promote transparency about China's activities. This in the intention behind the CSIS [Center

for Strategic and International Studies] Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative.

Implementing this strategy will require carefully picking and choosing which of China's moves to contest, clarifying how the United States will respond to deter them, and being prepared to accept greater calculated risk.

Finally, the United States should not cede nonmilitary spaces to China either which also seeks to expand its wider influence, which is why continuing American leadership on trade and investment is so important.

America's allies are looking for reassurance that America has the clarity of purpose to develop an effective strategy. And the resolve to carry it through with firmness and consistency. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Shearer can be found in the Appendix on page 51.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Dr. Chivvis.

STATEMENT OF DR. CHRISTOPHER S. CHIVVIS, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENSE POLICY CENTER, SENIOR POLITICAL SCIENTIST, RAND CORPORATION

Dr. CHIVVIS. Thank you and good morning Chairman Thornberry, acting Ranking Member Cooper, members of the committee and staff.

I think this hearing comes at an important moment in our national effort to address hybrid threats, especially from Russia. I am grateful for the chance to be here.

I will start by noting that there are many terms for hybrid warfare. Some analysts refer to it as gray zone warfare, others competition short of conflict, still others active measures, and there are other terms as well.

Now of course, each of these terms has a slightly different meaning, but they all point to one big thing. Moscow has developed and deployed its own version of the whole-of-government approach to achieve its major foreign policy objectives. More often than not, this is at the expense of America's interests.

The Kremlin is using hybrid strategies to weaken NATO, undermine European unity as a pretext for military action, and to influence a range of policy decisions among our allies and to do so in ways that complicate and slow down our own ability to respond.

Its use of hybrid strategies is linked to its broader military modernization program which has been going on for a decade now, and is itself bound up with President Putin's determination to challenge and even undermine the American-built world order.

So what are the main characteristics of hybrid warfare as practiced by Russia? Well there are at least three that come to mind.

First of all, it is population-centric. In other words, it focuses on the people of the countries that it targets.

Second of all, it is persistent. Russian military leaders, and I am thinking here, for example, of the current chairman of the Russian general staff, Valery Gerasimov, these leaders have rejected the idea that a country can be truly at peace in the 21st century. In-

stead, they think conflict is ever-present, even if it varies in intensity in different places, and at different times.

Third, Russia's hybrid warfare strategies economize on the use of kinetic force. This helps Moscow maintain plausible deniability, and get inside our decision loop. It is also because the Kremlin would actually prefer not to get into an outright military conflict with the United States or with NATO.

So what are the instruments that Russia typically uses for hybrid war? Well, there are several, including information operations via outlets like RT [Russia Today], cyber tools for espionage or for direct attacks on our networks, proxies that can range from protest groups to Kremlin-funded motorcycle gangs and other thugs, economic influence of various kinds, covert action with Russian special forces, military intelligence or other operatives, and of course, overt political pressure, and military intimidation.

As we speak, Russian hybrid operations appear to be under way in several places of significance to American interests. Russia is widely suspected of aiming to influence upcoming national elections in two key allied countries, France and Germany.

Russia has been working to undermine stability and project power via hybrid strategies in the Balkans. For example, with an attempt to stage a coup against a pro-NATO government in Montenegro just last fall, only a few months before Montenegro was to become the 29th member of the NATO alliance.

Russian hybrid strategies also extend to countries in Central Europe, where Russia has a legacy economic influence, especially in the energy sector. Estonia and Latvia are also potential targets of Russian hybrid efforts, although they have recently strengthened their defenses against these strategies. Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, and other countries along Russia's border all remain vulnerable.

Now, it is true that Russian resources for hybrid warfare aren't infinite. And many scholars have also pointed out that the Soviets used similar strategies during the Cold War. It may also be helpful to draw attention to the fact that Russia views many U.S. policies as hybrid warfare aimed against its own interests.

Nevertheless, the reality is that the Kremlin's use of hybrid strategies has been growing significantly in the last few years and at our expense.

I think these threats should be treated with greater urgency. Hybrid strategies may not have the immediacy of the threat from the Islamic State, but if left unchecked, they can do equal if not greater damage to American power and interests.

We need a strategy to combat this effectively, and I have laid out some of the bones of such a strategy in my written testimony. One is strong interagency coordination. Another is effective counter-messaging. Yet another is ensuring that the U.S. intelligence community has the resources it needs to get on top of the threat in the European theater.

A successful strategy is also going to mean giving America's full support to European anti-corruption and institution-building efforts, including defense institution building. U.S. special operations forces clearly have a role to play here as trainers, but they can also help with counter-messaging and in other areas.

Finally, European partners and allies are often the first line of defense, and we have to do everything we can to support their own efforts to push back against the Kremlin, all while recognizing that America itself isn't immune. The process of developing this strategy should be led by the National Security Council staff.

Congress' role is in ensuring funding for the related institution-building and anti-corruption programs, as well as the intelligence collection and analysis requirements. Raising public awareness with hearings such as this one is also a very valuable contribution.

We can't necessarily deter Russian hybrid strategies; we may be able to deter elements of them, for example, cyberattacks. But the key to dealing with this problem is to strengthen our defenses and those of our allies. It is important to get the balance right between conventional deterrence, nuclear deterrence, and addressing hybrid threats.

Protecting America's interests in Europe calls for strength on all three fronts. But of all of these lines of effort, I am least confident about our glide path with regard to hybrid threats. That is why I am very pleased that you have decided to have this hearing today, and want to urge Congress and the rest of the U.S. Government to remain seized with this matter. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Chivvis can be found in the Appendix on page 59.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. And I appreciate the fact that y'all have emphasized—maybe we have the longest history of dealing with Russia with these tactics, but China is using them.

We didn't quite get to Iran and I want, as the hearing goes on, to look at that. Because it seems to me, what is successful by one will be picked up and used by others.

I just want to ask, kind of going back a little bit in the history. Some of the press reports recently have talked about the Soviet efforts to spread a rumor that the U.S. Government was involved in assassinating Martin Luther King, Jr., that they spread the rumor U.S. intelligence had created the AIDS [acquired immune deficiency syndrome] virus up at Fort Detrick.

That they used a web of front groups, secret payments to activists and articles, to try to prevent our deployment of medium-range missiles in Europe in the 1980s, Pershing II and Glickmans and so forth. I wonder about recent leaks that we have seen from WikiLeaks and others, if that could not be a part of this web of activities to destabilize.

And then, I think, the Emerging Threat Subcommittee had a hearing last week, where one of the witnesses had reprinted a chart from Russian military doctrine that talked about the goal of disorienting the political and military leadership of the victim and spreading dissatisfaction among the population.

And you think about that, and you think about their efforts in the past, and what may be happening now. Is that a part of the goal of hybrid warfare? To disorient the political and military leadership, spreading dissatisfaction?

Dr. Hoffman.

Dr. HOFFMAN. Yes, sir. And, one doesn't really have to go into either fictional accounts, or even back to the 1980s to see a lot of

this in Europe, where I have been focusing most of my research of late in the Baltics in the European.

There are efforts by Russian entities to loan money to political parties. They are funding studies to advance their interests, to put out issues on climate change, or energy usage, that benefit them directly.

There are very concerted campaigns going on against the Swedes and the Finns, to undermine them and separate them from NATO. There is some very interesting research by scholars in Sweden that is showing this, one of the new aspects of disinformation.

In the old days, the Russians would work really hard to bribe somebody to write an article or get a rumor into a newspaper in Canada or the United States. And you would hope that over a series of months that those articles might get some momentum.

But today with computers and with automated tools and bots, I mean, you can put an innuendo into a crummy source on Monday, it can be picked up by three supporting news sites on Wednesday, and then it gets picked up by 20 or 30.

And by Friday, some mainstream individual is picking this up as a fact and articulating it. And Sweden has been attacked on this, and Sweden has been threatened by some aspects.

There are several cases documented by the German intelligence that show that rumors against Mrs. Merkel or rumors against German actions with respect to immigrants, have been picked up and planted by external sources, probably of Russian origin, to attack the German cohesiveness and the German political process.

So we see this kind of activity in the current tense and contemporary conflict right now directed against many of our allies and all along the periphery. I don't know if it is a concerted, integrated, campaign. I don't think Mr. Putin is 10 feet tall.

I don't think he is playing three-level chess against us. But he has got a lot of checkers games going on simultaneously.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Shearer, do you see efforts from China to disorient the political and military leadership, and spread dissatisfaction among the people, whether it is here at home or with countries around China's periphery?

Mr. SHEARER. Mr. Chairman, I think one distinction between China's use of hybrid warfare tactics and what we are seeing from Russia, is that at least today, China has been a little more restrained and a little less aggressive, and it hasn't crossed that threshold into the actual use of conventional military force, for example, which Russia has, as Dr. Hoffman said.

I think China is using—making very aggressive use of lawfare. So for example, its announcement of an air defense identification zone in the East China Sea, which it did in 2013; its rejection of the recent arbitration award in favor of the Philippines, which shed doubt over many of China's legal claims in the South China Sea; its very assertive use of economic sanctions and embargoes, and so on, which we are seeing deployed today against South Korean companies for no greater offense than the country taking measures in its own defense.

And then finally, something I have seen in my own country, unfortunately, which is a more sophisticated influence campaign with growing Chinese control over the local ethnic media, for example,

and also media reports of China-sourced money making its way to the major political parties, both sides of politics in Australia.

So, I think a more sophisticated attempt to influence, rather than to actually destabilize us, thus far.

The CHAIRMAN. And briefly, Dr. Chivvis, and I realize that I am asking you to speculate here a bit. But, these leaks from WikiLeaks, Snowden, all of that sort of stuff, it has done such enormous damage to our national security. Could that be a part of a hybrid warfare effort by Russia?

Dr. CHIVVIS. Yes. I mean, it certainly could be.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. I want to come back to what we do about it in a bit, but at this point I yield to Mr. Cooper.

Mr. COOPER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to put all three of you on the spot, by asking a completely different line of questions. I think too often, we assume what has been assumed in the testimony today, that it is a U.S. point of view. What if we were to put ourselves in the shoes of many of our adversaries, and the way they might view us?

And I do this with intent. I think the first rule of war is to understand the nature of the enemy. So what are they thinking about us? I would start by questioning the chairman's first view that the U.S. has a binary view of war. We are either at war or at peace.

I don't think I need to remind these sophisticated witnesses that we really haven't declared a war since what—World War II. So, these have been varieties of police actions. And right now, we are failing to even authorize, properly, through a use of force resolution, our current troops that are in the Middle East.

So, we have indulged legally in all sorts of permutations of war, whether the Pentagon has acknowledged these formally or not. On many other different levels, and I think a lot of this is probably paranoia on the part of countries around the world.

I don't think I need to remind you that, I think, traditionally, India even viewed our Peace Corps as a weapon of war and refused to allow any Peace Corps volunteers in the country of India. Because they were somehow suspect.

Some countries view our cultural exports as Western imperialism. Because it is kind of ironic that in the country of Iran, we are more popular there than any other Muslim country. Because of the sophisticated Iranian youth, kind of like our movies and our books.

I think some of these countries maybe attribute to us a whole-of-government approach which we, in fact, do not have, and incapable of projecting. But they still see a unified sort of aspect to our policies. And I am not even counting our intelligence agencies activities, which have been performing during the Cold War, and after the Cold War, things like that.

Because it is my understanding that Vladimir Putin tries to blame us for all sorts of color revolutions, even though we probably had nothing to do with the Orange Revolution, or the other varieties of color revolutions. So, to me, if we put ourselves in the shoes of our adversaries, and of neutral countries around the world, it is a much more confusing picture.

Because we may actually be better at some of these things than we are giving ourselves credit for. Now, there is some bureaucratic slowness, probably, in the Pentagon, for using these as formal in-

struments of U.S. power, but just the lack of whole-of-government coordination doesn't necessarily mean we are being ineffective.

So, to me, I would like to try that approach on. And I am sorry to upend your testimonies. But to me, it is perhaps a more useful analysis than the ones that you have pursued. I will start with Dr. Hoffman.

Dr. HOFFMAN. I would be glad to respond to that just a little bit, sir. It would be naive of me, as an historian, not to acknowledge that our actions, say, against Cuba, our actions against Iran, perhaps in the 1950s, and some actions against Central America don't represent some activity that would be considered non-traditional forms of influence operations of our own.

But I do believe that both, particularly Mr. Putin and his clique, which are largely from the intelligence community, are psychologically positioning themselves to look at the color-coded revolutions that I don't believe we fomented, I don't believe we supported, we may have encouraged, but we certainly didn't engage significant resources to push behind.

I think he is just looking for an excuse to justify most of his own actions. But, I know in the Cold War—I am old enough to, you know, be a Cold War veteran, and understand that period of time, that we, too, played this game under the table in the shadow wars, pretty extensively.

And anybody who has read Mr. Gates' memoirs on shadow wars would understand the competition. I, as a young man, had the opportunity to travel in the 1970s in East and West Germany, and saw the competition between two different forms of government, and understand that conflict.

I think, overall, for humanity and for the West, and for the world, that our competition, again, as I close, my last sentence, our understanding of the opponent, and our engagement of them, consistent with our democratic principles and values is the approach that we should be taking. And I think all of our strategies probably reflect that.

I do want to pick up one point that you made about the binary nature, and I, in my written testimony, include the little chart. But I don't think it is all black and white. I think we actually do compete in that space a little bit.

I do think our adversaries emphasize, under the table, illegitimate forms of influence. We see building partnership capacity, theater engagement, security force assistance, the Defense Cooperative Security Agency, mil-to-mil engagements, interactions that we have at NDU with foreign governments.

You know, we see this, I think, incrementally, and in a stovepipe manner, but they are forms of influence, interaction with the world, I think, people benefit from. And we might not strategically orchestrate that very effectively, but I think it is a very positive, a very constructive, a very transparent kind of thing.

