

TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY SECURITY IN THE OSCE REGION

HEARING BEFORE THE COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS FIRST SESSION

NOVEMBER 5, 2007

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November 5, 2007

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE
WASHINGTON, DC

[The hearing was held at 3 p.m. in room 2212 of the Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC, Hon. Alcee L. Hastings, Chairman, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, presiding.

Commissioners present: Hon. Alcee L. Hastings, Chairman, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe and Hon. Benjamin L. Cardin, Co-Chairman, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Witnesses present: Hon. David Kramer, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Asian Affairs; Hon. Daniel Fata, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Europe and NATO; Hon. Vasil Sikharulidze, Ambassador of Georgia to the United States; and Hon. Nicolae Chirtoaca, Ambassador of the Republic of Moldova to the United States.

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS, CHAIRMAN, COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

Mr. HASTINGS. The hearing will come to order. And the Commission is meeting this afternoon to examine key security challenges of today in the OSCE region.

This hearing, in my judgment, is particularly timely, given the increasing tensions among various Participating states over issues ranging from disagreements between the United States and the Russian Federation over missile defense to unresolved conflicts affecting Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, just to mention some.

I'm particularly concerned about the potential adverse impact upon European security if Russia follows through on its threat to withdraw from the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty. NATO and the former Warsaw Pact countries ratified the CFE, as we all know, in 1990, under the auspices of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the predecessor of the current Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The CFE has played a major role in European security in this post-cold war era, setting broad limits on key categories of conventional military equipment in Europe and mandating the destruction of excess weaponry. Under its provisions, over 60,000 pieces of combat material have been destroyed or removed from the arsenals

of signatory states under a rigorous, but mutually acceptable, transparency regime.

In sum, it established parity, transparency and stability among the conventional military forces and equipment in Europe. The CFE was amended in 1999 to account for the dissolution of the former Soviet Union and the reality that several Warsaw Pact countries had become NATO members.

However, NATO members have not yet ratified the amended treaty, because Russia has failed to fulfill related commitments to withdraw its troops and weaponry from the territories of Moldova and Georgia, where they are stationed against the wishes of those governments.

Russia announced its intention to suspend implementation of the CFE last July, citing among others, U.S. plans to construct missile defense facilities in Eastern Europe. What Moscow sees is further encroachment by NATO toward Russia's border and NATO member states' refusal to ratify the 1999 CFE adapted agreement.

But Russia refuses to acknowledge the linkage between its failure to meet its obligation to withdraw its troops and weaponry from Moldova and Georgia with NATO members' ratification of the treaty. Russia's declared suspension of the CFE on last July 14th is troubling to the countries that are parties to the treaty, because it may lead to instability in the security situation in Europe.

At the same time, forced borders and corruption continue to fuel human trafficking and illicit trading of weapons and drugs, especially in Central Asia, and to allow terrorists easy movement across borders.

I'm particularly concerned about the potential spread of weapons of mass destruction to state and non-state sponsors of terrorism. Today renewed terrorist attacks carried out by the Kurdistan Workers Party, or PKK, against Turkish state interests threaten peace and security in southern Turkey and northern Iraq.

My compliments to the prime minister, who is here today meeting with President Bush, and I have the good fortune, along with some other members, to meet with him later today.

As a recent attempted terrorist attack upon the U.S. Embassy in Vienna, Austria, and reportedly, another planned attack upon United States and other government interests in Azerbaijan illustrate, terrorist threats to security in the OSCE region remain real and will continue to require a long-term focus and cooperation among all Participating states, as well as the public and private sectors.

Since its founding, the OSCE has played an important role in advancing European security and cooperation through key organs, including newer fora such as the Forum for Security Cooperation and the Annual Security Review Conference, which brings security concerns and the political realm to the highest level of attention among participating states.

I'm pleased to note the planned priority to be accorded to this dimension at the Madrid ministerial. Let us hope that this meeting does not follow the precedent of previous years and we will see some positive, and tangible results in the security dimension at the conclusion.

Border management is a critical concern, given its relevance to combating terrorism, trafficking in weapons, drugs and human beings, and illegal immigration. Effective border management systems facilitate the movement of goods and people between nations. The OSCE has undertaken commendable initiatives to strengthen border security in the region, which is supplemented by support from individual Participating states, including the United States.

The United States has provided bilateral capacity building, training, and other technical assistance to various participating states, including several Central Asian countries. Efforts to expand police training and border security are also under way with Afghanistan and OSCE partners for cooperation.

I look forward to hearing from our distinguished witnesses how the border management and police training programs being implemented by the OSCE and the U.S. Government are progressing.

Finally, events in the Middle East impact security in Central Asia, Europe and North America—indeed, the world. That is why our cooperation with the five OSCE Mediterranean partners is so crucial in areas such as combating terrorism, conflict management and promoting tolerance.

We have two expert panels to provide insight or perspective on these issues this afternoon, and we look forward to their testimony.

Before you testify, gentlemen, I'll offer you a comment. Your entire written statements will be included in the hearing record, so we would ask of you to please summarize your oral testimony and try to stick to 5 minutes, if you can—after I've just taken 6. [Laughter.]

But we're very pleased to be joined by the Co-Chairman of the Helsinki Commission, my good friend, Senator Cardin, and I would at this time give the floor to Senator Cardin for any comments he may wish to make.

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, CO-CHAIRMAN, COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

Mr. CARDIN. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And I will put my entire statement in the record.

I want to thank you for convening this hearing. I think the security dimension in the OSCE is extremely important. I think many people think that the countries within the OSCE are relatively calm from the point of view of security concerns, but we all know the catastrophic results when problems are not resolved and ignite and blow up.

And we still have many areas within the OSCE that are of major concern today. Let me just mention one: Kosovo. What's going to happen? Are we going to be able to move forward with a path toward independence? Or are we going to run into difficulties as far as resolving the final hurdles, we hope, for peace and independence within that country?

We know that the Russian Federation has done things of late that are very troubling to us. The renunciation of the CFE treaty is certainly something that changes the dynamics in the region. Whether Russia will live up to its commitment that it made to Georgia and Moldova is an issue concerning Russian troops that is a major concern to many of us.

So I look forward to this hearing so that we have a chance to look at the hot spots within the OSCE region in an effort to do what the OSCE has been best at doing, and that is it has through its efforts prevented many security problems with the region over its now 30-year history. And we hope that we will see the OSCE continue to be in its security basket a way of resolving conflicts and maintaining security in the region.

I am pleased that it looks like in Madrid that we'll have a reaffirmation of the war against terrorism and commitment within the OSCE states. I look forward to hearing from our witnesses from the U.S. Government and from some of our friends.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you very much.

Ladies and gentlemen, the biographies of all of our witnesses are in the background over on the table on the outside, so I'm not going to give all of the information regarding them. I will just announce their titles, and I hope that that will suffice, with no offense meant at all.

Mr. David Kramer is the Deputy Assistance Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, and Mr. Daniel Fata is the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Europe and NATO.

I don't know whether you gentlemen worked it out, but either of you may begin. He says you, Mr. Kramer. Thank you.

**HON. DAVID KRAMER, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF
STATE FOR EUROPEAN AND ASIAN AFFAIRS**

Sec. KRAMER. Mr. Chairman, Co-Chairman Cardin, thank you very much for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss key security issues that confront the OSCE region.

These include a range of issues related to Russia, such as the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty, or CFE, and related 1999 OSCE Istanbul summit commitments, as well as our work with NATO and Russia on missile defense and a number of other OSCE security issues.

I appreciate that my written statement submitted to the commission earlier will be entered into the record.

Before I begin, Mr. Chairman, let me say that it's an honor to testify today along with the Georgian and Moldovan Ambassadors. We work very closely with them and with their governments, and very productively so, on a number of issues, including security issues related to the OSCE. And I thank the Ambassadors for their partnership.

I would like to start with an update on recent developments affecting our dialogue with Russia on OSCE-related security issues and then focus on CFE in particular. And my friend and colleague from the Pentagon, Deputy Assistant Secretary Dan Fata will then go into detail on the missile defense issue.

Since the meeting held between President Bush and President Putin in Kennebunkport this past July, we have had three rounds of expert level meetings on missile defense and three on CFE issues. We also have continued to meet with allies and partners, including Georgia and Moldova, in parallel with these meetings with the Russians.

These exchanges provide an important background for the Two-Plus-Two talks that took place October 12th between Secretaries Rice and Gates and their Russian counterparts, Foreign Minister Lavrov and Defense Minister Serdyukov.

Those talks included a strategic dialogue on a full range of security issues: missile defense, CFE, post start arrangements and arms transfers. Russian officials also discussed their views on the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces, or INF, Treaty.

The U.S. side came prepared to make progress and offered creative ideas on the major agenda items, and I should say that the meetings were more constructive than most press reports suggested. The secretaries plan to meet again in roughly 6 months time in the United States to continue their dialogue.

Both Deputy Assistant Secretary Fata and I were in Moscow with our bosses for the Two-Plus-Two meetings. The Russian side expressed appreciation for the number of ideas and proposals our side presented in an effort to work through our various differences. We agreed to continue expert level meetings to fill in some of the details and narrow these differences before the next Two-Plus-Two meeting sometime next spring.

We believe it's useful to continue this missile defense dialogue with Russia. Despite differences we may have, it is in our mutual interest to address ballistic missile threats together, for that enhances global security. Missile threats from the Middle East—particularly Iran—pose a threat to Russia as well as to the United States and our European allies. Cooperation between the United States and Russia in this domain can enhance the security of both countries and could improve overall U.S.-Russian relations.