So, I think we are involved, but maybe we are not strategically, coherently influencing the way we want to in certain regions. And that is an area that, perhaps the joint world and the NSC can improve our strategic responses, because we buy things, sometimes, and I don't think we understand that when we are supporting a

particular ally and building up their military, we think we are stabilizing something.

But Mr. Putin, he likes that weakness. He wants to see peripheral states along the Eastern seaboard to be spheres of influence for him. You know, he wants them to be destabilized. And that is, I think, something that we need to take to heart.

We focus, in the military, much on the hardware of the Soviet Union, or Russia, today. Its anti-access/area denial capabilities, A2/AD, has become a buzzword in defense. And I think that the A2/RD, the anti-alliance and the reality denial activities that the Russians are up to, is something we need to, you know, to push back on.

So, I take your point. I do believe we are competing, we are just not, probably, competing as strategically and coherently as I think we do. And we need to understand how the opponent sees that. When we build up the Philippines, or work with the Vietnamese, clearly the Chinese see that as something against their interests, and we need to be transparent and understanding about that.

Mr. SHEARER. Sir, with respect to China, I totally agree. It is very important to understand their worldview, and what they are thinking, and of course, they come to this problem as a country with very significant achievements.

They have dragged hundreds of millions of people out of poverty, and they have a history of imperialism in their country and so forth, that they feel very strongly, and I think there is no question that they feel encircled, if you like, by American allies, is how they would put it.

And therefore, at one level, it is not unreasonable for them to look to sort of push back that American influence. What has changed, I think, most recently, is that China now has more capability to do that, including very sophisticated military capabilities.

And seemingly, under its current political leadership, more intent to do that. And I agree that China doesn't want a conflict, for the reasons I mentioned in my statement. I think the problem, though, is that what China does seem to want, is a traditional, 19th century style sort of sphere of influence, where the region is organized politically, economically, and in security terms, according to its preferences.

And the real problem is that, in the region, we have an order which has worked very well for 70 years, and produced an extraordinary period of prosperity and peace, in which China has risen so incredibly successfully. And it is a question about what sort of region we want in the future it seems to me.

And the problem here is that if part of the deal and the sphere of influence is giving China what it wants, which is ultimately an end to the American alliances and the sort of say that I am describing in the affairs of regional countries, that is a very different region, and I think a very problematic one for us all, including for U.S. interests ultimately.

Dr. CHIVVIS. Congressman Cooper, you raise an important issue, and there is no question about it that Russia sees many things that the United States does as hybrid warfare. It said so on many occasions. You are absolutely right.

It views our support for democracy promotion programs as hybrid warfare, things like NDI [National Democratic Institute], IRI [International Republican Institute], our general support to civil society, it all sees as part of a broader U.S. hybrid warfare strategy.

The question for me is always, well, okay. That may be the case, but what is the significance from a foreign policy or a defense perspective? Because it doesn't change the reality that Russia is using these tactics in Europe to undermine American interests.

So whether or not it is true that we do similar kinds of things around the world, it doesn't change the fact that the Kremlin right now is actively using hybrid warfare strategies to work against and undermine things that we have built in Europe over the course of the last several decades.

So I guess my answer is a yes and a no at the same time.

Mr. COOPER. I know my time has expired, but I would like to hope that in your answers to other people's questions you can somehow include these two quick thoughts. One, should we kick out RT from America?

And two, when we mention South China Sea troubles, I wish we could hear more about creeping Chinese influence in Hong Kong, which is probably economically much more significant and yet somehow it is not as much in the news.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Wilson.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank each of you for being here today. And a question I want to begin with, Dr. Hoffman, and each of you can answer, my fellow Cold War veteran. So I am grateful to be with you.

In recent weeks North Korea has continued to launch ballistic missiles off the coast of South Korea in continued defiance of the international community. How effective are North Korea's hybrid methods in obtaining its strategic goals?

In addition, what capabilities does the United States and its partners have, and allies, to confront the hybrid threats of North Korea? And each of you can answer, again, beginning with Dr. Hoffman.

The CHAIRMAN. Microphone.

Mr. WILSON. Mike.

The CHAIRMAN. If you would hit the mike, please?

Dr. HOFFMAN. Yes, I am sorry. The North Koreans have never really been much of my research base. The only time I have explored that was a few years ago after the war with Hezbollah the North Koreans had a little bit of chatter about how successful Hezbollah was against the Israelis. And there was some open source material on how they might adapt their forces.

And so my discussion on, and research on, North Korea has been limited largely to how they have adapted their force structure for a post-conflict sort of insurgency. They have prepared themselves, you know, if we were to invade North Korea or to be involved in a post-regime stability operation, how they would conduct a hybrid campaign to attrit us over time. And I think they perhaps have even exercised that a little bit.

But what we have seen of late with North Korea, you have got the missile threats, you know, kind of the high-end things, intimidating both South Korea, forcing us to invest in the theater area

missile defense system. They threatened our friends in Japan with their missiles.

The recent assassination in Kuala Lumpur using a weapon of mass destruction is something that is of great concern, I think, to the security community writ large. It is clearly a violation of a norm that we didn't want to see anybody pass. And there hasn't been sufficient cost-imposing actions, you know, taken yet on the North Koreans.

We have contained a lot of their nefarious economic activity, money laundering, human trafficking. We have limited their counterproliferation efforts, which I think is a hybrid technique that doesn't get mentioned very much. But they have been successful in the past at exporting some missile components to adversaries of ours. So that is kind of a concern.

But I don't have anything more direct or specific than that. I have been focusing on the Middle East and Europe for the last years, and Iran.

Mr. WILSON. Well, you certainly have addressed every issue not being focused.

Dr. HOFFMAN. Yes, sir.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you.

Mr. SHEARER. Yes, sir. Sir, I have spoken mostly about China, but North Korea is, in my view, the most acute security threat facing us in the Asia-Pacific region. And the answer to your question about the hybrid capabilities is, unfortunately, they are very effective.

We have seen them carry out an assassination using a suspected nerve agent in another country. We have seen them carry out a range of similar actions over many years now, and they are very good at it.

They are very good at acquiring illicit technologies; the rate of progress in their missile programs and their nuclear weapons program is very disturbing. And they also are very good at funding these programs by a variety of nefarious means, organized crime, counterfeiting.

It is extraordinary some of the activities they get up to around the world often using their diplomatic missions as cover.

And then finally they have got very advanced cyber capabilities, which we saw exhibited in the Sony hack a couple of years ago. So their capabilities are very strong.

On our side, nuclear and conventional deterrence remains vital as always. Increasingly important, though, missile defense has to be part of that deterrent picture and it is vital there that the United States is networking its missile defenses more effectively with allies in North Asia especially, like Japan and South Korea.

The alliances generally will be vital in our response to the North Korea challenge. I think the idea that we can just sort of rely on China to sort out the problem is a mistake and rock solid alliances have to be the foundation of our strategy for dealing with North Korea.

And then finally, there is a place for effective, targeted U.S.-led sanctions. They have had some success in the past at really putting the screws on the North Koreans. And personally I think we need to go back there again.

Dr. CHIVVIS. I don't think I have anything to add on North Korea.

Mr. WILSON. And thank you very much, Dr. Chivvis.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. McEachin.

Mr. MCEACHIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning, gentlemen. Isn't it true that international institutions and alliances take on heightened importance in a context of hybrid threats? For example, the FVEY's [Five Eyes] intelligence sharing agreement can only work if there is goodwill and trust among the parties.

First of all, I would like for each of you all to comment about the importance of that arrangement, if you would? And then share with us your impressions about the administration's attitudes towards these institutions and whether they are enhancing our alliances or damaging to our security?

Dr. HOFFMAN. They are excellent questions, sir. I think I alluded in my comment that I think much of the tactics, particularly from Russia, but also China are against alliances.

They are trying to find cracks and seams and actually widen them, separate us from them economically, politically, and from a security perspective. So I think that is a key commonality, particularly with both the Chinese and the Russian activity.

In my countering hybrid threat strategy, I have an element that is about political competition, and it is about strengthening and employing all regional organizations and legal mechanisms at our disposal. So I would emphasize aspects such as the EU, which has an economic, political, and social integration aspect that I think helps fight off some of the Russian intrusions.

So I believe that the need to strengthen, sustain alliances, and work within alliances is kind of critical. Some of the statements that the administration made or before, at least maybe in the campaign, I think most of the comments since Mr. Trump has been inaugurated, such as his comments about NATO, Mr. Tillerson's visit to Munich and to Brussels, Mr. Mattis' trip to see the Japanese and also to Munich and Brussels have been about the importance of these alliances and everybody working together.

The second aspect of my strategy, also though, does require an enhanced alliance capability investments. And Mr. Trump, Mr. Mattis, and Mr. Tillerson have been emphasizing to all of our allies that the burdens of security and their own capabilities need to notch it up a little bit.

So I think that twin message about the importance of allies has been part, I think central to the administration's message and also the need to increase their capability levels and defense spending levels.

And I think that two-step message is, judging from the latest reports from NATO, that it is being effective. I don't know about Asia. Thank you, sir.

Mr. SHEARER. Sir, thank you for your question. As someone who started his career as an Australian intelligence officer, I have been involved in the FVEY's partnership really for over a quarter of a century now. And it is a massive force multiplier for us, and I think it has never been as important as it is today.

And as you said, it rests on goodwill and trust rather than a sort of more transactional approach. And that, maintaining that is crit-

ical and it is no secret to anyone on this committee that the Snowden revelations, for example, did enormous damage to the FVEYs and really were a blow to that trust.

But I think the strength of the arrangement is demonstrated by how well it sort of absorbed that shock and continues to play such a critical role, really in everything we do around all those threats we are talking about today.

And your point about institutions is spot on as well because ultimately this is an normative contest. It is a contest about who is going to set the rules. And I don't personally believe that in the Asia-Pacific China wants to completely demolish the regional order and start again.

It is not a revisionist power in that sense, but nor is it a status quo power. It wants to kind of selectively pick and choose rules that it is going to follow.

And just going back to the earlier point about Hong Kong, I mean, I think that is a really good example where Great Britain did a deal, if you like, with China in good faith and then over time you get this crab-walking away from the deal.

And for various reasons, not least all about economic equities in China, which are very significant, yet somehow we are not as vocal in defending our values and our principles as we should be.

So I think strengthening institutions is incredibly important. That is why it is really vital, I think, that the U.S. remains engaged in Asian institutions like APEC [Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation] and the East Asia Summit and with ASEAN [Association of Southeast Asian Nations].

And having just traveled to Southeast Asia I can say there is real anxiety out there about, you know, is the President going to come to APEC? And will the U.S. sort of drop back its level of engagement with Southeast Asia?

And those countries are looking for a lead and they are also hedging. They are also trying to get their minds around a world with less U.S. engagement. So it is very important that the institutions respect it and engage with them.

Mr. MCEACHIN. Thank you. My time has expired, and I yield back. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Stefanik.

Ms. STEFANIK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Hoffman, in the NDAA [National Defense Authorization Act] for fiscal year 2016, almost 2 years ago, this committee noted concern about hybrid and unconventional threats and directed the DOD [Department of Defense] to submit a strategy for countering unconventional and hybrid threats. Unfortunately, to date the DOD has yet to submit or even begin to coordinate with other government agencies.

In our language in that NDAA we also noted that, quote, "Most state sponsors of unconventional warfare such as Russia and Iran have doctrinally linked conventional warfare, economic warfare, cyber warfare, information operations, intelligence operations, and other activities seamlessly in an effort to undermine U.S. national security objectives and the objectives of U.S. allies alike."

My question for you is, first, do you agree with this assessment still and the need to develop such a comprehensive whole-of-gov-

ernment strategy? And second, in terms of countering hybrid warfare, are we any closer to linking all of our tools and capabilities such as conventional, unconventional, economic, cyber, intelligence, and information operations in our effort to counter these adversarial threats?

Dr. HOFFMAN. In short, no, ma'am. We are not as ready. I do agree that the committee's language was necessary. I was in the Pentagon working at the time and we actually directed some of the similar language. But I am not aware of where the status of those reports are.

There has been a lot of work done by the special operations community and the military about unconventional warfare, but I think they have a narrower definition. And this is one of the problems with hybridity and the Russian approach is that it transcends this committee's charter. It goes beyond NATO's capability.

I think one of the reasons I was working with General Breedlove on hybridity is that he understood that the challenge to Europe went beyond the narrow military charter of itself.

And I think we need to—one of the advantages of thinking of this multidimensionally, the way we have with hybrid threats, is that the economic aspects, the political, and the informational are more apparent, as they were to General Breedlove.

He understood that the resilience of Europe, the border security issues, the immigration challenges, the propaganda, aspects of European security that were not under his charter was something that he was trying to pull into the conversation.

And I don't believe we are organized. As I said in my series of questions in my oral statement, I believe that the organization and the orchestration of our responses needs to be more strategically integrated. And I don't believe it is.

And I don't know where that is resonant. And I don't know enough about the covert activities up at Langley to make an assessment on that. It has not been my area of focus academically.

Ms. STEFANIK. Thank you. Would the other witnesses like to add to that?

Dr. Chivvis.

Dr. CHIVVIS. Sure. As I said in my written comments, I think the locus for developing this kind of a strategy is the National Security Council staff.

And I would recommend a regular set of meetings at the PCC [Policy Coordination Committee] level to establish some kind of a national-level strategy. That is how I would start this process rather than in the Defense Department itself.

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Shearer.

Mr. SHEARER. The only thing I would add is that I think it is important that there is an overarching strategy but also regional strategies, if you like, because the precise mix of tactics and approaches and capabilities that is used in Europe, for example by the Russians, is different from what the Chinese are doing in the South China Sea and the East China Sea.

And I think we need to make sure our strategies are tailored to the problem.

Ms. STEFANIK. Thank you. My second question is in reference to a subcommittee hearing I chaired last week for the Emerging

Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee. The subject was information warfare and counter-propaganda strategies.

One of our witnesses, former Assistant Secretary of Defense Michael Lumpkin, described the State Department as a 19th century bureaucracy using 20th century tools against 21st century adversaries. Would each of you agree with that assessment?

And since the State Department is so critical to countering hybrid threats, what are some of the ways that Congress could help here? What are some of the ways that DOD could integrate better with State, for example?

Certainly if State faces significant cuts as the current administration proposes, how can DOD help fill that void? I would like to get your assessment of what the proper model would be.

Dr. Hoffman.

Dr. HOFFMAN. I watched that hearing and read all the testimonies, and I was particularly impressed with Mr. Lumpkin's. I am not sure that I agree with him that the GEC [Global Engagement Center] could be somehow injected with steroids in the State Department and that was the proper place for it.

And then when I was preparing my statement I was considering, you know, the NSC. On the strategic side I agree with my fellow panelists that regional directors do think about these matters in a strategic and comprehensive way.

But I worry about operationalizing the NSC to get into something that involves right now economic activity, which is difficult the way the NSC is kind of focused on foreign policy and military aspects. So again, I am not quite sure where to place this.

We have experimented with a variety of locations and we have experimented with things like the National Counterterrorism Center. And maybe there is some need for some study that some of the studies that you have requested in the past that haven't been completed should really examine.

But this issue of counter-messaging on the propaganda side and the disinformation is a key element. It is a major thrust that we are not well organized on that needs some investment, some pushing.

It just—whose jurisdiction does all this fit into and a method that is seeking to avoid hard surfaces and is looking for all those institutional barriers and cracks to kind of try to get into. But we are not there and we probably need to push the government to respond in some way.

Ms. STEFANIK. Thank you. My time has expired.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. O'Halleran.

Mr. O'HALLERAN. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I am sad to hear what you just said about us not being organized. It bothers me and it brings to mind our intelligence operations prior to 9/11 and the issues that occurred afterwards.

And I still don't know that we are fully there where we need to be in that.

But I am going to take up Mr. Cooper's idea about the South China Sea. Throw in there if you have any concerns about the Philippines and what containment strategies we can use?

Start with Dr. Hoffman.

Dr. HOFFMAN. I have some grave concerns about the Philippines, whether, you know, Mr. Duarte's actions represent a change in foreign policy for the Philippines that is permanent, whether it is a temporary alteration or an aberration in a longstanding—with the Philippines going back the better part of this century.

But I do believe that the Chinese are trying to abet that change and they are trying to institutionalize it as much as they can, which would limit our ability to have potential bases or access in that particular region of the world.

I am particularly concerned about China's activities with the building up of the missile bases and the atolls. I think they will continue that. They will continue to push on the threshold. They will continue to seize as many islands.

I think they are going to solve their entire South China Sea and energy access as incrementally and as illegally as they possibly can over a period of time.

I think that is their strategy in the region. And to undercut us and any potential other ally that we might want to, you know, build in the region.

Mr. O'HALLERAN. Containment.

Dr. HOFFMAN. Yes. Well, again we are not—I don't believe we are imposing costs sufficiently either diplomatically or economically against the Chinese for the actions they took. They have made promises and they have continued to not live up to all those promises.

You know, they have started building up these bases and said they wouldn't arm them and they have. And I think they are going to continue to do so.

That is part of, I think, a deliberate strategy of misinformation and diplomatic doublespeak that they are going to continue for a period of time. But I will have to defer to the regional expert in that particular area.

Mr. O'HALLERAN. And let us go to the regional expert. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. SHEARER. Thank you for the question, sir. So clearly the U.S.-Philippines alliance is going through a difficult period and President Duarte has got some very outspoken views. Myself, I am concerned about the situation, and I think we need to work very hard at it. But I don't think we need to despair totally yet.

I was in Manila a couple of weeks ago. And my impression is that the Philippines, like many countries around Southeast Asia, wants the strongest possible economic relationship with China, and wants the benefits that come from that particular investment in infrastructure and so forth, which it needs. But it also wants the United States.

The very clear message to me was that they value the U.S. alliance. They know how important it is to them. And their military in particular know how important U.S. training, and backup, if you like, is. And I think that is absolutely critical. Even despite all the noise and the problems, the core of U.S. exercises with the Philippines has gone on uninterrupted.

Two or three of them have been cancelled, but more than a hundred are going ahead, which is good news. And the enhanced defense cooperation arrangements are still intact.

So, while I don't think we should be complacent, I don't think we should sort of give up the Philippines yet either. And I do think, as I said in my statement, that it is particularly important because of the strategic location of Scarborough Shoal, about 150 nautical miles from Manila, that China is prevented from moving ahead and doing its dredging an island and building another of these 10,000 foot runways which can basically station a Chinese fighter regiment.

So I think, focusing on maintaining deterrence against that step is absolutely vital. As is continuing to build up the Philippines military's own capabilities, especially their maritime capabilities.

Mr. O'HALLERAN. Thank you. And I yield back, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Banks.

Mr. BANKS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thanks to each of you for being here today and for your testimony. In a few weeks I will be joining some other members of the committee to travel to Eastern Europe to gain a better understanding of the extent of these gray zone strategies as Dr. Chivvis articulates.

And I wonder, based on that, if each of you could articulate or help me define what you would determine as the crossing of the threshold of war? And also if you could just talk for a little bit about what are the best ways that we can identify and respond to these actions?

Dr. HOFFMAN. We need to work on the educational basis. This is something that I included, specifically in figure 1, in written testimony where I tried to create what we don't have in the American conceptualization of war. We have this black and white, or kinds of war. But we don't understand the competitive conflicts space.

So I try to define a continuum and I make a distinction between being in conflict with somebody and being at war with somebody. And I drew a red line in my chart.

When you apply organized violence, when you apply lethal force to someone, you have crossed over, in my mind, from using instruments of conflict into using instruments of war. So irregular war and terrorism cross over that line.

But the activities we see right now where people bump into boats, where they intimidate air traffic, where they impede into airspace, where they try to corrupt or penetrate with a false-front organization, when RT comes in and sets up shop and starts spewing a series of rumors, innuendos, and false information, you are in conflict with somebody because you are contesting and competing for influence and control over either population or benefits of being in the area.

To me that red line is somewhat important. I do believe there is a professional domain and jurisdiction for the military in the art of war that is applied violence for political objectives.

And then there is broader areas in which other instruments play. And that is the conceptual problem we are kind of struggling with. We all use the phrase spectrum of war and we all use the phrase sometimes continuum of conflict. But nobody has ever defined it.

U.S. joint doctrine is there are two forms. There is irregular and there is traditional. And think about the word traditional. Traditional defined by us, not in a commonly understood, you know, kind of thing.

So that is the research I have been trying to help the chairman who has been interested in this conceptualization problem. The chairman recognizes the problem, intellectually and conceptually, on how we are educating our officers.

Mr. SHEARER. So that is one way to sort of explain how this works in the South China Sea context, is what some analysts call a "cabbage strategy" from the Chinese. And that is, the first thing they will do is move in their maritime militia which are fishing boats, unarmed fishing boats. But they will coordinate them and sort of convoy them in. They did this with about 300 at the same time around the Senkakus.

Then, if there is a robust response from the other country to that, for example their coast guard responds, the Chinese will move in their coast guard ships, which as I said, are in at least two cases larger than American cruisers. I mean, very big; they're warships, except that they are painted white, and they are assigned to the coast guard. So that is their next layer.

And then if the other country chooses to escalate again, they have got naval forces over the horizon. And so each time, what they are doing, is they are putting the onus on the Philippines or Japan, either to submit to their move or to escalate. So that is the thinking.

And then where does that become actual armed conflict? Well after that there are warships bumping into each other. There are warships, you know, signaling each other. There are warning shots.

And a new area is the whole sort of non-kinetics space using electronic warfare, lasers, et cetera, to, you know, affect the other. So it is a very complicated question, I guess.

And in terms of how we should respond? I think it is really important we don't draw false red lines. I think it is absolutely critical that we decide where to make a stand and then we make a stand. I think we have to be clearer about our commitments.

Sometimes ambiguity is a good thing in strategy. But I think we are in a phase in these different regions where we need to be clearer about what we will oppose and how we will oppose it.

I think we are going to have to accept more risk, calculated risk. But to impose cost, we have to accept more risk. We have to tighten our alliances as well.

Dr. CHIVVIS. When we are talking about responding we are already back on our heels, which is why we need to be defending against these things. You can't predict where the next hybrid warfare operation is going to occur.

There are certain characteristics of countries which are more vulnerable than others, corruption and historical links to Russia, divided populace, where we can at least expect that it might occur.

Mr. BANKS. My time has expired.

The CHAIRMAN. Mrs. Davis.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to all of you for being here. Speaking of being back on our heels, when we already have to respond, I wonder if you could comment on sort of where we are when we look at the interagency effort or response on some of the different levels?

It is really clear that Russia and China are pretty good at hybrid warfare, I think. And excellent in incorporating the elements of diplomacy, information, military, and economics.

And with some of the proposals right now, which would be essentially cutting some critical elements—where does that put us in terms of trying to make greater headway when we think of these different elements?

And I think you have made a case that, in fact, we do have interagency that is working in some of these areas. But my concern is will they stop? Will they be underresourced in those areas as they have been in the past?

Could you speak to that and what alarms you within that realm?

Dr. HOFFMAN. Well the two things that came to mind, the organization and being on our back foot and where the new administration has some emerging issues.

I am concerned about our ability to think strategically about cost-imposing actions. Particularly in the economic domain. Our desire to back out of the TPP [Trans-Pacific Partnership] in Asia I think has put us a little bit on the back foot from a leadership option.

It may have been a bad deal economically. It might not have been in America's best interest, particularly in a purely economic or an employment or a transactional perspective. But it is perceived or misperceived in Asia as a withdrawal from commitments.

It is perceived as opening up a vacuum for China, for other actors to step into that void. We may do better economically in a bilateral arrangement applying our huge market advantages to a series of deals over time. But that is going to take a period of time.

So I am concerned that we have lost a little bit of maneuver space on strategic leadership, on economic action, and that the administration needs to think about that. And I think, the new NSC, as it forms up, will have to put that together. Along with the economic advisors who are outside the NSC structure right now, which I think creates some interesting tension organizationally.

And I am still concerned about our counter-messaging thing that Ms. Stefanik brought up in her hearing. We need to, I think, respond appropriately both in Asia and in Europe a lot better than we are doing. I think there is an organizational dilemma there as well.

Mr. SHEARER. As I said in my statement, I think the military piece of this is very important, though our strategy has to extend well beyond that obviously as you said in your question. And diplomacy has to be front and center in this.

So it is not an either/or that you can sort of take from one and give to the other. We do need robust diplomatic capabilities and we need to make sure that our diplomatic capabilities are adapting to a much more complex world, obviously. So that is very important as part of this strategy.

I completely agree with Dr. Hoffman on the economic point. There are two elements of this. One is with regard to China, for example, we need to offer countries around the Asia-Pacific a compelling economic vision that is not China's.

And of course, the irony is that that is exactly what the Trans-Pacific Partnership did. And that is why I think it is such an unfor-

tunate setback. I don't think it is a setback forever, I think, you know, we can work out and recover from it.

But it is undeniably a setback because we actually want these countries to diversify their economic linkages and not be beholden to China, so that China can, you know, stop them from entering ports or stop exporting rare herbs to them when China chooses to do that. Incredibly important.

The other economic aspect is we need a more coordinated strategy so that we can use the United States economic leverage more effectively in response to China's efforts to build its influence through things like the "One Belt, One Road" initiative, but also through targeted sanctions when those are appropriate.

And there may come a time when those are appropriate in the South China Sea, for example. So that is very important.

And then, I think, the other aspect is the communication aspect where we have to get our messaging right. And that obviously is just harder and harder in this sort of world we are living in. But it shouldn't be impossible.

Mrs. DAVIS. Did you want to comment——

Dr. CHIVVIS. The problem——

Mrs. DAVIS [continuing]. The resources in addition to——

Dr. CHIVVIS. From our adversary's perspective, from the Russian perspective, General Gerasimov, who I mentioned in my comments, sees this as a four to one civilian to military effort. And I think that is a reality that we need to take into account when we think about the resources that we are putting towards this.

Mrs. DAVIS. Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I am sorry, would you say that one more time? Sees this as a what?

Dr. CHIVVIS. Four to one civilian——

The CHAIRMAN. Oh, four to one.

Dr. CHIVVIS. Four to one civilian to military ratio in terms of the effort.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. I am sorry, I just didn't understand what you said.

Dr. Abraham.

Dr. ABRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Shearer, I will start with you but certainly the other two gentlemen can chime in on this.

I read your testimony and certainly the importance of the deterrence of the South China Sea issue is fore and foremost in everybody's minds. Heretofore, in the last 18 to 24 months, the missteps and misinterpretation of intelligence, or whatever you want to call it, simply has not deterred construction and militarization of the South China Sea.

So my question is, hindsight being 20/20, we look back, what could have been done differently and what do we need to do from this point on if we are going to say "okay, enough is enough"? Where do we go from here?

Mr. SHEARER. Thank you. It is a very good question. There has actually—I agree with your broad assessment. We have collectively failed to deter China from this kind of creeping de facto militarization. I think there is very little doubt of that.

There have been tactical exceptions to that though. Last year the media reported that the U.S. had successfully deterred Beijing from making a move on Scarborough Shoal through a combination of very high-level political messaging and military posturing, deployment of A–10s and an aircraft carrier.

And that changed China's calculations. It ramped up the cost of what they were planning to do. And I think, you know, that is a good example of what we need to think about going forward, including deterring further moves on Scarborough Shoal.

So I think we need to be thinking about our vertical escalation options, which we did in that case. And then I think we need to be thinking about a broader set of other, if you like, horizontal escalation options. And we need to be engaging the Chinese and telling them that moving on Scarborough Shoal with dredges and so forth is not going to be acceptable.

And those other steps could include, for example, the U.S. making its legal position on claims in the South China Sea less ambiguous than it currently is.