Now, let me turn to the CFE Treaty and Istanbul commitments, which were a major point of discussion in Moscow when the secretaries were both there and will continue to be a major issue following that Two-Plus-Two meeting. I also note that this set of issues is a major concern of this Commission, and I very much respect that.

The CFE Treaty has been responsible—as you said, Mr. Chairman—for the verified destruction of over 60,000 pieces of military equipment and countless onsite inspections, advancements which have changed the face of European security. Openness and transparency regarding all the major armies in Europe have replaced mistrust and lack of information. The United States and our NATO allies continue to believe that the CFE Treaty is a cornerstone of European security.

At the time the adapted CFE Treaty was signed at the 1999 OSCE summit in Istanbul, Russia made a number of commitments related to withdrawal of forces and facilities in Georgia and Moldova. These were made in accordance with the core principle of host country consent to the stationing of foreign forces.

Russia also committed to reduce its holding of treaty-limited equipment to the levels it accepted in the adapted treaty for the CFE flank region.

Russia has made important progress on many of those commitments, particularly in Georgia. While three of Russia's four major bases in Georgia have been closed or nearly closed—two under a 2005 agreement dealing with Akhalkalaki and Batumi—a small

number of Russian personnel and supplies remain at the Gudauta base in the separatist Abkhazia region of Georgia.

We are working on a way forward with our Russian and Georgian colleagues, in consultation with NATO allies, which we hope will resolve this last remaining issue involving Georgia.

Russian forces also remain in the Transnistria region of Moldova, some as peacekeepers under a 1992 cease-fire agreement and others as guards at a large storage depot where significant amounts of Soviet era light arms munitions remain.

Moldova wants the ammunition withdrawn or destroyed and all Russian forces, including peacekeepers, withdrawn and replaced by an international presence. So it could be a civilian force. In fact, that's an idea we are seriously exploring. Alas, there's been no progress in Russian withdrawal from Moldova since early 2004, but we are hoping to change that.

Mr. Chairman, our challenge has revolved around Russian authorities' claims that they have fulfilled all those Istanbul commitments they consider to be related to the CFE Treaty. Russian authorities stress that they do not accept NATO's linkage between the ratification of the adapted treaty and the Istanbul commitments.

And as you know, Mr. Chairman, neither the United States nor our allies shares that view. All of the pledges we refer to as the Istanbul commitments were reflected in the CFE final act, a political document agreed by the CFE member states at the time the adapted treaty was signed at the summit in Istanbul. There never were two classes of commitments, some related to CFE and some not. However, we are trying to work to bridge the differences we have with our Russian colleagues.

Russia's threat to suspend implementation of the current CFE Treaty is a matter of serious concern to the United States and to our NATO allies. We have said that publicly, and we have certainly conveyed that message in our bilateral meetings. With Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Daniel Fried in the lead, we have met with our Russian counterparts again since the Two-Plus-Two meetings in Moscow to try to find a way to keep Russia from suspending while maintaining allies and partners equities.

We plan to hold another meeting in Europe in a few days, and I'll be accompanying Assistant Secretary Fried for that meeting. Working with NATO allies, the United States has developed a set of ideas for moving forward together with Russia on parallel tracks as a way to make progress on remaining Istanbul commitments and to move forward on ratification of adapted CFE.

If Russia is prepared to commit to move on Istanbul, some NATO allies are open to beginning the ratification process while Russia is still in the process of completing those commitments. Allies believe that this would send an important signal of NATO's continued support for CFE.

I want to stress that in developing these ideas, the United States and NATO allies have worked hand-in-glove.

We have also been consulting closely with the Georgian and Moldovan governments. I personally traveled to Chisinau after the Two-Plus-Two meeting to consult with President Voronin and his

government and separately met with the Georgian Foreign Minister Bezhuashvili to elicit his views as well. Assistant Secretary Fried was just in Tblisi for further consultations, and I've also met recently with our two distinguished Ambassadors last week.

A transparent, consultative process is key to maintaining allied unity and effectiveness.

Mr. Chairman, if I may in my last minute or so, let me touch briefly on the effectiveness of the OSCE interrelated efforts to combat terrorism, enhance border security and monitor the weapons trade in the region—issues that I know are of great interest to this Commission.

The OSCE is at the forefront of counterterrorism efforts in the region, and we are encouraged by the results we have seen, both of the security multiplier and in terms of cooperation among countries from the Balkans to the Baltics.

One way that we are supporting the OSCE's counterterrorism efforts is by exploring ways for governments to cooperate closely with the private sector and civil society to combat terrorism. The United States and Russia worked together on the public-private partnership conference held earlier this year under OSCE auspices in Vienna.

The United States and Russia are also working together on a decision with the OSCE's Forum for Security Cooperation, or FSC, in support of the global initiative to combat nuclear terrorism. We tabled this draft on October 31st, and when agreed, it will provide an endorsement by all OSCE participating states for further cooperative action to combat the threat of nuclear terrorism.

In the area of border security, the OSCE plays an important role, particularly in Central Asia. The OSCE is currently examining a potential role in helping to train Afghanistan border authorities. Confidence in security building measures remains a vital element in the long-term security of the OSCE region, and we continue to work with the OSCE to enhance these measures even further.

Mr. Chairman, the United States is committed to furthering security for the people of Europe and Eurasia. Our main goals in this area, as I have explained today, are to work constructively with Russia where we can, but we at times, of course, may have to agree to disagree on occasion to continue to press forward toward entry into force of the adapted CFE Treaty in fulfillment of Russia's Istanbul commitments.

We are also committed to ensuring the success of OSCE efforts to foster and enhance security throughout the region. Security, along with the political and economic baskets of the OSCE, is a vital matter for this organization, and it is very good that you have called today's hearing to focus on this issue.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to appear before you here today, and I am happy to take your questions perhaps after my colleague goes.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you very much, Mr. Kramer.

Mr. Fata?

**HON. DANIEL FATA, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF
DEFENSE FOR EUROPE AND NATO**

Sec. FATA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Co-Chairman. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today. I will focus my comments on the issue of missile defense, but will be happy to answer any of the other questions you raised or topics you raised in the letter of invitation for this hearing.

I'd like to start with the basic question of why is the United States pursuing a missile defense system in Europe. The Bush administration made an early decision to move from national missile defense under the Clinton administration to a broader based approach capable of protecting our allies. This is based on the belief that the United States and allied security is indivisible. It also recognizes the growing ballistic missile threat facing all of us.

There are good reasons for urgency. There are over 20 states or non-state actors that possess or are attempting to possess ballistic missiles. But as a threat to Europe, Iran is our most immediate concern.

Despite our efforts to limit its spread through the missile technology control regime, ballistic missile technology is freely exported by some countries, such as North Korea, allowing development to be accelerated.

Intelligence has previously underestimated the pace of ballistic missile developments. The ballistic missile threat is growing. We don't want the United States or its European allies to be held hostage by a country or an actor with a ballistic missile capability.

In Europe the U.S. missile defense system we envision consists of three parts: a radar in the Czech Republic, an interceptor site in Poland and a third component, which would be a smaller, forward-based radar within 1,000 kilometers of likely launch points in the Middle East.

The system would be focused on a threat emanating from the Middle East and would provide a defense to much of Europe, as well as additional protection for the United States.

A missile defense system is just that: purely defensive. The kinetic energy of an interceptor missile will pulverize an attacking warhead outside the atmosphere. The interceptor system carries no explosive warhead of its own.

We believe that the system, which has been tested by a variety of means, will not only destroy incoming missiles—it will also serve as a deterrent and may dissuade some countries from undertaking long-range ballistic missile development. In short, the system is meant to detect, deter and defend.

The system poses no threat to Russia. It cannot catch Russian missiles, and the 10 interceptors we propose to deploy in Poland will be no match for hundreds of Russian missiles with over a thousand warheads. In no way, shape or form do plans for missile defense in Europe affect Russia's strategic deterrent or serve as a legitimate catalyst for a new arms race.

The U.S. missile defense system would complement NATO's work on its own active, layered theater ballistic missile defense, which would provide command and control for defending deployed forces against short and medium-range ballistic missiles. The combination of the U.S. system and NATO's program could lay the groundwork

for defense of NATO territory against short, medium and long-range ballistic missile threats.

Our talks with the Polish and Czech Governments have been under way since early this year. Our goal is to be able to complete negotiations with both countries by the end of this year, and at some point early next year, we would hope that both governments would be able to take a positive decision to host the U.S. assets.

If we are successful, then the United States would hope to begin construction at some point late in 2008, reaching initial operating capability several years later and, ideally, full operational capability in 2013.

We have made steady progress in our negotiations with both countries, and the United States is pleased with the serious and constructive approach our counterparts have taken. We remain confident that we will be able to reach agreement.

The last aspect I want to cover is the Russian dimension. We have been talking to the Russians almost as extensively as we have been talking to the allies. Throughout, we have offered full transparency on the threat, why it needs to be countered, and our plans for doing so. We have offered a variety of ideas and cooperative projects to provide transparency and reassure the Russian Government that our missile defense system is not directed toward or against them.

We have invited Russian officials to visit our sites in Alaska and California. We have suggested jointly undertaking test bed experimentation and radar data sharing. During the past 6 months, we have offered a comprehensive proposal for cooperation across a broad spectrum of missile defense activities.

Although we continue to disagree in key areas, including how soon Iran could possess long-range ballistic missiles, both sides have presented ideas for cooperation and have an exceptionally open exchange of information regarding Iranian ballistic missile development programs.

At the recent Two-Plus-Two meeting in Moscow with Secretaries Gates and Rice and their counterparts, the United States made additional proposals to further transparency and information sharing on our proposed missile defense system.

Secretary Gates told his Russian colleagues the United States will continue negotiations with Poland and the Czech Republic on the deployment of missile defense assets, that we did not accept the Russian proposal that the United States freeze these negotiations.

We told the Russians that our intent to complete these negotiations and construct the proposed system need not impede further discussions with Russia about cooperation on missile defense.

The United States proposed to develop a joint regional missile defense architecture that could incorporate both Russian and U.S. missile defense assets. This architecture could eventually incorporate U.S., Russian, and European missile defense elements with the aim of defending the United States, Europe, and Western Russia from missile attack.

The United States also expressed its willingness to work with the Russians to address Russian concerns, and we discussed transparency efforts such as, as I previously mentioned, potential visits to the U.S. and Russian sites. Any Russian visits to sites in Poland

and the Czech Republic would of course require host nation agreement, and before we negotiate such an idea, we would ensure that Prague and Warsaw were fully on board with the proposal.

We also discussed possibly phasing the activation of missile defense assets in Europe based on further developments in the Iranian threat—that is, the actual flight-testing of a long-range Iranian ballistic missile.

Although we did not resolve our differences at the Two-Plus-Two meeting, we did agree on a way forward, which is that we would continue our experts talks, we would work on developing a strategic framework document that captures the variety of programs that the United States and Russia are engaged in, and that we would—as DAS Kramer pointed out—hold another Two-Plus-Two meeting in about 6 months time here in Washington.

So to summarize, I want to leave you with a few key points on the missile defense system in Europe. The United States has been proactive in explaining to allies both bilaterally and through multilateral forums, such as the OSCE, the EU and the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, what our missile defense is and that it is indeed defensive.

Second, NATO understands the intent of our system and that it complements NATO's short and medium-range system development. And third, we have been working with the Russian government to explain what our system is and is not and have offered full transparency in cooperative projects.

Given that I'm over my allotted time, I'm happy to answer any CFE or other questions during the next piece. I wanted to say thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Co-Chairman, for the opportunity to present.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you both so very much. And I'll jump right in on questions and probably come at this a bit of a different way.

Very recently, Secretary Gates was in the Czech Republic and offered—or at least, it was reported that he suggested—that the United States might delay implementation of its missile defense system until it has definitive proof—and I quote the secretary—that Iran poses a missile threat.

What comments do either of you offer regarding that position? Specifically, it seems that if I listen to you and your presentations, the missile defenses that are proposed are virtually situated around the subject of Iran. What if there is no definitive proof of a missile threat from Iran? And I'm not suggesting that there is none. Then what would be the relationship with us going forward with a missile defense system?

Sec. FATA. OK, sir. If I may answer that question, a couple of points to just lay the foundation. Iran is the country of greatest concern with respect to ballistic missile development, but there are other countries in the Middle East.

Mr. HASTINGS. Name some.

Sec. FATA. Syria would be one that we're concerned about, and some of the other ones I'm not sure in an unclassified setting that we can discuss, but Syria would be another one that we're concerned about. But Iran would be the one that's most advanced, and that is the one that concerns us.

And I would also say that in our discussions with the Russians, the Russians, too, are concerned about Iran's ballistic missile program. The fundamental difference between the United States and Russia on Iran is the point at which we believe Iran will have a long-range capability.

We believe sooner rather than later, based on our intelligence. The Russians believe later rather than sooner. But both countries are concerned about the development of Iran's ballistic missile program. So it comes down to that fundamental difference.

We continue to make the point that in 1998 there was an intelligence estimate that showed that North Korea wouldn't be able to launch a three-stage missile for about 7 to 10 years. One month after the intelligence report came out, North Korea launched that missile over the Sea of Japan.

The point there is that intelligence estimates of closed regimes don't necessarily tend to be accurate. We know, because of the open source data, that North Korea and Iran have shared technology. Part of the Russian argument is that Iran doesn't have the organic capability to be able to develop these weapons.

Again, the fact that there's sharing from North Korea and, as far as we are able to assess, that Iran has a determined interest in being able to develop a long-range ballistic missile gives us concern that the United States, that Europe, even Russia could be held hostage to an Iranian ballistic missile. And also Iran shares technology as well, so again, here's a concern from—

Mr. HASTINGS. But if I were to turn to Mr. Kramer and follow on from your comment, it would certainly appear geographically, at least, that Russia should have a continuing concern with reference to any development in that area.

Unless we dwell totally on the negative, en route here today I read a report where our military operatives from the Department of Defense had had an opportunity to review the Russian system, and I found that, at least, very positive. And it seems that the team was able to relay rather substantial information regarding their findings.

And I was pleased to hear you say that that effort have been mutual and that we have offered now that Russia have an opportunity to visit some of our sites as well in Alaska and California.

But, Mr. Kramer, there is a school of thought that contends that Moscow prefers to see the United States at loggerheads with Iran in order to keep the Middle East tense and oil prices high. Do you see that as a reasonable supposition?

Sec. KRAMER. Mr. Chairman, I think one needs to recall that for the two Security Council resolutions that were passed last December and then one this March, that Russia was right there with us, voting for those resolutions.

We also have seen delays in completion of the Bushehr nuclear reactor, which suggests that Russia is trying to send a message to the Iranians that it is not business as usual.

The United States and Russia share the overarching strategic objective, which is that neither of us wants to see Iran become a nuclear weapon state. We may have some differences over the tactics over how to make sure we accomplish that goal, but I think the track record so far has been rather positive.

We'll have another test coming up, and that will be our ability to get through a third U.N. Security Council resolution. And I think we'll be in a better position to judge on how Russia is cooperating with us once we get through that process.

China, of course, is also another key player in this, and that's something to keep an eye on. But I think for the most part we have seen cooperation from the Russians on the overarching strategic objective, some differences over tactics.

President Putin called President Bush very soon after he was in Tehran for the Caspian summit on October 16th and explained the position that he conveyed to Iranian leaders. And I think that is an indication that all is not black and white when it comes to the Russian cooperation with us on Iran.

Mr. HASTINGS. All right. One more question before I turn to Senator Cardin.

The discussion—the Senator mentioned it; I did; you did in your remarks—of the CFE Treaty and the fact that the Russians have indicated, or at least Mr. Putin has suggested, that Russia will suspend its observance—what it appears is that the Russian Duma is scheduled to take the matter up in the fall, and I gather that that will be interesting.

A footnote totally unrelated. I'm really concerned about the December elections in Russia and the fact that the OSCE, insofar as being invited to observe, so far as I understand it today, the observation mission would not be as robust as it has been in the past, and that's disappointing in my judgment. I think it carries us in the wrong direction at a very critical time, not just for Russia, but for all of the OSCE and the election monitoring that we do.

But what would be the practical impact of a Russian decision to suspend CFE, and what, if any, response—if you are in a position to suggest what the response of the United States might be?

Sec. KRAMER. Mr. Chairman, if I may, I would like to address both issues—the ODIHR problems—

Mr. HASTINGS. It's ODIHR and the Parliamentary Assembly.

Sec. KRAMER. Yes, exactly. Absolutely. And both will have important decisions to make over the next week or so—but also address your question about the possibility of Russia's fulfilling its threat to suspend from CFE.

We are working aggressively to try to keep Russia from going forward with its threat to suspend. December 12th is the deadline that they have imposed. We have been in negotiations going back several months now with the Russians, including also at the Two-Plus-Two meeting in Moscow in October, to try to address some of Russia's concerns while also making sure that our allies' equities, the equities of Georgia and Moldova, are also met.

Our view is that we would consult very closely and carefully with allies, should we reach a point where Russia fulfills its threat to suspend from CFE. We have been consulting with allies very closely and working various strategies and ideas to keep Russia within the treaty, for it is much better for Russia to stay within the treaty, for the reasons you cited, Mr. Chairman, in your opening comments, for the reasons I alluded to as well in my comments.

We would hope that if Russia were to go ahead and suspend—and there is no provision, by the way, in the treaty for suspension;

we would need to consult with allies on that specific issue as well, but if Russia goes ahead and also ends the data exchanges, the inspections, it will be difficult, I think, to keep allies adhering to the provisions of the treaty if one of the biggest and most important players in the treaty—Russia—no longer abides by the treaty itself.

I think Russia would also want to think through carefully the implications if some member states or signatories did not abide by it, such as Azerbaijan or Armenia, where none of us wants to see military buildup in that area with the possibility of renewed violence.

Our message has also been to the Russians that if they go ahead and suspend on December 12th, that would make moving forward with ratification of the adapted CFE Treaty much more difficult, if not impossible, for some allies. And so our hope is that they will not take that step.

Mr. HASTINGS. In light of the fact that there is no provision for unilateral withdrawal, how is that approached inside the signatories when the discussions are—is it a broader discussion with our allies and Russia or others that are signatories and Russia than just the United States and Russia?

Sec. KRAMER. Well, Mr. Chairman, if I may, what Russia is proposing to do is to suspend, not to withdraw, and there is no provision for suspension, so we would need to consult very carefully with allies—if we reach that point—what suspension means. And I think that's still to be determined.

Mr. HASTINGS. I thank you very much.

Sec. KRAMER. Mr. Chairman, may I? You mentioned—I apologize—you raised the elections and ODIHR issue, if I may.

Mr. HASTINGS. I'm going to make you say, "and the Parliamentary Assembly"—

Sec. KRAMER. Yes, sir, because you are a key member of that. Absolutely. My apologies. I'm shorthanding, and my apologies on that.

Mr. HASTINGS. Too many people do that.

Sec. KRAMER. Indeed. And after today—I trust you—I won't do it again.