Dr. ABRAHAM. I don't think China would listen to that very well.

Mr. SHEARER. I think it is about having a cumulative effect. So, I think as I said, at a certain point economic sanctions could come on the table if there are Chinese companies that are involved in the sort of massive environmental damage that is done when these places get kind of bulldozed and dredged and so forth. Then sanctions against those companies is probably an option.

And then I think you need to go to the things that China values and fears, if you like. And one thing that they don't want is closer, sort of encircling alliances around them.

So I think sending the signal to China that one of the United States responses will be to tighten its alliances, tighten its alliance with Japan and South Korea and Australia and make those alliances more capable and more able to deter China.

Dr. ABRAHAM. Dr. Chivvis, Dr. Hoffman, do you want to comment?

Dr. CHIVVIS. I will pass on the Asia question, thank you.

Dr. ABRAHAM. Okay. Let me follow up with a question that Dr. Banks had a while ago. We are talking about hybrid warfare, using an analogy of they look at it as death by a thousand cuts, so to speak. Where do we stop the bleeding militarily? Where do we intervene militarily to stop the bleeding to prevent the death?

Dr. Chivvis, I will ask you to start with that question.

Dr. CHIVVIS. That is obviously a difficult question and the main reason for that is that it is going to be different in every case. I think it is going to be difficult to develop some kind of a litmus test for when we deploy military forces into action, which is again why I emphasize the importance of building up our defenses against this. This is one of the things that makes this so hard.

Obviously there is, you can imagine, in any case a point at which our interests are so threatened that it becomes justified to use large-scale kinetic military force.

We have spent a lot of time at the RAND Corporation looking at different kinds of scenarios in the Baltic States, for example. And certainly you can imagine hybrid scenarios in a country like Esto-

nia which get out of hand and call for the deployment of significant military forces into combat.

So that doesn't mean that we will always know when that comes, which it is good that we are having conversations like this to think about it in advance.

Dr. ABRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Mrs. Hartzler.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So we were talking about China and Mr. Shearer, I want to build on that. And I apologize, I have multiple committee meetings at the same time here. So you may have answered this. But can you expound a little bit more on China's strategic goals and how hybrid activities help advance those goals?

Mr. SHEARER. Certainly ma'am. I think that the first thing I would say is that, at least at the moment, one of China's most important goals is to avoid a major conflict with the United States. That is not in its plans.

China wants to continue its rise. Its preoccupations are overwhelmingly internal in the sense that it has an authoritarian government that is struggling with a slowing economy, a number of problems stored up in that economy in the financial sector, in loans and so forth, separatist movements and so forth, massive environmental problems.

So its focus is very much internal, but at the same time it is a country which in the last decade or so, and much more so in the last few years, has been looking to increase its strategic space.

And the problem, of course, is that that means pushing back the United States influence and blunting the United States ability to project military power forward into the region, which has been one of the lynchpins of America's Asia strategy for a very long time.

The other problem of course is that China is rising not on its own in its own hemisphere, I guess the way the United States once did, but already with Japan, a major power next door to it, South Korea and a series of other countries, who are all very heavily invested in the U.S.-led order in the region and want to see it continue.

And hence based on all of that, China's strategy is to over time squeeze out U.S. influence using its anti-access and area denial capabilities to weaken the ability of the U.S. to project force, to create doubts in the minds of U.S. allies about whether the United States will be there for them when it is needed.

And ultimately, it would like to decouple those alliances and have a region where China is very central, where countries all around the region have to defer to China's choices about how the region is organized politically, economically, and in security terms.

That is their game and the way they are trying to do it, it has to be said with quite a lot of success so far, is to stay under that threshold of conflict with the United States.

Mrs. HARTZLER. What are some of the hybrid activities that they are doing with that? I know I came in and heard you shifting to their coast guard, you know, which is kind of a gray area.

Mr. SHEARER. Yes.

Mrs. HARTZLER. What are some of the other hybrid areas you would say they are employing?

Mr. SHEARER. They are very active in the communication space trying to influence domestic opinion using Chinese-owned news outlets and so forth. Social media, the internet, they have a very sophisticated cyber capability. They are active on that front. We talked about the paramilitary piece of this.

And then economically where, for example, right now they are using de facto sanctions against South Korean companies to show their displeasure about South Korea's decision to deploy the THAAD [Terminal High Altitude Area Defense] missile defense system in response to the threat from North Korea. I would say that.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Can you build on that as a—we have heard a lot about them being very forward-thinking and going into areas where typically our allies and buying up hotels, buying up areas.

Can you give more examples of some of their economic activities they are doing to try to project their power and gain influence?

Mr. SHEARER. Certainly. The main one is what they call the Belt and Road initiative, which is this idea of creating a sort of network of Chinese-funded infrastructure facilities stretching all the way from China through to the Middle East.

And examples of their purchasing or investing in ports and railroads and other critical pieces of strategic infrastructure, very often with a dual purpose in mind. So, mysteriously, China now has a de facto naval facility next door to the U.S. one in Djibouti.

There was in Australia a couple of years ago the Chinese bought a 99-year lease over the Port of Darwin, which happens to be the port used by the U.S. Marines to support their rotations through Northern Australia. So quite a sophisticated long-term strategic investment plan.

Mrs. HARTZLER. My time is up, but is there a map that shows all of their different spots where they have invested with a table that lists what those are?

Mr. SHEARER. Yes. CSIS actually has a whole project looking at that, so I could get that information for you.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Yes. That would be great. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The information referred to was not available at the time of printing.]

The CHAIRMAN. Let me circle back around to a couple items that we have kind of touched on, but first one we haven't touched on. Does anybody have any comments about Iran's activities that may fall within hybrid warfare?

Dr. Hoffman.

Dr. HOFFMAN. Sir. We did a study. I believe it was 2009 when Iran was a maritime hybrid threat as opposed to a ground-based threat. But clearly as an exporter of instability—they have an organization called the Quds Force, which is, you know, a special operations force that is basically in the business of advising foreign military nonstate actors into fairly capable hybrid threat actors such as Hezbollah.

They are in the business of creating instability through these hybrid actors that they sustain financially, they give advice and training to. But I also looked at Iran's naval capabilities.

They really don't have a conventional navy, haven't bought a frigate in 40 or 50 years, and I believe they are out of major missiles, but they have bought small boats. They have bought foreign boats from Europe.

They have ad hoc'd navigation and missile systems on top of these capabilities. They have some small submarines with advanced submarines. They have cruise missiles along the coast. They basically fight a hybrid war at sea as part of an exercise that they plan to swarm major capital ships.

They have bought or have acquired a significant number of Chinese influence mines. So they have the capability of trying to impose costs on us economically by attempting to close the Straits of Hormuz and then ambush and raid against any kind of naval forces and activity all along their coast.

So from a maritime perspective definitely a hybrid kind of threat in the classical sense, as well as the land projection capability. Admiral Stavridis has recently written on hybrid maritime threats as well, both in the Baltics where he and I were working, and in the Iranian area.

And Admiral Stavridis has published two articles in the Naval Institute Proceedings and one now in the Royal Uniform Services Journal in London in this particular area.

Iran I think is definitely an exporter of hybrid threats and multiplying them, and we see Hezbollah now in Syria getting some offensive skills that it didn't have in its repertoire before.

They were somewhat of a defensive force with their missiles and fighting capabilities in southern Lebanon against Israel. But now they are on the march. Whether that is a threat multiplier for Hezbollah or weakens them remains to be seen what kind of attrition they take over time.

But definitely Iran is definitely an issue that is worthy of study. And there are a variety of experts that I work with in the national intelligence community that are focused on that.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. Let me go back to your continuum for just a second and where you draw the line, violence, nonviolence. Where does the little green men fit in? Because they commit violence. They don't have a uniform. They try to blend in as, you know, indigenous separatist sort of thing. Which side of the line are they on?

Dr. HOFFMAN. Well, Crimea is somewhat of a unique case. I have actually tried to explore what was the violent count, and violence in terms of I am looking at lethality in terms of killed in action kind of thing, not in the movement of military force.

In one sense, that is a classical coup de main, a descent of a uniformed, organized military force and leadership. I view that in somewhat conventional terms, like us rushing into Panama where we already had forces.

The Russians had naval bases, troops, paramilitary. They had pretty much infiltrated Crimea. It would be interesting in a classified forum to discuss the previous penetration of Crimea informationally, cyber, and influence. I believe a lot of phone calls, a lot of people were sick that day or didn't attend work.

There was a lot of prep. We missed this in our study at military. We kind of start with the enemy order of battle on the day the bat-

tle began, but if you looked at, in studying Czechoslovakia and Hungary, there is a lot of activity there going on months before that the Russians do. And that case it can be seen as more conventional.

But they are filling it with some hybrid aspects. The ambiguity and the paralysis that they intended, to delay anybody responding, certainly to allow people who want to delay making a decision, like NATO, to delay and to argue about is it really a Russian military force?

But I look at the troops. I recognize the uniforms. I actually know who the units were. I think we even knew who the commanders were. We know where they came from. They wore Russian helmets with Russian-speaking individuals wearing Russian uniforms. They were just missing the patch.

It is not too unique. And it is very hard to replicate that in other places I believe.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, but, well, I guess that gets to the deception part of this. If they slow you down in the response then maybe it has achieved its objectives.

And I would like to ask each of you to comment on the benefits and the cost of making public more of these activities, because you always have this balance with the intelligence community that you don't want to reveal your sources and methods. You don't want them to know what you know.

And yet if so much of hybrid warfare is based on deception, shining a light on it and saying the Russians are trying to push a rumor that U.S. started AIDS at Fort Detrick. Is it not something that we ought to do more of, I will put it that way, to shine the light on what they are trying to do on the deception to bring that out, I guess, is what I am saying.

Dr. Chivvis, we will start with you and go the other way.

Dr. CHIVVIS. Sure. I would agree that it is probably leaning in on this. There is always a balance between protecting sources and methods and making things like this public. But I think in dealing with hybrid warfare, obviously, we may want to move the needle a little bit towards being more liberal in terms of what we put out there.

I think that there is obviously a middle course, which is to communicate with our allies about this, and this gets back to the question about FVEYs. I mean, the benefits of intelligence sharing are both that we gain intelligence from our allies.

Oftentimes they have that important understanding of what is happening on the ground that we do not have access to. But also we have to be able to tell them when something is happening in their own country that they may not be aware of in order to get them to take actions that we want them to take. So it goes both ways.

And I think that at least in that middle space the more that we can share I think the better.

Mr. SHEARER. Mr. Chairman, I mentioned the CSIS Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative. What I think has been good about that is it uses commercial imagery and then we show it to the world and it has had a remarkable effect in terms of exactly what you are speaking about.

Before we did that, you know, this just wasn't part of people's consciousness, and then suddenly you can see these enormous islands, runways, hangars, the whole thing. It somehow makes it real to people. So I think that is an incredibly important part of this.

We have to protect sources and methods, obviously, but my sense is we can lean much further forward than we are in information warfare, to call it what it really is. And psychologically I think the point here is, going back to your opening comment about being at peace and being at war, we just don't have our heads in this game.

And we have been there before. We have done it before, but we need to get our heads back in the game quickly, in my view. Because otherwise we are not going to make all the sort of bureaucratic and budget investment decisions and so forth that we really need to build these strategies.

Dr. HOFFMAN. I really can't add very much to that, sir, but in my strategy for countering hybrid threats the very first aspect is an open, transparent, strategic narrative about what we are about in terms of a rule-based order, normative values and being up front about that. If we could arm our diplomats, the U.N. [United Nations] ambassador with some kind of—I don't think as much of it is classified as it needs to be.

But I have already seen our French intelligence allies and the German intelligence being very public about the intrusions and the information and diplomatic space inside those two countries and their elections. They are getting out in front of it before the elections.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes. Just a side note, Mr. Shearer, I think, for example, the environmental damage done by this island building is something that hasn't gotten nearly enough attention. I have had people suggest it is the largest environmental disaster the world has ever seen. I don't know how you measure that, but the point is there is probably more that could be done.

Last question I want to get back to is back to this NSC question. You know, part of our concern has been too much micromanagement by the National Security Council staffers in an operational sense. I have even been around Washington long enough to remember Iran-Contra where that was the big issue is to what extent the NSC was operational.

And yet I take the point if this is not a clear sort of issue that falls clearly in the Department of Defense, and yet we turn to the Department of Defense because they are the most capable agency for solving problems. Even though that may not be the best way to do.

Dr. Chivvis, what is your view about this? I mean, I got your point on a strategy for dealing kind of across the board. That is what the NSC should do. But they shouldn't really be micromanaging the details, should they?

Dr. CHIVVIS. No. I completely agree. Again, what I was recommending was the development of a national strategy for this, and I think that the NSC is the right place to do that.

A, obviously, because that is its responsibility is to coordinate, and second of all, because it also signals a level of significance and

importance to this issue to the other agencies in the U.S. Government. And I think that is what we need right now.

The CHAIRMAN. Anybody else? Yes.

Dr. HOFFMAN. Sir, I have published a study on the NSC as advice for the incoming administration, and I was somewhat sympathetic about the size of the NSC in the past because of the nature of the problems we face. And not because I wanted to operationalize the NSC or the White House.

And I come from the same era of having come to town in 1983. I understood that period of time and have worked for members of the other body who were on the Church Committee as well. And I am old enough to remember that.

But the nature of the problems we have today puts a, without the regional architecture that we have in the military, I can turn to a PACOM [Pacific Command] or a EUCOM [European Command] and get a staff that, you know, does certain things.

But the rest of the government lacks that regional architecture, and I think sometimes what happens with the NSC is because there is no other integrating body to both design, conduct, assess, and adjust, is that the NSC ends up, you know, in that supra kind of role compensating for that.

And if we had—in my Orbis essay, I suggest that perhaps one of our problems is the lack of regional task forces that are actually interagency is an architectural problem that would resolve that problem for us.