Mr. HASTINGS. OK.

Sec. KRAMER. Both for ODIHR and the Parliamentary Assembly, Mr. Chairman, I think Russia has proposed a restrictive approach that is not good for any of the members of the OSCE. The invitation was issued late, in our view, by Russia, and it also comes with a number of conditions. And I think this will pose some serious challenges and decisions that both ODIHR and the Parliamentary Assembly will have to decide on.

Our hope is that visas are granted to the members of the missions as soon as possible so that they can get in place as soon as possible. It is already too late for long-term observation, so we are talking about short-term observation. But December 2nd, to state the obvious, is not far away, and so far we have not gotten indications that visas will be forthcoming for the members of these missions.

So this is, I think, an unfortunate development, and as you rightly point out, Mr. Chairman, it has repercussions beyond Russia. It has repercussions for other countries in the region, too, who don't

take the most favorable view toward the work that the Parliamentary Assembly and ODIHR perform.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you very much.
Senator?

Mr. CARDIN. Once again, thank you all for your testimony.

Russia has done things during the last couple of years in the region that would have any of its neighbors concerned as to its intentions. So if I were from Moldova or Georgia and there were still Russian troops facilities in my country, I would even be more concerned today than I was in 1999 when the commitments were reached for the removal of these troops.

So let's be a little more specific. What is our position with regards to Russia's troops presence in Moldova and Georgia?

Sec. KRAMER. Senator, we support the efforts and the requests of the governments of Georgia and Moldova to see foreign forces leave their territory. Host nation consent is a very important principle for the OSCE, certainly, but in general.

From the 1999 Istanbul commitments, Russia committed to withdraw its forces from Georgia, to withdraw its forces and munitions from Moldova, and as I mentioned, we've seen some significant progress in the case of Georgia. We have not seen much progress in the case of Moldova since, really, the end of 2003, early 2004.

So we continue to stand by the requests of those two governments to see foreign forces leave their territory. We also try to work out ways—and we are having discussions with our Russian colleagues on this issue—to try to facilitate that process. We have not seen progress, as I've said, in the case of Moldova for now almost 4 years.

Georgia's almost done, when it comes to the Istanbul commitments. Gudauta is the last outstanding issue, and our view is that this is an achievable objective, that we can in fact get to a point where Gudauta is no longer an outstanding issue as it relates to Istanbul commitments. So our hope is to continue to work with our Russian colleagues to address these issues. That, then, creates the conditions where allies can move forward with ratification of adapted CFE.

Mr. CARDIN. I would point out that, looking at Russia's attitude and performance in the last 2 years that it's even more urgent today than it was. So the failure of making progress in Moldova, the failure to complete the commitments in Georgia should be of more concern today. And I would urge the administration to give this a little bit more attention, a higher priority, so at least this chapter can come to an end.

Let me move firstly with you, Secretary, on the CFE and Russia's attitudes toward our missile defense announcements. You sort of glossed over that—like Russia had some concerns and you're dealing with those concerns. It seems to me that that is one of the reasons that, as speculators have said, it's Russia's attitudes toward the CFE—that the United States is moving forward into our missile defense.

And I would like to get an honest assessment of where our European friends are on this commitment to construct a missile defense system in Europe—specifically, the NATO countries, but also beyond that—as to whether we have the type of understanding and

support that would seem logical, based upon—the way that you’ve explained—the threat that you’re trying to protect Europe and the United States and other our allies from.

So I would like to get a better assessment of the politics of this, because as at least reported in some press, it’s not quite as rosy as you’ve pointed out.

Sec. KRAMER. Senator, if you would permit, perhaps we both could address this, because I think this overlaps with both State and the Defense Department.

First, if I may, sir, the administration does in fact take the Istanbul commitments very seriously. And in fact, in 2005 President Bush did place phone calls to the respective leaders, urging them to complete the base withdrawal agreement on Akhalkalaki and Batumi, and I think that call from President Bush was very important.

Secretary Rice and Secretary Gates were very engaged on this issue in Moscow in October and have indicated that they will continue to follow this issue very closely, so I do very much appreciate your interest in seeing that the administration takes the Istanbul issue very seriously and agree completely.

On the issue of NATO and missile defense and CFE, we do not approach these issues in a linked kind of way. We see these issues as separate. While the Russians, perhaps, do draw connections between the two, we do not. And in fact, we are trying to address the differences that we have on CFE with the Russians separate from the differences we may have on missile defense with the Russians.

We also have been engaged with our allies on both issues, as we’ve discussed already. And perhaps I could turn to DAS Fata for the discussions we’ve had with NATO allies.

Sec. FATA. Since February, this administration has done a full court press throughout the Europe in capitals in multilateral form, explaining what our system is and is not. It’s fair to say that in the beginning, following President Putin’s speech at the Wehrkunde Conference in Munich in February, he was able to spread some doubt and confusion about the U.S. system.

The administration rapidly got on top of this, and in a matter of months, we had contacted every capital. Someone had set foot in just about every capital or had met with every national representative in a multilateral forum in Europe and in Eurasia.

I personally did a lot of this, Undersecretary Edelman, Lieutenant General Obering—to the point where I would say by early summer, and in particular at the NATO defense ministerial in June, there was across-the-board NATO support for our missile defense system. They understood what it was and what it wasn’t.

It reinforced what NATO said at its Riga summit last November, that they believed—and this is what the heads of state and government endorsed—that there’s a growing ballistic missile threat that faces alliance territory, that a NATO missile defense system is feasible and that NATO should move on to the research and development stage.

And as the United States explained it, we would be willing to provide the long-range system for Europe and that we would hope that NATO would be able to expedite its short and medium-range system so there was full coverage.

Let me say that there has been senior representation at NATO at least three times to these North Atlantic Council meetings, NATO Russia Council meetings. In each of these meetings, the support and the understanding for the U.S. system is growing, and I would say that Russian rhetoric is not helping the Russian position. It makes the allies scratch their head as to what is really going on in Moscow, to the point where our sense is that it makes them keep the unity that we had hoped would be there together.

Mr. CARDIN. Is there specific support for our programs in Poland and in the Czech Republic?

Sec. FATA. Yes, sir, there is. There is support, and—

Mr. CARDIN. Among every NATO country? Is that what you're saying?

Sec. FATA. I'm saying there is across-the-board NATO support. No country has said that they do not support. Some countries, such as Norway and Denmark and the U.K., are more supportive or more vocal, but there's no NATO ally that is opposed to the missile defense system.

Mr. CARDIN. Leaving Russia and its closely allied allies, is there any other major country in Europe that has expressed opposition or concern about what's happening in Poland or the Czech Republic?

Sec. FATA. Other countries have asked for more technical data—Ukraine; Austria; a few that would be, if you presumed the flight path is emanating out of Iran, countries that would be crossed over by a missile that could then be intercepted by our system.

They have technical questions that would be, "Tell us what happens to the debris." Does the debris get scattered across our country? Let's say it was a chemical biological warhead. Would that then rain down?" Those are the kinds of questions.

But there's been no non-NATO ally that's expressed outright opposition. It's just either they've been quiet, because they're asking more questions or they realize that they're not at this point part of the decision loop and have just said, "Interesting. We believe it's a good idea."

Sec. KRAMER. Mr. Co-Chairman, if I may, I think one country has expressed disapproval. That is Belarus with Mr. Lukashenko—not a terrible surprise.

Sec. FATA. I stand corrected.

Mr. CARDIN. I'd use that as a qualification of my question.

As you point, there is no provision within the CFE that would allow for suspension, and you're saying you're weighing your options, but did not go into specifics. I would appreciate if you would share with the committee—if you can't do it today, then find a way to do it—as to what the options could be.

Sec. KRAMER. Sure. Senator, I think our focus right now is really on trying to keep Russia from moving forward with its intent to suspend. As I mentioned, we will have another round of discussions with Russian colleagues on Wednesday in Europe, and that is the focus of our efforts right now.

This is a multilateral treaty, and so it will require engagements and discussions and consultations with all of our allies and all of the other signatories on what steps to take if we reach that point.

And I would be happy to come back at the appropriate time—when ever you'd like, sir—to brief you on what we might—

Mr. CARDIN. I assume that some of these preliminary discussions are taking place.

Sec. KRAMER. Yes, they are. They are. But so far—and I hope it will remain the case—so far it's on a hypothetical situation.

Mr. CARDIN. I would just request that the appropriate committees in Congress please have some information of their options so that we are aware—

Sec. KRAMER. Yes, sir.

Mr. CARDIN [continuing]. We'd receive some of our discussions in regards to these kinds of—

Sec. KRAMER. We will do so.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you very much, Senator.

Mr. Fata, the read that I have is that the United States has indicated that it would pay for the defense system in the Czech Republic and Poland. Although I see us as a unit, meaning ourselves and our allies, and rightly so, I believe, at the same time the immediate beneficiaries of this system are people that are our NATO allies and Russia, for example.

I don't expect Russia or Belarus, of course, to consider any payments, but is there thought that the NATO allies will come forward with some of the resources to implement this system?

And I might add some of us are a bit distressed sometimes with our NATO allies with reference to some of the heavy lifting that needs to be done. I think they need to do more in Afghanistan, for example, but I'll just leave it at that. Can you give me a quick answer on that?

Sec. FATA. With respect to will they be asked to pay for pieces of the long-range system, the answer is no. This administration does not expect or will ask the Czech Republic and Poland or the others to pay into a long-range system.

At Riga, again, they looked at the feasibility or a move to the R&D stage of a long-range system. We believe that it would not be worth the NATO allies' investment to duplicate the long-range system. We would rather NATO would spend the money on a short and medium-range system so that the allies in southern Europe will have coverage.