The CHAIRMAN. I will go look at your paper. One of my concerns is when an NSC is implementing strategy, I mean, implementing policies and they are not developing strategy. And unfortunately I think that is what we have had in recent years.

Do you have other questions?

Thank you all. I appreciate your insights and your study of this very challenging issue for us. With that, the hearing stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:37 a.m., the committee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

MARCH 22, 2017

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

MARCH 22, 2017

Statement of Ranking Member Adam Smith
House Armed Services Committee Hearing:
The Evolution of Hybrid Warfare and Key Challenges

March 22, 2017

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding today's hearing on a topic of critical importance. Thank you as well to our witnesses for sharing their expertise on the evolution of hybrid warfare. I look forward to their views about how the United States should respond to hybrid threats and methods short of war.

Our adversaries, including Russia, China, North Korea, and Iran, are blending methods to achieve strategic ends, which seek to undermine Western democracies, the international order, and various international organizations. While the term hybrid warfare may not be precisely defined, it is clear that our adversaries are using blended irregular and conventional approaches to achieve these strategic goals.

For example, in the South China Sea, Chinese Coast Guard patrol vessels provide a continuous presence to reinforce China's claims in the region. The Russian Federation learned from its experience in Georgia to combine information operations with deployments of Russian special forces, and it used this hybrid approach effectively when it occupied Crimea. Russia also employed hybrid methods to enable separatist elements in the conflict in eastern Ukraine.

Hybrid threats and methods short of war are also evolving. Following the influence campaign perpetrated by the Russian Federation during the 2016 U.S. elections, reports appear to indicate that Russia is orchestrating a coordinated campaign to influence elections across Europe, disrupt international order, and exploit seams to push countries away from NATO and the European Union (EU).

What I'd like know is what we should be doing to address hybrid threats and methods short of war? How should we be postured to understand what our adversaries are doing, to deter them, and, if necessary, to respond appropriately to their use of hybrid methods?

Hybrid approaches tend to cross department and agency jurisdictions within the U.S. government. The challenge we have lies in establishing a robust, well-coordinated, and effective interagency response. Addressing hybrid methods will also require close coordination with our partners and allies across the spectrum of regional and functional areas affected by hybrid threats.

At its core, an effective U.S. response system would entail regional strategies, consistent coordinated messaging, and prioritization across the interagency, ultimately converging at—and with direction emanating from—the White House. I'm particularly concerned that any U.S. response to a hybrid threat today would be insufficiently coordinated and that the message from this Administration is that Russia is not a priority.

Statement before the House Armed Services Committee

on

The Evolution of Hybrid Warfare and Key Challenges

Francis G. Hoffman, Ph.D.
Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University[1]
March 22, 2017

Mr. Chairman Thornberry, Ranking Member Mr. Smith, and distinguished members of the committee, it is an honor to appear again before you and speak on the threats facing our country. I thank you for this opportunity to participate and address the key challenges generated by the convergence of modes of warfare represented by hybrid threats and other forms of conflict.

Our Joint forces must be ready and able to respond to challenges across the full spectrum of conflict. The U.S. defense community faces global challengers, and must devote sufficient attention to the breadth of adversaries facing it and the many different forms that human conflict can take. The first step is understanding both the range of conflicts we may face and then their changing character. Partially because of this two-part challenge, we are falling behind in our readiness for the future. As the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Joseph Dunford, has concluded "We're already behind in adapting to the changed character of war today in so many ways."[1]

American strategic culture is sometimes criticized for an emphasis, if not myopic focus, on conventional interstate war. This emphasis was acknowledged in a major lessons learned project produced by the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff which observed that a "big war" paradigm clouded our understanding and delayed the adaptation required for U.S. forces to succeed in Iraq and Afghanistan.[2] The tendency to ignore certain types of threats or forms of conflict has impeded U.S. strategic performance in the past, and will continue to do so until we grasp the full set of conflict types. Without explicit recognition of conflict types in our strategy and doctrine, we remain in a perpetual state of reactive adaptation.[3]

Years ago, before this Committee, I explained the origins of the so-called hybrid threat as we saw it emerging in the early years of the last decade. This threat was based on the expected convergence of irregular forces with advanced military capabilities. The mixture of these both irregular methods and conventional tools was not a new form of warfare, but the toxic addition of catastrophic terrorism and criminal behavior was expected to present unique challenges for which we were not prepared. The war between Israel and Hezbollah in the summer of 2006, the evolution of ISIS over the past several years, and the ongoing bloodshed in eastern Ukraine suggest that our forecast was not too far off the mark.

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[1] This statement reflects only the personal views of the author and does not necessarily represent the positions of the Defense of Defense or the U.S. Government.

Hybrid Warfare. Nearly 15 years ago, defense analysts at the Pentagon and at the Marine Corps' Warfighting Lab identified trends and writings about deliberate efforts to blur and blend methods of war. This forecast suggested that our prevailing technological dominance in the American-led Revolution in Military Affairs would produce a counter-revolution that would exploit the convergence of different modes of conflict. This threat hypothesis evolved into a theory about hybrid threats.[4] Just a few years later, the projection was born out in Southern Lebanon with Hezbollah's example, and appears to be relevant to other conflicts as well.[5] Three U.S. Secretaries of Defense, including the current DoD leadership, found the concept useful and have cited the emergence of hybrid adversaries.[6]

A hybrid threat reflects more than a blend of regular and irregular tactics. Over a decade ago, this mode of conflict was defined as an adversary that "simultaneously and adaptively employs a fused mix of conventional weapons, irregular tactics, catastrophic terrorism, and criminal behavior in the battlespace to obtain desired political objectives."[7] The convergence of criminal and "socially disruptive behavior," along with the rise of mass terrorism was forecasted as a rising factor back in 2005. The fusion of advanced capabilities with irregular forces and tactics is key, as borne out repeatedly over the last decade from Hezbollah to Russian campaigns in Georgia and Ukraine.[8] It is important to note that the concept is not limited to landpower, and is equally applicable to the maritime domain.[9]

Hybrid threats can often be created by a state actor creating a proxy force.[10] Sponsorship from a major power can generate hybrid threats more readily by the provision of advanced military capabilities to the proxy. Proxy wars, appealing to some powers as 'warfare on the cheap' are historically ubiquitous but chronically understudied.

The hybrid threat captures the ongoing implications of globalization, the diffusion of military-related technologies, and the information revolution. Hybrid threats are qualitatively different from less complex irregular or militia forces. They, by and large, cannot be defeated simply by Western counter-terrorism tactics or protracted counterinsurgency techniques. Hybrid threats are more lethal than irregular forces conducting simple ambushes and crude improvised explosive devices, but they are not necessarily unknown to Western forces, and may be defeated with sufficient combat power. Hezbollah's method of fighting Israel, as evidenced by their political leader Hassan Nasrallah, is an organic response to their security dilemma that is "not a conventional army and not a guerrilla force, it is something in between."[11]

Events in Crimea and eastern Ukraine have led European security officials to pay more attention to Russia's assertive behavior and its ways of war. For this reason, hybrid warfare is now an explicit discussion point at NATO and among NATO civilian leaders.[12] In the Crimea, Russia demonstrated that it had learned from its performance in Georgia in 2008 and employed inherently conventional methods, but with better agility and illegal methods.[13] This was hardly new or "ambiguous" but it was effective under circumstances that are not easily replicated elsewhere. These are not novel, especially to Russia. These are actually time-tested methods with which the U.S. security community has seen before.[14]

European military analysts, pushed by Russia's example, have also embraced the hybrid evolution as a feature of contemporary conflict.[15] Yet the NATO interpretation of hybrid warfare is much broader, depicting it as a mixture of military means with non-military tools including propaganda and cyber activity. This interpretation is much closer to the issues raised in this country by scholars and senior U.S. military officials studying what they call gray zone conflicts. The distinction between indirect gray zone conflicts and the violent methods posited by hybrid threats should be noted as a key distinction.[16]

Hybrid warfare as a mix of methods short of war has become a common interpretation and an alternative definition in Europe, where key leaders at NATO define hybrid threats as "a wide range of overt and covert military, paramilitary, and civilian measures are employed in a highly integrated design."[17] The NATO version reflects a combination of methods, and emphasized an integrated and purposeful design. This is a broad definition that could explain just about all wars, which usually contain combinations of military and non-military activity in an integrated plan. In the context faced by NATO today, such activities are occurring short of armed conflict. Thus, NATO's perspective is closer conceptually to gray zone or what I call Measures Short of Armed Conflict.

The Continuum of Conflict. Understanding war as a holistic phenomenon is important, and so too is understanding the complexity and distinctions of various modes of warfare across the "continuum of conflict." To dissipate the fog of confusion in current terminology, a heuristic construct for conflict is presented below in Figure 1.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">Lower Violence Continuum of Conflict High Violence</td></tr>
<tr><td>Measures Short of Armed Conflict</td><td>Irregular Warfare/ Terrorism</td><td>Hybrid Warfare</td><td>Conventional Warfare (Limited Objectives to Theater-wide)</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="3">Unconventional Warfare</td></tr>
</table>

Figure 1

Measures Short of Armed Conflict. The Joint Staff's projected security environment forecasts a future in which adversaries will employ stratagems to gain influence and undermine U.S. interests with techniques well short of traditional armed conflict.[18] During the Cold War, the United States faced persistent efforts to undermine order, weaken our alliances, and undercut our interests by activities that fell well short of military violence. The Soviet Union had well-established directorates in their intelligence organizations designed to sow discord, de-legitimize political opponents and weaken the resolve of the NATO alliance.[19]

More recently, non-violent coercion measures as a form of geopolitical competition have been occurring with regularity, suggesting that this history remains relevant. China's use of diplomatic assertions, deliberate use of fishery/maritime law enforcement forces, and aggressive seizures of disputed islands in the Pacific constitute a modern case study.[20] China's assertive

behaviors in the South China Sea appear designed to erode the existing international order and change the norms of international behavior through acts of latent coercion. China has used maritime militia forces to disrupt foreign survey, energy development, and commercial fishing operations and to extend and consolidate areas it views as Chinese territory with low risk of escalating to greater violence.[21]

Chinese conceptions of "quasi-war" and the "Three Warfares" which embrace legal, psychological, and information activities short of warfare, are relevant to this discussion. [22] Recent research suggests a convergence of China and Russian tactics is occurring, emanating from Chinese interpretations of Russia's actions in the Crimea and in the cyber domain. We should expect Russia, in turn, to absorb lessons from the South China Sea, as well as other states.[23]

Cold War and recent experience with the Russians suggests that the admixture of political/economic/subversive activity remains an element of their operational art.[24] Russia uses similar tactics in Ukraine and elsewhere, a form of "simmering borscht" that seeks to extend Moscow's sphere of influence without triggering an armed response. The Soviet Union frequently employed what it called "Active Measures" (Russian: активные мероприятия or ak ti'vnyye mero priya'tniya) in the information domain, including false stories. [25] Russian interest and application of Active Measures does not seem to have abated, and perhaps has even been expanded via social media and fake news outlets in the last several years, particularly in Europe.[26] Russia's current leadership clique emerged from the state intelligence agencies and seems well-experienced in the use of covert approaches and the use of distortion, disinformation, subversion and propaganda.[27] Much attention has recently been made of Russian meddling in U.S. electoral campaigns, but such influence efforts have routinely been part of their tradecraft for a long time.[28] Its cyber efforts have garnered a lot of attention in Estonia, Georgia, Ukraine, and now in the United States. [29] However, its interference in European political parties, and its development of soft power "false front" organizations is also noteworthy.[30]

Belatedly, we are appreciating the need to compete with greater agility at lower levels short of war, against multi-functional or multi-dimensional threats. This gap in our understanding of the competitive space between peace and war is a shortfall in U.S. strategic culture.[31] More recently, a defense policy scholar has noted: "By failing to understand that the space between war and peace is not an empty one – but a landscape churning with political, economic, and security competitions that require constant attention – American foreign policy risks being reduced to a reactive and tactical emphasis on the military instrument by default." [32]

This suggests that U.S. security or policy community does not currently recognize the importance of competing in this arena. An examination of any regional or theater commander's engagement plans suggests this concern may be exaggerated. Theater Security Cooperation plans, military to military engagement, military aid or support, exercises and various forms of engagement are routinely employed by our regional commands to compete for influence and signal U.S. commitment. We may not coordinate these efforts well, or think of them as part of a collective competition against other major powers. But the United States does employ what is best described as the constructive instruments of traditional statecraft, as shown below in Figure 2.

Traditional/Legitimate Forms of Statecraft and Influence
Security Cooperation and Foreign Military Sales
Economic Sanctions
Public Diplomacy and Support for IGO/NGO
Military Presence/Engagements/Exercises
Foreign Internal Defense/Security Force Assistance
Freedom of Navigation (maritmie or aerospace domains)
Non-traditional/Illegitamate Forms of Statecraft and Influence
Political Subversion, Penetration, False Front organizations
Economic Corruption
Coercive Threats
Propaganda/Psychological Operations/Disinformation
Cyber Intrusions/Cyber Corruption/Disruption

Figure 2. Forms of Statecraft and Influence

Our adversaries, on the other hand, have mastered the more ambiguous and nontraditional instruments of statecraft, and have been criticized as nefarious or of questionable legitimacy. Kennan noted this decades ago when he observed that "The varieties of skullduggery which make up the repertoire of the totalitarian government are just about as unlimited as human ingenuity itself, and just about as unpleasant." [33] While the challenge varies from region to region, we should recognize the need to orchestrate our traditional forms of statecraft, integrating the military and non-military elements, coherently as part of an integrated design.

Some Cold War scholars will recall George Kennan's arguments for the institutionalization of Political Warfare by the United States to counter Russian activities.[34] Kennan defined Political Warfare as "the employment of all the means at a nation's command, short of war."[35] His understanding of the problem was informed by a deep understanding of Russia and its preference for indirect methods. Covert Action (or activities) displaced the use of Political Warfare over time. Kennan himself used "Measures Short of War" in his lectures at the National War College.