Parts of Italy and other countries wouldn't be covered by our system, because they'd be too close to the threat. So we would rather NATO spend the money investing in that.

Mr. HASTINGS. All right. I also can't let the two of you go—I apologize to my good friends, the Ambassadors, and we will take the time, of course, to hear from them and ask questions—but I don't want you to leave without indicating to me what, if any, progress our OSCE efforts have made in improving border security in the region.

And it becomes even more heightened. I heard you, Mr. Kramer, when you spoke about training in Afghanistan. Well, I'm sure that in preparation for coming here, the events of the last 5 days were not necessarily your focus, but the events of the last 5 days make border security take on an altogether new meaning, or at least a critically important meaning.

And I'm just curious what our efforts have been to improve not just border security there, but I hear from numerous of our people in this sphere. I meet with them regularly, and all of them raise the subject of border security.

Sec. KRAMER. Well, Mr. Chairman, in response to a request by the Government of Afghanistan, the OSCE is currently studying the possibility of border management training for Afghan authorities. And we certainly agree that is a major priority as it relates to border security for the OSCE.

OSCE's activities range from conflict prevention to post-conflict management, institutional support, and our view is that the OSCE facilitates the capacity building for border services and reinforces the cross border cooperation.

For the U.S. side, the United States has provided \$200,000 to an OSCE Central Asian border security needs assessment extra budgetary project, which is currently under way and expected to be completed by the middle of 2008.

And in cooperation with the OSCE, the Government of Tajikistan has developed a set of projects, including developing a border security strategy, improving immigration controls and training border guards, which is also very important, particularly—getting at your question, Mr. Chairman—with the drug flows and other problems we have on the Tajik-Afghan border. So these are extremely important.

The OSCE states also have negotiated a border security management concept, a document by which they have committed to promote best practices and standards, and it opened yet secure borders in a free, democratic and more integrated OSCE region. So this certainly is a priority for the OSCE and one where the United States in particular has stepped up to the plate to try to add support.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Fata?

Sec. FATA. If I may, I spoke before the Annual Security Review Conference that you referenced earlier. I was there in June. And I noted in your comment that you hoped the Madrid will actually have tangible results. And this was my first Annual Security Review Conference, and I had the same attitude. My understanding was people get together on an annual basis. They read their statements. And then they all go home, and they come back next year.

I offered some forward leaning proposals, in particular with respect to border security. Let's get the OSCE to start thinking about its air and sea border security. We see a lot of trafficking of weapons, peoples, moneys, drugs, all that through non-land border means. So that was a proposal we put on the table.

And also with respect to terrorism, we wanted to make sure that all the members of the OSCE were signatories to the U.N. Convention on Terrorism. To have the OSCE undertaking counterterrorism or looking at terrorists without the members having signed on is something that needs to be done.

Mr. HASTINGS. Well, turning again very briefly to Mr. Kramer, if you could deliver a message back for me. With the heightened concerns that all of us have not only about border security, but all of the presentation that you have made, certainly if the State Department can be of assistance, this would be a critical time to make

sure that the budgetary constraints that have been discussed are made clear regarding our intentions. And it would be my great hope that the United States would participate at the level that it has without there being any cuts. And I just want that to be clear, coming from this side, at least.

Sec. KRAMER. Yes, sir.

Mr. HASTINGS. And I appreciate it very much. I genuinely appreciate both of you being here, and if you would take your leave, you're welcome to stay.

I had hopes of being able to ask you—and perhaps, in light of the fact that my good friend from Georgia is here—what has been the result of the Georgian assertion regarding Russia firing a missile over their territory? Has there been any investigation that we have participated in, Mr. Kramer?

Sec. KRAMER. There have been independent intergovernmental experts that went to Georgia to review the incident. The OSCE did a spot report as well.

The report by the experts from the Russian Federation, which was also conducted on the other hand, challenges the findings of the four separate reports and does not provide the kind of evidence that we've seen provided by the Georgians. The Georgians, by contrast, have been very forthcoming with the information that was sought.

Mr. Chairman, we have no evidence that Georgia, referring specifically to the August 6th incident, either dropped the missile from one of its own planes or placed the missile fragments on the ground. The missile was fired from the air, as noted by the joint peacekeeping force eyewitness accounts, and the two independent, intergovernmental expert groups have verified that the Georgian planes are incapable of mounting or firing the sort of weapon that was launched on Georgian territory.

Moreover, the Georgian radar data that we have seen has been convincing. We have not seen similar data provided by the Russian side. So air incursions and missile attacks by one state on another—accident or otherwise—are violations of basic OSCE principles, and we hope that all sides can learn from this.

And this also underscores the importance and the need for confidence building measures and promotion of security and stability in the entire region. It is a region where none of us wants to see another incident like this again.

Mr. HASTINGS. I thank you both for your presentation.

And I'd invite our witnesses from the Republic of Moldova and from Georgia to come to the positions that they're in. And if our staffs could change the nameplates, it would be deeply appreciated.

Sec. KRAMER. Thank you, sir.

Sec. FATA. Thank you.

Mr. HASTINGS. OK.

Thank you all.

As I indicated, the biographies of our distinguished witnesses are here. Just as an addition, I would like to have it clearly understood that the Russian Ambassador was invited to this hearing, and it's my fourth or fifth invitation. And just for added clarity, I did meet with the Russian Ambassador to the United States last week, and

we had a very spirited discussion. I'll just put that in diplomatic terms.

But that said, we turn now to the Ambassador of Georgia, the Honorable Vasil Sikharulidze, and Ambassador Nicolae Chirtoaca of Moldova. And I guess by tenure, you've been here a little longer than him, Ambassador, so I'll start with you, if you don't mind.

**HON. NICOLAE CHIRTOACA, AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC
OF MOLDOVA TO THE UNITED STATES**

Amb. SIKHARULIDZE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Co-Chairman. It is my honor to attend this hearing today. I thank you for continuing interest in critical issues of past control and security needs.

Georgia considers the CFE Treaty as a cornerstone of European security, and like other nations, is greatly interested in seeing the adapted treaty entered into force.

Mr. HASTINGS. Ambassador, would you speak up just a little bit?

Amb. SIKHARULIDZE. Yes.

Mr. HASTINGS. Or pull the microphone to you. Thank you, sir.

Amb. SIKHARULIDZE. It must be emphasized that since the Istanbul OSCE summit of 1999, Georgia has done its utmost to foster the complete implementation of obligations undertaken in the Istanbul joint statement. As you know, the Istanbul joint statement provided for the withdrawal of the Russian military personnel and equipment and the closure of Russian military bases on the territory of Georgia.

Georgia considers the full implementation of the commitments as a necessary pre-condition for the ratification of the adapted CFE Treaty. This is a view shared by almost all signatories of the CFE Treaty. There has been progress in implementing the joint statement, but much remains to be done.

In particular, the Russian side fulfilled its obligations concerning the reduction of the levels of Russian treaty limited equipment, TLE, before the 30th of December 2000, the withdrawal and utilization of TLE located in the Russians' military base at Vaziani and the repair facilities in Tbilisi, the withdrawal of the Vaziani Russian military bases from the territory of Georgia by the 1st of July 2001.

The joint statement called also for Georgia to assist in the process of reduction and withdrawal of Russian forces by providing conditions necessary for their unintended withdrawal. Georgia has fully complied with this requirement. The financial assistance provided by international communities through OSCE voluntary fund was also important in facilitating the Russian withdrawal to date.

Finally, the joint statement stated that Russia and Georgia would complete negotiations regarding the duration and modalities of the functioning of the Russian military bases at Batumi and Akhalkalaki within the territory of Georgia during the year 2000.

Despite our best efforts with the strong support of the OSCE, the United States and many others, the agreement with Russia was not achieved until May 13, 2005, with the signing of the foreign ministerial statement in which Russia agreed to complete the withdrawal of the remaining military bases and other facilities by 2008.

The statement was codified as an agreement signed on March 31, 2006, in Sochi. Implementation of 2006 Sochi agreement is under way. The base at Akhalkalaki was already closed. All Russian TLE were withdrawn from Georgia, and Russian military base at Batumi will be closed next year.

The most significant outstanding issue is the Russian military base at Gudauta. The facilities of the base have not been legally transferred to Georgian authority.

According to information provided by Russia to the Georgian side, Gudauta contains combat helicopters, about 60 vehicles, more than 2,200 active military personnel. In fact, it means that today the base is actively used by Russian military forces.

And access to the base has never been provided to the Georgian government or the international observers to independently verify any aspects of its scope and operations except OSCE group visit early in 2000—always a limited scope and without possibility to make a conclusion on the modalities of the base.

At the same time, Georgia has never provided host nation consent for any military base at Gudauta and therefore continued Russian presence has no basis in international law. Until Russia has completed withdrawn its forces from Gudauta, a core part of Istanbul commitment will remain unfulfilled.

Georgia has been and remains committed to negotiate with Russia on this issue to aid and facilitate the entering to force the adapted CFE Treaty. Georgia would like nothing more than to see this chapter of history closed once and for all.

At this point, allow me to express Georgia's consensus regarding the Russians' decision to suspend compliance with the CFA Treaty. The unfortunate decision jeopardizes the cornerstone of the OSCE regional security system, and we stand with the international community in adjuring Russia to return into compliance with the CFE Treaty.

We are concerned about the potential Russian military buildup in the gray zones, which would further complicate the regional security. Georgia supports the idea of a parallel action plan introduced by United States, and we believe that the common approach by CFE community is essential to preserve the CFE mechanisms and its important confidence-building measures and security roles.