This conflict mode has recently drawn renewed interest as "Gray Zone Conflicts." These have been defined as actors "employing sequences of gradual steps to secure strategic leverage. The efforts remain below thresholds that would generate a powerful U.S. or international response, but nonetheless are forceful and deliberate, calculated to gain measurable traction over time."[36] These are admittedly not novel, but rather are more classical "salami-slicing" strategies, fortified with a range of unconventional techniques—from cyberattacks to information campaigns to energy diplomacy. One scholar goes on to list numerous current relevant examples, including eastern Ukraine. But Ukraine, particularly the fighting in Donbas, has blown past being an ambiguous no-man's land, given the violent scope of the conflict (10,000

dead) and the overt use of advanced conventional power (armor, rockets, missiles). This definition would lump together or 80 percent of the occurrences of conflict, including all forms of irregular or proxy war.

Others argue that "The Gray Zone is characterized by intense political, economic, informational, and military competition more fervent in nature than normal steady-state diplomacy, yet short of conventional war."[37] These scholars note that such conflicts "involve some aggression or use of force, but in many ways their defining characteristic is ambiguity — about the ultimate objectives, the participants, whether international treaties and norms have been violated, and the role that military forces should play in response."[38] They go on to list Russia's annexation of Crimea, its support of separatists in Donbas, Ukraine; the advances of Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL); the murderous Boko Haram's insurgency in Nigeria, as Gray Zone Conflicts. That is a wide range of very different conflicts and asks a lot of the concept. Their inclusion of the fighting in Donbas challenges their definition, as Russia's war inside Ukraine has resulted in nearly 7,000 deaths and tens of thousands of other casualties -- hardly covert or ambiguous. These are *not* gray or ambiguous acts. Several of these conflicts are more accurately described as irregular or revolutionary movements.

Thus, the definition of Gray Zone conflict remains expansive and elusive. Instead, I think the better term is Measures Short of Armed Conflict. Short of "armed conflict" puts it in the right place on the continuum and also outside of what we know and teach as war.

Comparison

The distinction between Hybrid warfare and Measures Short of Armed Conflict is important. Both use combinations. The latter seeks to gain advantage politically without the overt and explicit use of violence. Actors employing Measures Short of Armed Conflict seek to avoid violence. Hybrid threats also have combinations including the use of political warfare and narratives, but they combine it with violent force directed at both military and non-combatants.

An historical case study will illuminate the distinctions between the original usage of the concept of "hybrid threats" and its NATO interpretation. Russia's efforts to influence Kiev's discussions about joining the EU constitute an example of a gray zone conflict, clearly intended to interfere with Ukraine's realignment by indirect forms of influence including corruption and disinformation. This is well short of traditional armed conflict. However, the ongoing violence in eastern Ukraine is an archetypical form of hybrid warfare within an integrated design that has produced a costly conflict.[39] The conflict has generated nearly 10,000 dead and over 22,000 wounded.[40]

The fusion of the various forces or means employed in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts (combinations of separatists, Sestinas special forces, Russian regulars with advanced military capabilities Electronic Warfare, drones, rocket launchers, and some armor) is representative of hybrid warfare as originally defined in the United States and used by various Secretaries of Defense over the last decade.[41] The employment of political repression, control over food supplies to control the local population, and the accidental catastrophic act of killing of 217 passengers aboard MH-17 suggest a less conventional character in the middle of the conflict

spectrum, and all represent elements consistent with hybrid threat methods. The evidence of rampant corruption and suppression of employment and economic security evidence all the elements of a hybrid operational context within a deliberate design.[42]

The Russians under Mr. Putin's leadership are not reinventing a new approach to warfare. What is clear is that a new generation of leaders, spawned within the KGB, are clearly applying longstanding Russian concepts of protracted conflict from the Cold War.[43] Russia's understanding of conflict constitutes a full spectrum approach, which means it can employ measures short of war or more violent hybrid approaches appropriate to the situation.[44] It can also pose credible conventional combat capability, and project it at great distance, as shown several times in the Middle East. NATO's posture in Europe was indeed dangerously close to inviting aggression in the Baltics, and Congressional actions to reassure the Alliance and enhance conventional forces in the region has averted the crossing of a violent threshold.[45]

The actions described as gray conflict or Measures Short of Armed Conflict are very significant to our security interests. This area has been highlighted by strategic assessments of the U.S. intelligence community and cannot be ignored.[46] Some see the indirect approach, staying below the threshold of actual armed clashes, to be "a weapon of choice" for the future. I think this assessment holds true only for one of our major geopolitical competitors. Russia is likely to continue to employ more ambiguous and less kinetic efforts given both its past practices and its declining political, demographic and economic fortunes. China on the other hand continues to grow both in economic and military indices, and has, by its actions, expressed an inclination to alter the existing rules set and international order. While a physical confrontation is not inevitable, it appears to be a contingency that is increasingly more likely. The combination of growing conventional power and national aspirations for regional control by China's leadership portend a higher potential for military confrontation. There will be many instances of "salami slicing tactics" in the South China Sea and cyber espionage. These may produce a shift in the region. But at the end of the day, hard power will be required to substantially reorder the balance of power and to dominate the region.

Our key challenge is recognizing the competition for influence that occurs in peacetime as part of Measures Short of Armed Conflict. In both Europe and in Asia, we are competing with major revisionist powers for influence and for the retention of a rules based international order. We are also competing for the retention of the coalition network and basing structures we have used for a generation to gain access to key regions of the world for power projection. Our adversaries are using illegitimate instruments of statecraft (such as economic corruption, political intimidation, energy security threats, false front organizations and disinformation activities) to undermine our credibility, dilute the cohesion of our alliances, and prevent us from sustaining the international order and regional stability on which our economic prosperity has been based.

We need to move past the lexicon debate and begin to improve our ability to counter the activities our adversaries employ to undercut our interests.[47] Countering these subtle coercive techniques is the subject of new studies.[48] The U.S. defense policy community and the military are now beginning to devote intellectual capital to this issue.[49] But countering this method of conflict will require more than traditional military strategy responses and incorporate more than special operations forces. We need to establish or reestablish a broader framework for conflict

short of violent warfare that incorporates a wider range of tools beyond traditional tools, and Special Forces or paramilitary operations. I think we are prepared for the violence of the hybrid threat but we need to ask ourselves some harder questions about more indirect methods. For example, how do we counter manipulation of elections and efforts to sow discord via cyber intrusions and the deliberate distribution of false information?[50] How do we ensure that forms of subversion or disinformation, here and abroad, is neutralized? Who designs and integrates our strategic approaches in Measures Short of Armed Conflict? How should we organize ourselves to address this challenge?[51]

Conclusion

When looking back at our engagements of the last 50 years and peering forward into the future, it is safe to say that the United States will continue to face challenges across the continuum of conflict. As Professor Eliot Cohen has noted:

> The wars of the twenty-first century may take many forms. Conventional conflict, including with China, most assuredly cannot be ruled out. At the other end of the spectrum, terrorism will surely continue. In between, what has been called hybrid war–blending different forms of force with subversion, sabotage, and terror will also exist.[52]

The prevailing black and white distinctions between Traditional War and Irregular War in U.S. strategic culture make for simple boxes but the real world is not so easily categorized. Some adversaries seek to exploit the institutional and cognitive seams that these over-simplifications create. They seek combinations, both multi-domain and multi-functional, to gain an advantage. We must not underestimate them. Instead we do need to conceptually understand them and become full spectrum capable ourselves.

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Statement Before the

House Armed Services Committee

"The Evolution of Hybrid Warfare and Key Challenges"

A Testimony by:

Andrew Shearer

Senior Adviser on Asia Pacific Security and

Director, Alliances and American Leadership Project,

Center for Strategic and International Studies

March 22, 2017

2117 Rayburn House Office Building

Chairman Thornberry, Ranking Member Smith, distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify before you today on a subject of great importance: the evolution of hybrid warfare.

Like Russia and Iran, China is using an ambiguous fusion of conventional and unconventional capabilities and tactics to weaken liberal norms and institutions, erode U.S. influence, and impose its own security preferences on its neighbors. Left unchecked, this trend will undermine the regional and global order – endangering the security and prosperity of the United States and its allies.

China's hybrid warfare strategy draws on many of the elements also employed by Russia and Iran: exploiting the "gray zone" created by the West's binary notion of "war" and "peace"; primarily using paramilitary, coast guard, or militia organizations while keeping regular military forces over the horizon; and combining all instruments of national power, including sophisticated cyber operations, economic incentives and sanctions, and legal and political warfare ("lawfare").

Over the past decade – and particularly since President Xi Jinping took office four years ago – China has ramped up its assertiveness in the Western Pacific region. Recent examples include:

- Establishment of an air defense identification zone in the East China Sea (2013) and rejection of an international tribunal's ruling on Beijing's South China Sea claims (2016);
- Island building at seven disputed features in the Spratlys (since 2013);
- Deployment of an oil rig into disputed waters near Vietnam (2014);
- Harassment of supply missions to a Philippine military outpost (2014);
- Convoying more than 300 fishing vessels to the Japanese-controlled Senkaku Islands (2016);
- China-sourced donations to Australia's major political parties (reported in 2016);
- And economic coercion, including limits on rare earth exports to Japan (2010) and fruit imports from the Philippines (2012), as well as ongoing measures to harm South Korean companies in retaliation for deployment of the THAAD ballistic missile defense system.

This incremental "salami-slicing" has enabled China to achieve much of its political and territorial agenda in East Asia without triggering a forceful military response from the United States and its allies. Beijing calculates it lacks the military capabilities (at least for now) to prevail in an outright conflict at an acceptable cost. Instead, it has used capabilities like maritime law enforcement where it has a comparative advantage, for objectives like offshore islands in which it believes Washington has little direct stake.

Backed by its expanding suite of advanced access denial capabilities, the intent of China's creeping militarization of the South China Sea is to give itself the ability to restrict U.S. maritime

forces' traditional ability to project power and support allies within the First Island Chain. The effort is to complicate U.S. military planning, undermine regional countries' confidence in American security commitments, and ratchet up pressure on the U.S. alliance system.

We will be confronting a profoundly different Asia-Pacific region if the United States has to contemplate fighting its way back into the South China Sea.

To respond effectively, the United States needs to invest in adequate nuclear and conventional military capabilities to maintain a favorable regional military balance that can deter escalation, including attacks against U.S. or allied forces. Credible military forces are also vital for resisting coercion and shaping a benign security environment.

Continuing to deter any further move at Scarborough Shoal is particularly important. China's modus operandi is to target weak points; any further significant change in the status quo in the South China Sea will feed doubts in the region and increase pressure on U.S. alliances in Northeast Asia.

However, an effective U.S. strategy must extend beyond military might and overcome bureaucratic and military "seams" to match China's comprehensive national approach.

The starting point needs to be recognition that the United States is already engaged in an intense competition of interests and values in the Western Pacific. The outcome will shape not only the future of the region but the United States' long-term security and prosperity.

By building what Dean Acheson called "situations of strength," the United States can increase the costs to China of pursuing its gray-zone strategy. It should strengthen existing alliances and network them more closely, as well as working with allies to build capacity and resilience in Southeast Asia.

The United States also needs to continue to champion the rule of law and fundamental principles such as freedom of navigation.

Secrecy and deniability are part of Beijing's strategy, so wherever possible the United States should promote transparency about China's activities; this is the intention behind the CSIS Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative.

Finally, the United States should not cede non-military spaces to China, which also seeks to expand its wider influence. This is why continuing American leadership on trade and investment is so important – and why countries in the region look to the United States to engage actively

with regional institutions such as APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Conference), the East Asia Summit, and ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations).

The United States has the capacity to develop and implement an effective strategy. Your friends and allies are looking for reassurance that America has the clarity of purpose to do so, and the resolve to carry it through with firmness and consistency.

Andrew Shearer
Senior Adviser on Asia Pacific Security and Director, Alliances and American Leadership Project

Andrew Shearer joined CSIS in May 2016 as senior adviser on Asia-Pacific Security. He is also director of a new CSIS project on alliances and American leadership. Mr. Shearer was previously national security adviser to Prime Ministers John Howard and Tony Abbott of Australia. In that capacity, he played a leading role in formulating and implementing Australian foreign, defense, and counter-terrorism policies. He provided high-level advice that shaped Australian government decisions on engagement with the Asia-Pacific region, defense capabilities, responses to international crises and terrorist incidents, and longer-term strategic challenges.

Mr. Shearer has more than 25 years of experience in intelligence, national security, diplomacy, and alliance management. He was political minister-counselor at the Australian embassy in Washington, D.C. Earlier, he was strategic policy adviser to former Australian defence minister Robert Hill and held positions in the Department of Foreign Affairs of Trade, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, and the Office of National Assessments (Australia's premier intelligence analysis organization). As the deputy secretary advising the former Victorian state premier on international engagement, Mr. Shearer led the development of a comprehensive trade and investment strategy, establishing new representational offices in China and Indonesia, leveraging business, academic, and cultural relationships, and modernizing the state's Chinese language curriculum. Mr. Shearer is a respected commentator on Asia-Pacific strategic issues. He was director of studies at the Lowy Institute for International Policy, and his analysis has been published in books, journals, and leading U.S., Australian, and Asian newspapers. He holds a master's degree in international relations from the University of Cambridge and honors degrees in law and arts from the University of Melbourne. He was awarded a UK Foreign Office Chevening Scholarship.

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Understanding Russian "Hybrid Warfare"

And What Can Be Done About it

Christopher S. Chivvis

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Understanding Russian "Hybrid Warfare" and What Can be Done About It

Testimony of Christopher S. Chivvis[1]
The RAND Corporation[2]

Before the Committee on Armed Services
United States House of Representatives

March 22, 2017

As used today in reference to Russia, "hybrid warfare" refers to Moscow's use of a broad range of subversive instruments, many of which are nonmilitary, to further Russian national interests. Moscow seeks to use hybrid warfare to ensure compliance on a number of specific policy questions; to divide and weaken NATO; to subvert pro-Western governments; to create pretexts for war; to annex territory; and to ensure access to European markets on its own terms.

Experts use the term "hybrid warfare" in different ways. Several related terms are now in use, including "gray zone strategies," "competition short of conflict," "active measures," and "new generation warfare." Despite subtle differences, all these terms point to the same thing: Russia is using multiple instruments of power and influence, with an emphasis on nonmilitary tools, to pursue its national interests outside its borders—often at the expense of U.S. interests and those of U.S. allies.

Russia's use of hybrid strategies has grown markedly in recent years. This growth is a key dimension in the overall increase in Russian military capabilities and the Kremlin's antagonistic attitude toward the West. Russian resources for hybrid warfare are not infinite, of course, and Russia faces many of the same difficulties any other country does in coordinating a multipronged foreign policy. Its hybrid tactics will also not be effective everywhere. Nevertheless, the United States and its allies need a clear understanding of the threat and strategy to effectively counter Russian hybrid strategies before critical U.S. interests are damaged in Europe and elsewhere.[3]

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[1] The opinions and conclusions expressed in this testimony are the author's alone and should not be interpreted as representing those of the RAND Corporation or any of the sponsors of its research.

[2] The RAND Corporation is a research organization that develops solutions to public policy challenges to help make communities throughout the world safer and more secure, healthier and more prosperous. RAND is nonprofit, nonpartisan, and committed to the public interest.

[3] Olga Oliker, Christopher S. Chivvis, Keith Crane, Olesya Tkacheva, and Scott Boston, *Russian Foreign Policy in Historical and Current Context*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, PE-144-A 2015.

This testimony explains the key characteristics and uses of Russian hybrid warfare, the major tools involved, and the countries currently targeted. It then gives a brief sketch of the history of Russian hybrid warfare and outlines basic elements for a strategy to counter it.

Key Characteristics of Russian Hybrid Warfare

Russian hybrid warfare has at least three main characteristics.

It economizes the use of force. Recognizing Russia would stand little chance of winning a protracted conventional conflict with NATO, Moscow seeks instead to pursue its interests without overt use of military power if possible. Russia may still use its conventional and even nuclear threats as part of a hybrid strategy, but in general it prefers to minimize the actual employment of traditional military force. The use of cyber tools is an excellent example of one way in which Russia economizes on the use of force.

It is persistent. Hybrid war breaks down the traditional binary delineation between war and peace. The reality of hybrid war is ever-changing intensity of conflict. Hybrid war strategies are always underway, although at certain moments they may become more acute and intense or cross over into conventional combat operations.

It is population-centric. Russian military experts have watched as the United States and its allies fought in the Balkans, the Middle East, and elsewhere over the course of the last quarter-century. They seized upon the importance of an approach that seeks to influence the population of target countries through information operations, proxy groups, and other influence operations. Russia uses hybrid warfare to work within existing political and social frameworks to further Russian objectives.

Typical Objectives of Russian Hybrid Warfare

As practiced today, Russian hybrid warfare can have at least three objectives.

1. **Capturing territory without resorting to overt or conventional military force.** This was the objective of Russia's successful annexation of Crimea in 2014, the move that launched the debate over Russian "hybrid strategies." The annexation of Crimea relied heavily on the now-infamous "little green men"—primarily Russian special forces operating through a newly created Russian special operations command. The use of these elite troops, in conjunction with an information warfare campaign and the deployment of loyal Russian proxies, created circumstances that laid the groundwork for a bloodless conventional takeover of Crimea. Russia used some similar tactics ahead of its 2008 invasion of Georgia. The resulting "frozen conflicts" in Ukraine and Georgia have hampered these countries' efforts towards integration with Western Europe. In a much-referenced 2013 article on modern warfare, Russian Chief of the General Staff General Valery Gerasimov argued that nonmilitary means are used four times more often in modern conflicts than conventional military measures.[4]

[4] Valery Gerasimov, "The Value of Science is in the Foresight: New Challenges Demand Rethinking the Forms and Methods of Carrying out Combat Operations," *Voyenno-Promyshlennyy Kurier*, February 26, 2013.

2. **Creating a pretext for overt, conventional military action.** Russia's annexation of Crimea generated concerns that the Kremlin might seek to use a hybrid strategy to create a pretext for military action elsewhere, such as in the Baltic states. Russia might seek to foment discord between the minority Russian population in a country like Estonia, creating a narrative that portrays the Estonian government as repressive and then exploiting this narrative to justify a Russian military intervention on behalf of the Russian minority. Such an operation would likely be accompanied by cyber operations aimed at inflaming tensions or complicating national and NATO responses. It would almost certainly be accompanied by efforts to influence broader European and world opinion in ways that favored Russia's intervention. On the ground, it would involve the use of Russian secret agents and proxies.
3. **Using hybrid measures to influence the politics and policies of countries in the West and elsewhere.** This objective is currently the most pressing challenge for Western governments, including the United States. Here, the Kremlin does not seek to use hybrid strategies as a substitute for military action or as a precursor for war. Instead, it seeks to ensure that political outcomes in targeted countries serve Russia's national interests. Most vulnerable are countries with weak legal and anticorruption measures or where key domestic groups share Russia's interests or worldview. However, even strong countries, such as the United States and Germany, are far from immune.

Russia's Hybrid Warfare Toolkit

Moscow has many mechanisms and levers for hybrid war.

Information operations. Russia has become notably more effective in its use of strategic communications to shape political narratives in many countries. Outlets such as *Russia Today* and *Sputnik News* are among the most well known vectors for this strategy, but Russia also uses targeted television programming; funds European think tanks to promote its views; and employs large numbers of Internet trolls, bots, and fake news farms. The result is high volume and multichannel.[5] The objective of these information operations is primarily to muddy the waters and cast doubt upon objective truths. Needless to say, these media outlets do not share established Western journalistic practices regarding factual evidence and truth. They aim to shape the political discussion in ways that will benefit the Kremlin.

Cyber. The Kremlin now has access to a growing cadre of cyber warriors that allows it to hack into Western information systems to collect valuable information. The information is then used to influence elections and other political outcomes outside Russia's borders. This was the strategy Russia appears to have attempted during the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign. Beyond stealing secrets, Russia could deploy more advanced cyber tools to directly manipulate or otherwise affect the information systems on which Western political processes rely. There is no evidence that Russia possesses such capabilities today, but if Western defenses are not strengthened, it may develop them.

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[5] Chris Paul and Miriam Matthews, *The Russian "Firehose of Falsehood" Propaganda Model*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, PE-198-OSD, 2016.

Proxies. Russia also uses a range of proxies to further its interests. Proxies are often groups that have broad sympathy with Russia's objectives. One of the Kremlin's typical proxies is the Night Wolves, a biker club and ultranationalist, anti-American gang, whose leader is a personal friend of President Putin. The exact role of the Night Wolves is uncertain, although it can be used to intimidate populations and may facilitate a range of hybrid activities behind the scenes. Russia also seeks to exploit European protest movements. For example, it backed anti-European Union (EU) groups in a 2016 referendum on trade with Ukraine in the Netherlands.[6] It is also suspected of supporting the anti-shale gas and other protest movements in Bulgaria that have complicated Bulgaria's efforts to reduce its dependence on Russian energy sources.[7]

Economic influence. Russia uses both direct and indirect economic influence to affect European politics. Moscow used energy as a tool of foreign policy when it shut off the natural gas supplies to Ukraine in the dead of the winter in 2006 and 2009 in an overt effort to coerce Ukraine into agreement on the price of its gas. The indirect influence Moscow has built in Europe, however, may be even more important. Taking advantage of the vast network of natural gas pipelines built in Soviet times, the Russian state-owned gas giant Gazprom and its subsidiaries wield influence over the politics and economics of many European countries. Russia has also offered large-scale investment to build energy pipelines and other infrastructure in countries that are dependent on Russian energy supplies as a means of growing its influence—often through murky back-room deals. Many other Russian investments are legal, but their use to further Russian national interests is problematic, and the results can damage free markets and democratic institutions.

Clandestine measures. Russia also has the ability to use traditional espionage as part of its hybrid methods, bribing, extorting, and otherwise attempting to influence vulnerable political figures to further its interests. As part of its broader military modernization program, Russia has invested in strengthening its special operations forces. These forces have a range of roles, but one of their most dramatic has been in infiltrating other countries and directing hybrid warfare efforts there. Russian military intelligence, for example, is believed to have instigated a 2016 plot to overthrow the pro-NATO government of Montenegro. Russian special forces were crucial in seizing Crimea and supporting separatists in the Donbass, and they are likely operating in several NATO-allied countries.

Political influence. Of course, Russian leaders also use traditional diplomacy to support their preferred political parties and candidates, offering high-level visits in Moscow and otherwise attempting to champion their claims, while deriding the positions of political leaders more critical of Moscow.

Behind these levers lies the implicit threat of Russian conventional and, in the extreme, nuclear force. A discussion of Russia's full military capabilities is unwarranted in this testimony, but it is important to recognize that these higher-end military capabilities are the backdrop against which hybrid warfare is carried out.

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[6] Anne Applebaum, "The Dutch Just Showed the World How Russia Influences Western European Elections," *Washington Post*, April 8, 2016.

[7] Kerin Hope, "Bulgarians See Russian Hand in Anti-Shale Protests," *Financial Times*, November 30, 2014.

Today's Targets

Russian hybrid warfare targets a number of different countries in Europe and Eurasia. I will not detail them all here, but a few key examples deserve attention. The newest focus of Russian efforts appears to be on the Balkans and West European elections, but hybrid activities in the Baltic states, Central Europe, Ukraine, and elsewhere persist.

Upcoming European Elections

The greatest immediate concern is the potential for Russian meddling in several key elections that will take place in Europe in 2017. Russian efforts to meddle in the 2016 U.S. presidential elections, combined with known Russian efforts to hack into the computers of Germany's lower parliament in 2015, have piqued concern that Russia may be seeking to undermine pro-American and especially pro-EU parties in Germany, France, and Italy.

The most important of these elections is the German election scheduled for the fall, where German Chancellor Angela Merkel faces a tough re-election battle. Merkel has taken a hard line with Moscow over Ukraine and been a lynchpin of efforts to sustain European sanctions on Russia. The chancellor's uncompromising stance on the European migration crisis has hurt her popularity and made some parts of German society more receptive to Russia's anti-EU, anti-immigration views. In early 2016, Russian news media and Russia's top political leadership alleged that a 13-year-old Russian girl had been gang-raped by a band of Muslim immigrants in Germany. The story turned out to be a fabrication, but it complicated Merkel's effort to maintain a pro-immigrant stance in the face of a major influx of migrants from overseas. Similar opportunities for Russia to inflame tensions could arise in 2017. Merkel's ouster in favor of a more pro-Moscow Social Democratic party would be a boon for the Kremlin. Even better from Moscow's view would be a coalition that includes either the far-right *Alternative für Deutschland* party or the far left, *Die Linke*, which is the remnant of the East German Communist party.

In France, the far-right National Front, which espouses a political outlook akin to Putin's own, has received financial support from Russian banks. The center-right presidential candidate François Fillon has also taken a very pro-Moscow stance. Currently, both candidates are running behind the center-left Emmanuel Macron, but concern that Russia may seek opportunities to turn the tide against him persist.

Concern about potential Russian hybrid strategies in the United Kingdom have meanwhile intensified rapidly, as exemplified by Foreign Minister Boris Johnson's recent outbursts against Putin's "dirty tricks."[8] Many experts believe that there was a Russian hand in shaping the 2016 British vote to leave the European Union. Italy may also hold elections early in 2018, and there are suspicions that Italy was targeted by a Russian influence operation aimed at unseating its moderate government in December 2016.

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[8] Kate McCann, "Boris Johnson Claims Russia Was Behind Plot to Assassinate Prime Minister of Montenegro as He Warns of Putin's 'Dirty Tricks,'" *The Telegraph*, March 12, 2017.

The outcome of the Dutch elections last week may be one bright spot. The rise of the far-right Dutch Party for Freedom, led by Geert Wilders, created yet another opportunity for Moscow to make inroads. Luckily, the Party of Freedom did not win, but it did gain seats.

The Balkans

Another concern is the Balkans. Over the course of the last year, the western Balkans have emerged as a key target of Russian hybrid strategies within Europe. Simmering discontent in the Balkans over economic stagnation, lack of progress to EU membership, persistent ethnic tensions, and Russian cultural links have made the subregion a ripe target for Russian hybrid strategies.

Russia has been seeking, for example, to establish a base in Serbia that could be used for covert operations across the Balkans under the guise of a "Humanitarian Center."[9] As noted already, Russia is widely alleged to have orchestrated the attempted coup against a pro-NATO government in Montenegro in October 2016.[10] Russia has also stoked separatist tensions, backing the controversial leader of the semiautonomous *Republika Srpska,* Milorad Dodik, and supporting Serb separatism in northern Kosovo. In 2016, Croatia, a NATO member, was also wracked by scandal when it was revealed that a former deputy prime minister had received campaign funding from Russian sources. In 2012, the Bulgarian government cancelled a license for Chevron to explore its shale gas reserves under pressure from Russian-backed protestors. Business networks with Russian financial backing have also played a prominent role in shaping government policy in Sofia and across the region.

Central Europe and the Baltic States

Kremlin influence in Central Europe, especially with U.S. allies such as Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia, is grounded in historical links to the Soviet empire. Russian influence in these countries is often derived from Russia's key role in the energy sectors of these countries, but Moscow has also used other means to influence the region's policies. In 2015 and 2016, the strain of the European migration crisis opened the door to even deeper Russian involvement in the region, as anti-EU and anti-immigrant sentiment rose.