Finally, let me also touch on the issue of effectiveness of OSCE efforts to monitor weapons trade, enhance border security and combat terrorism. Unfortunately, we have direct experience on what it means to have uncontrolled borders. The so-called gray zones that exist on the territory of Georgia are a result of conflicts and danger to Georgia and to the region as a whole.

While we value the efforts of OSCE, it has not been enough. Russia retooled the extension of the border monitoring operation in 2004. Our northern border remains inaccessible to OSCE monitors, and OSCE freedom of movement in South Ossetia is limited.

The OSCE mission has expressed its serious concerns about the presence of heavy military equipment, over 100-millimeter caliber, brought into the zone of conflict by Ossetian forces. Likewise, the OSCE has reported a buildup of heavy combat vehicles by Ossetians.

The Tskhinvali region is landlocked, and the only way for a military buildup in this region is by the transfers of weapons and armaments to the secessionist regime from and by the Russian Federation, ostensibly a mediator in the conflict resolution process.

These are concrete problems Georgia is facing that result from the uncontrolled borders and from the gray zones, both in the South Ossetia region, as well as in Abkhazia.

Georgia supports the involvement of OSCE in its historic mission of preventing and resolving conflicts, but we also recognize the limitations of existing arrangements in gray zones and support greater involvement of other international actors committed by preserving Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for this opportunity to address these important issues, for your continued interest in security and freedom of my country and of the world as a whole, and I'm ready to answer your questions. Thank you very much.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you very much.
Ambassador Chirtoaca?

**HON. VASIL SIKHARULIDZE, AMBASSADOR OF GEORGIA TO
THE UNITED STATES**

Amb. CHIRTOACA. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Co-Chairman, excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, really it's an honor and a privilege to appear before you today to discuss developments related to security in OSCE region, as well as the possible impact on regional security issues and stability of the recent revolutions related to CFE adapted treaty.

My government also considers that the Conventional Forces in Europe adapted treaty is a cornerstone of the current European security system. Its ratification will further strengthen the confidence and will consolidate peace and security in the Eurasian space.

The adapted version of this treaty underlies the importance of the crucial CFE provision and one of the basic principles of the international law, the required consent for the stationing of foreign troops in a sovereign territory. Here, the Russian Federation has assumed the obligation in Istanbul of responsibility to withdraw its illegal military presence from the territory of sovereign Moldova and Georgia.

We consider that unlawful presence of Russian troops in our country constitutes one of the key security challenges that OSCE confronts today. It is also the remaining obstacle to the CFE Treaty ratification with western alliance of the United States of America.

In this context I would like to mention that Moldova is grateful to all the countries that support the unconditional and early withdrawal of Russian troops from Transnistria division of Moldova, as well as the Gudauta base in Georgia as initial steps in the sequence of moves to bring the '99 adapted CFE Treaty into force and accommodate Russia on other treaty-related issues.

I would like to express our gratitude to Congressman Thaddeus McCotter, who initiated as the sponsor of the House Resolution 457 that calls upon the Russian Federation to respect Moldovan sovereignty by upholding to its commitments to withdraw Russian soldiers and armaments and munitions.

We also support the U.S. Department of State initiative known as the parallel action plan that David Kramer was speaking about, the proposal to Russia that outlines the possible sequence of steps that will bring the unratified CFE Treaty into force and keep Russia on board with this treaty.

With the resumption of Five-Plus-Two negotiations on the Transnistria conflict settlement, the withdrawal of Russian troops and munitions, international alliance peacekeeping force, manageable solutions to Transnistria superlative strikes that respect Moldova's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the promotion of democratic and economic reforms throughout the entire region are all important principles and aim at restoration of peace and stability in my country, the Republic of Moldova, and its entire region.

Russian suspension of compliance with CFE Treaty means for us first of all failure of the Russian Federation to truly fulfill its international obligations in order to advance as a way of this treaty ratification.

This approach to one of the main multilateral international agreements in the area of military security in the modern Europe can undermine the entire system of conventional arms control in the Eurasian territory, raising a number of serious security concerns for the wider OSCE area.

You may also want to know why the unconditional compliance of Russian Federation with CFE Treaty agreement in Istanbul conditionality is so important for my country, the Republic of Moldova. First, because the Russian military players on the territory of Moldova, as well as Georgia, is a clear infringement of the sovereignty, and territorial integrity of our countries—both members of OSCE and GUAM regional organization—that violate the basic principles of international law.

Second, along with political and economic support, the Russian military is a crucial ingredient of maintaining and fueling the protest regime in both countries, which are still instrumental for Moscow policy in ex-Soviet space.

Third, Russian military presence in Moldova and Georgia is Moscow's reaction to the struggle of our countries toward real freedom and European integration, which means efficient democracy, rule of law, respect of human rights and free economic development.

Speaking about the status of the Istanbul commitments regarding Moldova and Georgia and their relations to the Adapted CFE [inaudible], I would like to underline that to this date they remain unfulfilled.

In defiance of the international commitments and despite the financial resources allocated also by United States of America available for the withdrawal through the OSCE voluntary fund, the Russian Federation stopped the withdrawal process in March 2004 when the last trainload of Russian military equipment left the territory of my country.

As far as the third issue on the agenda of today's hearing is concerned—namely, the proposed U.S. deployment of ground-based missile defense installations in Poland and the Czech Republic, let me just state that my government fully respects the sovereign right of the Governments of United States, Czech Republic, and Poland

to decide on bilateral legal arrangements and their technical implementation in order to ensure their national security.

Mr. Chairman, the Republic of Moldova is also ready to further contribute to strengthening the effectiveness of OSCE efforts to monitor weapons trade, enhance border security in joint effort at maintaining and upgrading OSCE confidence and security-building measures in light of these key issues.

But my government remains worried by the failure of the international, multilateral institutions to contribute to the effective settlement of existing conflicts that is eroding with every passing year their credibility as reliable security [inaudible] and guardians of international law.

The position of the Republic of Moldova on the issue of OSCE security area from the perspective of the adapted CFE Treaty ratification remains unchanged. The Moldovan Parliament will proceed with the ratification of this treaty only upon the full and unconditioned withdrawal of Russian troops from Moldova.

Thank you very much for your attention. I appreciate the opportunity to testify here today, and I welcome any questions that you may have.

Mr. CARDIN. Well, first, let me thank both of you for your testimonies here today. I think it completes our record, which I think is very important here for your two countries. And we certainly are very supportive of the types of reforms that you're trying to institute in both of the countries.

You heard me say earlier, I agree with you that the Russian troops in your countries infringe upon your sovereignty, and makes it much more difficult for you to deal with the re-integration into Europe, and violates the commitments that were made in Istanbul in 1999.

For all those reasons, I strongly support your position that it is past time for Russia to honor its commitments and to remove its troops and facilities from your country. And I'm hoping that we'll be able to find an effective way to have that exchange as quickly as possible.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HASTINGS. Thank you very much, Senator. And I'm mindful that your schedule allows that you need to get back to the other body. That's how we refer to the U.S. Senate. Some refer to it as the out of body. [Laughter.]

Thanks. I appreciate it very much, Senator. Thank you, sir.

Gentlemen, as the Senator has expressed, I'm deeply appreciative of your comments. And I would start with you, Ambassador Sikharulidze.

Conflicts that exist—I think you know that I have been able to follow for both of you what has transpired now for coming up on 12 years as a member of the Parliamentary Assembly.

And I'd first like to compliment your representatives to the Parliamentary Assembly for their active work in keeping the issues at the forefront in the Parliamentary Assembly and at the OSCE in Vienna. There is no lack of effort on their part at all to make sure that matters are attended.

I also would ask of you what, if anything, do you need at this point in the way of additional support from the United States and

what, if anything, from the international community at this point? And I guess I would put that to both of you.

And I'll start with you, Ambassador.

Amb. SIKHARULIDZE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And let me start by expressing my personal appreciation toward you. And I know you've been supporting Georgian delegation all these 12 years in OSCE and in other occasions.

So to generalize the situation and to speak about our nation and what is really needed to resolve this conflict is that—and I think that more and more academicians and more and more foreign observers and also international observers agree that the current format of the conflict resolution—political format—is not effective at all.

And I would go even further and say that there is no political format for the conflict resolution in South Ossetia or in Abkhazia. These existing formats were created about 13 years ago, and by not only dominant, but only Russian participation, and they have not been designed to solve this conflict.

Therefore, the main objective in the conflict resolution process is to create a reliable political format for the conflict resolution in both Abkhazia and also Ossetia under the United Nations, under the OSCE, but also with the participation of international actors, more international actors, the national organizations. And then the format has not been designed for the conflict—political resolution of the conflict.

Plus, of course, this will bring up the issue of presence on the ground and the changing of the composition of supporting forces. I doubt the fact that we need the peacekeeping forces in both regions, but what is absolutely necessary is to have international law enforcement in place in order to facilitate.

Mr. HASTINGS. I really appreciate that, and as a followup, if you would be so kind as to inform me more as to what you think would be a supportive format that we could try and assist in implementing. And by that I just mean by raising the issue here at the Helsinki Commission with those whom you think would be good and active participants.

I know, just as a for example, I was on the Moldova working group for 5 years, and one of the hardest things to do was to get those of us that were from the various countries together to be able to go to the region. And we met a lot of resistance along the way, I might add, and it was kind of difficult.

Ambassador Chirtoaca, your response to what's needed from either the U.S. and/or the international community.

Amb. CHIRTOACA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to start by saying that we value very highly the United States of America's participation in the conflict resolution process. The process itself, and as David Kramer mentioned—he is a representative from Department of State—there is a real common effort and the clear understanding of the complexities, how difficult to resolve these so-called protracted conflicts.

For the time being, this format does not work, simply because it's still blocked up by Russian cooperation with the Transnistrian separatist regime, which proves once again that having these mechanisms with the participation of the United States and other general

species with the full involvement of OSCE and government mission in Moldova does not produce immediate results.

From that perspective we consider that we should adjust our common strategy in a conflict resolution, understanding that Russia is not only mediator or is not a broker in the system, but is a participant. It's a part of the conflict itself. And for all these periods, quite a lot of effort has been done by Moscow to strengthen their instruments, the neutral political, and thus produce a neutral political dimension of the conflicts themselves that goes much beyond the capacity of our new democracy to address the new challenges by ourselves.

So basically we consider the involvement of the United States, the OSCE, Ukraine, Russia, Moldova and Transnistrian separatist regime provides already the framework and possibility. We need a more proactive policy in addressing key issues, understanding the deepest roots of the culture and some hidden agenda of some of the countries that are involved in this conflict-resolution process. In this way, we can approach or try to identify common ground in addressing these problems.

Mr. HASTINGS. All right. Let me followup with you and say that in your statement you indicated that in order for Moldova to proceed to ratification of the CFE, that it would require unconditional and proven, full and unconditional withdrawal of Russia. Would that include, let's say, if the re-integration process were to get under way, would that exclude the inclusion of Russian military forces as short-term multinational peacekeepers?

Amb. CHIRTOACA. Basically, we consider the current format is obsolete. It does not work properly in any way. At the same time Moldova declares its military neutrality. We consider that Russia is very concerned of possible foreign troops presence alongside the commonborder, which I would like to remind the audience that we have almost 1,000 kilometers from our border to the Russian border.

We consider that a good solution could be civilian observers in the security zone, because for more than 15 years we have not had clashes or any kind of military tension in the region. If there have been provoked minor clashes, they're only because of the involvement of Transnistria foreign military forces and local militia.

So there is understanding of this approach shared by the Department of State and our American partners. I think this will demilitarize the region and is one of the steps ahead to reach a consensus.

Basically, our president just launched a couple of weeks ago new initiatives calling on Transnistria together with Moldova to reduce considerably the military potential just to strengthen the measures of mutual confidence in the region.

Mr. HASTINGS. Concerning border security and the border security and management concept, have we had any successes that you could cite? What are some of the continuing challenges that you're confronted with? Ambassador?

Amb. SIKHARULIDZE. With regard of border control, the only challenges that remain there are gray zones, the conflict zones that Georgian border guards and law enforcement are not controlling—

Georgian-Russian border. And they are forced to control the perimeter, not the conflict. And how dangerous could it be?

So I would like to bring one example, which is in January 2006, Georgian authorities in close corporation with CIA and FBI apprehended the Korean smuggling nuclear bomb enriched—over 90 percent enriched uranium. It was a sting operation identifying channels of illicit trade in the separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

As smuggling of low-grade enriched materials was sometimes observed, it was the first case of such one to surface.

Mr. HASTINGS. How widespread is that problem? You're speaking specifically, and I can be corrected in pronunciation, but I believe that capture took place in Tskhinvali?

Amb. SIKHARULIDZE. Yes, it was the South Ossetia, Tskhinvali region. Exactly. And it was in January 2006.

Mr. HASTINGS. OK. But is it something—I'm deeply appreciative of joint efforts, but how widespread a problem is that? We continue—all of us—to be concerned about the possibility of enriched weapons grade uranium falling into the wrong hands.

While it isn't on today's agenda, I can't imagine a more volatile situation in the world today than the situation that exists in Pakistan with reference to not enriched uranium, but ready nukes that could conceivably get into hands of people who would do harm. And that is a vital concern.

But in your country, Ambassador, is it a widespread problem? Or is it something—it's good that you detected this event. When I was a judge, I had a theory about children that would steal from stores or break into folks' homes. They were caught one time, but there were 10 times that they were not caught, and we proved that statistically over time. So I would imagine that there are other examples of this, and not just in Georgia, but throughout the OSCE region. Can you comment?

Amb. SIKHARULIDZE. Absolutely. Absolutely. I think, Mr. Chairman, that we have a different situation here. And Georgia's law enforcement is strongly cooperating with law enforcement of other countries, especially with United States, and know of my concerns here. And according to the Georgian law enforcement sources, it was almost the only case—

Mr. HASTINGS. I understand.
Ambassador?

Amb. CHIRTOACA. If I may, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HASTINGS. Yes.

Amb. CHIRTOACA. We have a rather positive experience in cooperation with United States and European Union concerning the so-called EUBAUM mission on our border with the European Union border systems mission. Our idea was 3 years ago to establish and strengthen our relationship with our neighbor Ukraine. And defending the border—porous borders more exactly—is one of the biggest sources of a financial sustainability of separatist regimes in the region.

More than that, they say all different kinds of schemes of organized crimes and networks of organized crimes are involved in money laundering in different kinds of contraband, including human trafficking and stuff like that. These people usually can use

any kind of situation or provide any kind of service. It's just across the borders.

Now, this is a real risk, and we know exactly about this weaponry that has been stockpiled for weapons in our country, withdrawn from Central and Eastern Europe after the collapse of the Soviet Union. And we have, according to our estimation, only half of the weapons and armaments in a so-called combustible region, which means that these armaments and arms have been sold by those who pretend that they protect them all over the region in the hot spots.

So I totally share your concerns regarding the borders, how well they are protected and how organized crime is working in the region and without recognizing any borders, because this contains threats of different kinds.

Mr. HASTINGS. Well, gentlemen, I thank you all very much. I'm going to have to go to a Rules Committee hearing, but this has been very informative, and the fact of the matter is that the more information that we share, the more opportunities that we have to raise the subject for the public, the better off we are.

And I think you know, and I express to the Russian Ambassador as well, that the doors of the Helsinki Commission are open, and in any way that we can assist in expediting our efforts to bring stability and peaceful resolutions to conflicts, we will do that.

We had the good fortune of having the President of the Parliamentary Assembly very recently in a hearing, sitting in the same position as yourselves, and he specifically mentioned both your countries, as well as other areas, that are ongoing and continuing concerns within the framework of the Parliamentary Assembly.

So I'm deeply appreciative that you all would come here. And, Ambassador, please, both of you, as regards the format, offer your suggestions to us so that we can see if there's anything that we can do to help. Thank you. This closes our hearing.

[Whereupon, at 4:33 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

APPENDICES

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS, CHAIRMAN, COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

The Commission is meeting this afternoon to examine key security challenges in the OSCE region today. This hearing is particularly timely, given the increasing tensions among various participating States over issues ranging from disagreements between the United States and the Russian Federation over missile defense, to unresolved conflicts affecting Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. I am particularly concerned about the potential adverse impact upon European security if Russia follows through on its threat to withdraw from the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) treaty.

At the same time, porous borders and corruption continue to fuel human trafficking and the illicit trading of weapons and drugs, especially in Central Asia. I am particularly concerned about the potential spread of weapons of mass destruction to state and non-state sponsors of terrorism. As recent reports of an attempted terrorist attack upon the U.S. Embassy in Vienna, Austria, and another planned attack upon U.S. and other government interests in Azerbaijan illustrate, terrorist threats to security in the OSCE region remain real and will continue to require long-term focus and cooperation among all participating States, as well as the public and private sectors.

Since its founding, the OSCE has played an important role in advancing European security and cooperation through key organs, including newer fora such as the Forum for Security Cooperation and the Annual Security Review Conference, which bring military and security concerns to the highest level of attention among participating States. I am pleased to note the planned priority to be accorded security concerns at the Madrid Ministerial. Let us hope that this meeting does not follow the precedent of previous years, and we will see some positive and tangible results in the security dimension at the conclusion.

Border management is a critical concern, given its relevance to combating terrorism, the trafficking in weapons, drugs, and human beings, and illegal immigration. Effective border management systems facilitate the movement of goods and people between nations. The OSCE has undertaken commendable initiatives to strengthen border security in the region, which are supplemented by support from individual participating States, including the United States. The U.S. has provided bilateral capacity building training and other technical assistance to various participating States, including several Central Asian countries. Efforts to expand police training and border security are also underway in Afghanistan, an OSCE Partner for Cooperation. I look forward to hearing from our distinguished witnesses, how the border management and police training programs being implemented by the OSCE and the U.S. government are progressing.

Finally, events in the Middle East impact security in Central Asia, Europe, and North America. That is why our cooperation with the six OSCE Mediterranean partners is so critical in areas such as combating terrorism, conflict management, and promoting tolerance.

We have two expert panels to provide insightful perspectives on these issues this afternoon and look forward to their testimony. Your entire written statement will be included in the hearing record, so please summarize your oral testimony to five minutes.

Mr. Kramer, you may begin.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, CO-CHAIRMAN, COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

I am very pleased that the Commission is turning its attention to the military security dimension of the OSCE. For more than a quarter century, the OSCE participating States have attempted to combat conflict and instability in Europe, guided by the Helsinki Final Act's principles and norms relating to relations between States. Sometimes those principles have prevailed. Too often they have not, with disastrous consequences for populations uprooted by conflict and horrific crimes against humanity. While at first glance the OSCE region might seem relatively calm today, the reality is that hotspots abound that could erupt through provocation or misunderstanding into actual conflict.

Only last August, the Georgian Government accused the Russian Federation of violating its sovereignty by firing a missile into Georgian territory. While Russia denied the charge, the incident serves as a reminder of the potential for armed clashes where unresolved conflicts exist.