Political parties with strong pro-Moscow sympathies, such as the Hungarian nationalist party *Fidez*, have introduced legislation designed to facilitate Russian investment in their national economies. Suspicion is widespread of foul play in Russia's win of the 12.5-billion-euro deal to build the Paks-2 nuclear plant in Hungary, largely on account of the nontransparent way in which the decision was made. Rumors have meanwhile swirled about warm ties between the Czech Republic's President Zeman and Moscow, especially after Russia's largest private oil company, Lukoil, paid a 1.4-million-euro fine to keep one of Zeman's top advisers out of prison in late 2016.[11]

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[9] Dusan Stojanovic, "Inside Russian 'Spy Base' in the Balkans," *Associated Press,* October 6, 2016.

[10] Andrew Higgins, "Finger Pointed at Russians in Alleged Coup Plot in Montenegro, *New York Times*, November 26, 2016.

[11] Neil McFarquhar, "How Russians Pay to Play in Other Countries," *New York Times*, December 30, 2016.

Moscow also has significant influence in the Baltic states. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have historical links to Russia that are even closer than those of U.S. allies in Central Europe. These countries were part of the Soviet Union, whereas their Central European counterparts were separate countries bound to Moscow via the Warsaw Pact.[12]

Russia provides funds to pro-Russian groups throughout the Baltics via its "Compatriots Policy." Latvia and Estonia are both home to sizeable Russian minority populations, some (although not all) of which are easily influenced by Moscow. A key example is the Harmony Party in Latvia. The Harmony Party is supported by Latvia's ethnic Russian minority, has established a formal partnership with Putin's United Russia Party, and advocates a softer approach to Russia on issues such as the Ukraine sanctions. In Estonia, Russian minorities are concentrated in areas such as the town of Narva, which lies along the northeastern border with Russia. These minorities are accordingly potential targets for Kremlin covert activities and, in a worst-case (and also least likely) scenario, efforts to create a pretext for military intervention in the Baltic states.[13]

Notably, there has been some progress in raising awareness of the threat in the Baltic states, perhaps because these states are on the front lines. Baltic governments, as well as the governments of the Nordic countries, are increasingly engaged in strengthening their defenses and resilience against hybrid strategies.

Ukraine and Other Areas

Russia's efforts to make inroads in the Balkans and influence European politics more broadly have not put an end to Russian operations in Ukraine, where its operations first ignited debate over the subject of hybrid war. Russia continues to support separatists in the eastern Donbas region with its special operations forces and pursues a campaign that involves media, cyber, and economic pressure against the U.S.-backed government in Kiev.

Russian Hybrid Strategies Are Not New. . .

Russia's use of hybrid strategies is not new. During the Soviet era, Moscow frequently made use of subversive "active measures" to gain influence and shape the political landscape in Europe. For example, Soviets funded "euro-communist" political parties, encouraged antinuclear protest movements, and sought to manipulate the European media. The Kremlin conducted these activities in conjunction with efforts to steal state secrets and buy influence through traditional forms of espionage. Soviet special forces also trained for activities similar to those of Russian special forces in hybrid warfare today.

With the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, these activities naturally declined. Moscow lacked both the resources and the interest in pursuing them. It lacked the resources because of its dire economic state. It lacked the interest because, in the 1990s at least,

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[12] Although never recognized as such by the U.S. Congress.

[13] F. Stephen Larrabee, Stephanie Pezard, Andrew Radin, Nathan Chandler, Keith Crane, and Thomas S. Szayna, *Russia and the West After the Ukrainian Crisis*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, RR-1305-A, 2017.

Russia appeared to be on a trajectory for greater cooperation and integration with Europe. Even at the turn of the century, in the early years of Putin's presidency, hope that Russia and the West would get along persisted.

Beginning with the so-called color revolutions in Georgia in 2003 and Ukraine in 2004, however, Russia's relations with the West began deteriorating. Meanwhile, thanks to foreign investment and strong oil prices, Russia regained resources that it lacked in the 1990s and invested them in its military and security services.

. . . But Are Updated for the Twenty-First Century

The hybrid war tactics that Russia uses today, however, are not identical to those used during the Cold War. Even if Russia used information operations back then, the volume and ambition of Russian information campaigns today are far greater and facilitated by the existence of the Internet, cable news, and especially social media. The use of cyber operations is also new, as is Russia's more extensive use of economic levers to influence foreign governments. Because Russia and the world are much more closely interlinked than during the Cold War, it is easier for Russia to penetrate Western societies. Russia's use of these tactics also appears to be less ideological than during the Cold War, when the Kremlin held a hidebound Marxist worldview. Russia's outlook today is less bound to any ideology, and Moscow may be shrewder as a result.

Developing Strategies to Counter Hybrid Warfare

Meeting the challenge posed by Russian hybrid warfare will take time and effort. It must also be developed in conjunction with efforts to strengthen conventional deterrence. An effective strategy to defend U.S. interests against hybrid Russian strategies will include, at a minimum, the following.

Strong coordination and cooperation within the U.S. interagency. Russian hybrid warfare plays out in areas that are the purview of the U.S. State Department, the Defense Department, the Treasury Department, and the intelligence community. The Defense Department has an important role, but cannot counter Russian hybrid war strategies alone. Developing and implementing an effective strategy calls not only for effective coordination of response but also consensus about the threat and its meaning to U.S. national security. The White House may also wish to consider establishing regular interagency meetings led by the National Security Council staff—for example, at the policy coordination committee level—to develop and implement a coordinated national strategy and potentially a National Security Presidential Directive.[14]

Appropriate resource allocation to the collection and analysis of intelligence in the European theater. For over two decades, Europe's security has largely been uncontested. But European insecurity is now growing rapidly as a result of Russian threats and the threat posed by terrorist groups, such as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. The United States must ensure that it has the resources necessary to meet that threat in Europe. Tracking and gaining advance warning

[14] See Charles P. Ries, *Improving Decisionmaking in a Turbulent World*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, PE-192-RC, 2016.

of Russian hybrid activities is vitally important, but it imposes a toll on intelligence collection and analysis capabilities. The United States must also continue to develop close intelligence sharing relationships with key allies—both to obtain information about Russian activities and to share it when it serves U.S. interests. To combat hybrid strategies, intelligence agencies must be as closely linked with law enforcement as possible.

Support for transparency and anticorruption efforts. Tolerance of corruption greatly facilitates Russian influence strategies. Some countries in Europe—for example, many states in the Balkans—suffer from weak anticorruption legal frameworks and limited political will for change. In other countries, political will may be strong, but individual privacy concerns can limit the remit of transparency laws. In these areas, the EU is an important partner for both the United States and for NATO. The United States should support European anticorruption efforts wholeheartedly, with appropriate funding for related State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development programs.

Support for internal security reform and defense institution building in targeted states such as the Balkans and Ukraine. Although some Balkan militaries already meet NATO standards of professionalization, others need additional support. Institution-building in these countries needs to be focused on weakening any lingering ties with Russian security services. In addition, strengthening capabilities in such countries, as well as in the Baltic states, will enable greater detection and resistance to covert Russian operations. In general, U.S. assistance targeted at strengthening the rule of law will complicate Moscow's hybrid efforts.[15]

Strategies to push back against Russian influence operations. More work needs to be done in this difficult area, but initial research suggests that it may be better to focus on discrediting sources such as *Russia Today* and generally raising awareness of misinformation rather than attempting to fight each and every story on a tit-for-tat basis. Civil society must also be encouraged to play a larger role in combatting Russian disinformation. Increasing the flow of positive information will also help. In extreme cases, such as wartime, it may be necessary to temporarily close off access to Russian media outlets.[16]

Effective use of U.S. special operations forces in the U.S. European Command area of operations. U.S. special operations forces have an important role to play in combating Russian hybrid strategies in Europe. Both the mission and operating environment in Europe, however, is different from that in countries like Iraq and Syria. This requires some adaptation. For example, one challenge is ensuring that U.S. diplomats are attuned to the needs of U.S. special operations forces conducting training and other activities in the region. Conversely, U.S. forces must also be fully aware of the delicate nature of some U.S. diplomatic activities underway in these same countries. The United States must also operate in support of individual European countries' plans, filling their gaps and bolstering their programs.

Support for European efforts to combat Russian hybrid warfare. The United States, after all, is not the first line of defense against most forms of Russian hybrid warfare in Europe.

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[15] Andrew Radin, *Hybrid Warfare in the Baltics: Threats and Potential Responses*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, RR-1577-PAF, 2017.

[16] Paul and Matthews, 2016.

Instead, the first line of defense is the EU and European countries themselves. The United States can support specific efforts, such as Finland's Hybrid War Center of Excellence, Latvia's Strategic Communications Center of Excellence, and Estonia's Cyber Center of Excellence, while encouraging other best practices, such as closer public-private partnerships in Europe, to strengthen Europe's own defenses against cyber attacks.

Not Going Away

Russian hybrid strategies pose a clear challenge to U.S. national interests in NATO unity, a prosperous EU, and a strong liberal democratic system in Europe. In the most extreme case, hybrid strategies could be used for outright aggression against NATO territory.

Of course, Russia does not have endless resources for hybrid warfare, so it will be important not to overexaggerate the threat. It is also helpful to remember that Russia uses hybrid strategies as a means of pursuing what it believes to be its national interests—and views many U.S. and NATO activities as hybrid strategies directed against it.

Nevertheless, the growing challenge posed by Russian hybrid threats is real and not going away. The United States must recognize this fact and remain wary of Russian efforts to influence allied politics—and our own.

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The author of three scholarly books and several monographs and articles on U.S. foreign and security policy, Chivvis has worked on Eurasian security and NATO-Russia issues in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. He has also held research positions at the French Institute for International Relations (Ifri) in Paris and at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) in Berlin, and taught graduate courses at Johns Hopkins University, New York University, and Sciences Po in Paris.

His work has appeared in The New York Times, Foreign Policy, Foreign Affairs, The National Interest, Survival, The Washington Quarterly, The Christian Science Monitor, CNN.com, and other leading publications. Chivvis received his Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins, SAIS.

Federal Contract or Grant Information

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Foreign Government Contract or Payment Information

FY2017

Foreign Contract/Payment	Foreign Government	Dollar Value	Subject of contract or payment
Contract	South Korea	$90,000	Research
Contract	Japan	$195,351	Research

FY2016

Foreign Contract/Payment	Foreign Government	Dollar Value	Subject of contract or payment
Contract	Commonwealth of Australia	$1,521,072	Research
Contract	Jinan Water Resources Bureau – Peoples Republic of China	$355,652	Research
Contract	Japan	$207,700	Research
Contract	South Korea	$249,040	Research
Contract	United Arab Emirates	$3,155,000	Research

Contract	Kurdistan Regional Government	$2,714,789	Research

FY15

Foreign Contract/Payment	Foreign Government	Dollar Value	Subject of contract or payment
Contract	Commonwealth of Australia	$9,104,636	Research
Contract	Canada	$17,624	Research
Contract	Japan	$207,700	Research
Contract	South Korea	$100,000	Research

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING

MARCH 22, 2017

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. LAMBORN

Mr. LAMBORN. Does DOD have the resources and capabilities needed to confront the hybrid threat? How well does DOD prioritize responding to this threat?

Dr. HOFFMAN. [No answer was available at the time of printing.]

Mr. LAMBORN. Does DOD have the resources and capabilities needed to confront the hybrid threat? How well does DOD prioritize responding to this threat?

Mr. SHEARER. The defense funding cap imposed by the Budget Control Act impedes coherent defense planning and has a deleterious impact on U.S. military readiness and investment in future capability. Nevertheless, neither resource constraints nor capability gaps are not the main impediment to confronting the hybrid threat. The main challenges are: 1. Recognizing the nature and scale of the evolving hybrid warfare threat in Asia, Europe, and the Middle East; 2. Developing tailored regional strategies to counter competitors' determined efforts to exploit the "gray zone" between peace and war to undermine the interests of the United States and its allies; and 3. Aligning and concerting not only DOD resources but the capabilities of agencies across the U.S. Government to implement those strategies. The absence of coherent regional strategies makes it difficult for DOD to prioritize relevant capabilities. Within DOD, greater priority should be given to the following areas: intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; cyber; irregular warfare, including special forces; and information operations.

Mr. LAMBORN. Does DOD have the resources and capabilities needed to confront the hybrid threat? How well does DOD prioritize responding to this threat?

Dr. CHIVVIS. This is an important question. Although RAND has extensive analytical experience in assessing the cost implications of challenges like Russia's use of hybrid warfare, we have not yet been asked to do so. Here are a few initial thoughts, building on my written testimony.

Allocation of resources for countering Russian hybrid war strategies should naturally flow from the strategy for countering Russian hybrid war. I have outlined the elements of such a strategy in my written testimony, including:

1. strong interagency coordination
2. appropriate resource allocation for analysis and collection of intelligence in the European area of responsibility (AOR)
3. support for transparency and anticorruption efforts in Europe
4. strategies to push back against Russian influence operations
5. effective use of U.S. special operations forces
6. support for European efforts to combat Russian hybrid warfare.

Of these dimensions, the DOD has the lead in effective use of U.S. special operations forces and some elements of support to European efforts to combat Russian hybrid warfare. It has a role in interagency coordination and allocation of resources for intelligence collection—for example, through Defense Intelligence Agency programs.

This being the case, the key to ensuring adequate DOD funding for countering Russian hybrid war will be adequate funding for U.S. special operations forces in the European AOR, DOD intelligence activities in the AOR, and necessary funding for building partner capacity (although much of the relevant funding in this category is under State Department authorities). I note that support to North Atlantic Treaty Organization special operations forces could also be valuable in this regard.

Investments in DOD-related programs needed to counter hybrid warfare in Europe should not come at the expense of relevant State Department and other civilian programs, and it is important to recall that Russian military leaders consider the relevant ratio of civilian to military activity to be 4:1 when it comes to hybrid warfare. Similarly, funding for hybrid warfare does not obviate the need for funding conventional forces in Europe, which are needed to reduce the risk of Russian conventional war.

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