Concern obviously continues in the Balkans where lingering tensions from past conflicts could reignite, especially though not exclusively surrounding the future of Kosovo. Elsewhere in the OSCE region so-called "frozen conflicts" have real life consequences for those living in these areas. Too often these vulnerable populations are manipulated by outside forces determined to prolong instability for their own gain, or perceived advantage. Not surprisingly these areas are typically the breeding grounds for corruption and a whole range of criminal activity, including trafficking in arms, drugs, and humans, resulting in vested interests threatened by the prospects of resolution.

Meanwhile, Russian rhetoric and actions elsewhere seem more like a throwback to a bygone era when Soviet missiles and bombers targeted western capitals. In a revealing step, the Kremlin has called into question the CFE Treaty, in part a way of diverting attention away from the fact the Russian soldiers remain on the ground in Georgia and Moldova in contravention of commitments and timeframes for withdrawal agreed at the Istanbul OSCE summit in 1999.

I am pleased that the OSCE will reaffirm its commitment to combating terrorism at the upcoming Madrid Ministerial. Counter terrorism remains an urgent priority of the OSCE, as reflected in the OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century, adopted at the Maastricht Ministerial in 2003, and the OSCE Charter on Preventing and Combating Terrorism. The terrorist bombings in the hearts of Madrid and London added impetus to OSCE participating States' efforts to improve information sharing, policing and judicial cooperation to combat terrorism in the region. Measures to curtail the movement of terrorists across borders, improve travel document and transportation security, including shipping containers, and interrupt terrorist financing have been instituted across the region.

These and other initiatives in the security dimension deserve our attention as they have implications for U.S. interests in Europe and here at home. It should be clear that to the extent we work

closely with our OSCE partners to apprehend terrorists before they can bring their deadly plans to fruition, to that extent we make all our homelands more secure.

Mr. Chairman, I welcome the opportunity to hear from the experts assembled from our own government as well as representatives of Georgia and Moldova, countries on the front line on many of these issues and concerns, and look forward to hearing their views on the efficacy of ongoing OSCE efforts and engagement to address these seemingly intractable problems.

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH,
RANKING MEMBER, COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND CO-
OPERATION IN EUROPE**

Thank you Mr. Chairman, and good afternoon to everyone.

The behavior of the Russian Federation must count as one of the greatest security concerns in the OSCE region.

Russian President Putin supports dictators like Lukashenka in Belarus and Karimov in Uzbekistan, the latter responsible for the bloody massacre at Andijon.

Meanwhile, the Russian Federation exacerbates tensions with Georgia, and makes trouble by supporting secessionist regions of that country.

Russian troops continue to occupy Georgia and Moldova, where they are unwanted. It was at the Istanbul Summit that the Russian Federation committed to withdraw its troops and materials from those countries. Nearly eight years later, withdrawal of Russian troops from Georgia appears to be underway yet about 1,000 Russian soldiers remain in Moldova.

The Russian Government continues to work to eviscerate OSCE election monitoring activities and dictate which, if any, NGOs can participate in OSCE Human Dimensions meetings.

In short, the Russian Government shows its visceral contempt for the very principles that are at the heart of the Helsinki process: human rights, democracy, and transparency.

How to deal with the Russian Federation may be the most divisive security question the OSCE faces. Yet we cannot avoid it. Many nations bring their security concerns to the OSCE, and they are right to do so. The OSCE was created to protect the very values that the Russian Federation is threatening.

Mr. Chairman, there are those active in the OSCE who think concessions to President Putin are called for. I am glad to be able to say that the OSCE has not yet made any major concessions. It has not abandoned the values on which it was founded. More than one OSCE ministerial meeting has addressed Russia's "Istanbul commitments" and the Russian Government has usually reacted angrily. We should be prepared for more of the same at the Madrid Ministerial scheduled for late next month.

But more is needed. The OSCE should strengthen its stand for human rights, democracy, and transparency. It is incumbent upon the United States and others to meet Putin's attempts at bullying with strong words and to energetically promote the OSCE's founding ideas within the organization.

Vacillation or compromise will only breed more problems and erode the OSCE as a meaningful organization. Provocative rhetoric and actions by President Putin should be viewed as testaments to the efficacy of those very aspects of the OSCE they are seeking to scuttle.

Our task is to remind President Putin of his obligations to live up to commitments Russia accepted, regardless of whether they would agree to them today. To permit an a la carte approach to OSCE agreements would consign the organization to irrelevance.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I look forward to hearing the witnesses' views regarding the progress achieved in the OSCE's border security and counterterrorism endeavors. Good border management is

critical to combating the scourge of human trafficking, the illicit spread of drugs and weapons, and constraining terrorist activity.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVID KRAMER, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE, EUROPEAN AND EURASIAN AFFAIRS

Chairman Hastings, Co-Chairman Cardin, Members of the Commission, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss key security challenges that confront the OSCE region, covering a range of issues related to Russia, including the Conventional Forces in Europe (or CFE) Treaty and related 1999 OSCE Istanbul Summit commitments, our work with NATO and Russia on missile defense, and a number of other OSCE security issues. I am pleased to testify along with my colleague, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Dan Fata, with whom colleagues at the State Department and I have a very close, effective relationship.

WORKING WITH RUSSIA: THE “2+2” TALKS

Let me begin with an update on recent developments affecting our dialogue with Russia on security issues. Since the meeting between Presidents Bush and Putin in Kennebunkport in July, we have had three rounds of expert-level meetings on missile defense and three on CFE issues. We have also continued to meet with Allies and partners, including Georgia and Moldova, in parallel.

These exchanges provided important background for the “2+2” talks that took place October 12 between Secretaries Rice and Gates, and their Russian counterparts, Foreign Minister Lavrov and Defense Minister Serdyukov. Those talks included a strategic dialogue on a full range of security issues: missile defense, CFE, post-START arrangements, and arms transfers. Russian officials also discussed their views on the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. The U.S. side came prepared to make progress and offered creative ideas on the major agenda items. I should say that the meetings were more constructive than most press reports suggested. The Secretaries plan to meet again in six months, this time in the U.S., to continue the dialogue.

MISSILE DEFENSE AND RUSSIA

I will let Secretary Fata take the lead in providing an update on missile defense, but I would like to say a few words about our recent discussions with Russia on this topic. We both were in Moscow with Secretaries Rice and Gates the week of the “2+2” meetings. I had the opportunity to participate in the experts’ meeting led by Acting Under Secretary of State Rood, along with Under Secretary of Defense Eric Edelman, and Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Kisylak two days before the arrival of our principals. This marked the third round of U.S.-Russian bilateral discussions on missile defense. Both the U.S. and Russian sides believe the talks were productive. The United States presented Russia with a number of ideas and proposals in order to work through our differences; the Russians expressed appreciation for our proposals. Additionally, we agreed to continue expert-level meetings to fill in some of the details and narrow our differences before the next “2+2” meetings.

One U.S. proposal discussed during our meetings is the possible development of a regional missile defense architecture that would

integrate U.S. and Russian defensive assets, including radars. This would enhance our ability to monitor emerging threats from the Middle East and could also include the use of assets from NATO Allies. Secretaries Rice and Gates also proposed the idea of a phased operations approach. This idea, which is still under development, proposes that the construction of the sites in Poland and the Czech Republic would be completed, while activation of the sites—turning the switch, so to speak—would be tied to specific threat indicators. Although the U.S. and Russia would cooperate to monitor jointly the Iranian missile program, the U.S. would make decisions on how to make our European MD elements operational in response to how we see the threat evolve. The assertion that Washington and Moscow would have to agree jointly whether a sufficient threat exists from a third country (such as Iran) prior to activating any U.S. European-based MD system is incorrect. There is no such agreement or understanding with Russia.

These are forward-leaning proposals, and our Russian counterparts have shown interest in them. Although the Russians have not immediately embraced these proposals, they have said both publicly and privately that they find our proposals interesting and have indicated that they would study them.

We believe it is useful and important to continue this missile defense dialogue with Russia. Despite our differences, it is in our mutual interest to address ballistic missile threats together. Missile threats from the Middle East, particularly Iran, pose a threat to Russia as well as to the United States and our European Allies. Cooperation between the United States and Russia in this domain can enhance the security of both countries and could improve overall U.S.-Russia relations.

THE CFE TREATY AND THE ISTANBUL COMMITMENTS

Let me now turn to the CFE Treaty and the Istanbul commitments, which were a major point of discussion in Moscow, and will continue to be a major issue following the “2+2” meeting. I know that this set of issues is a major concern of the Helsinki Commission, too.

The CFE Treaty has been responsible for the verified destruction of over 60 thousand pieces of military equipment and countless on-site inspections, advancements which have changed the face of European security. Openness and transparency regarding all the major armies in Europe have replaced mistrust and lack of information. The United States and our NATO Allies continue to believe that the CFE Treaty is a cornerstone of European security.

The updated, or Adapted, CFE Treaty was signed at the OSCE Summit in Istanbul in 1999 to take account of changes that had occurred in Europe since 1990, but has not yet entered into force. The United States and NATO Allies, as well as Russia and other CFE states, look forward to its entry into force. Russia says it wants that Treaty to enter into force right away, to replace the current Treaty—which they feel, and we agree, is outdated.

At the time the Adapted Treaty was signed at the 1999 OSCE Summit in Istanbul, however, Russia made a number of commitments related to withdrawal of forces and facilities in Georgia and Moldova, in accordance with the core principle of host-country con-

sent to the stationing of foreign forces. Russia also committed to reduce its holding of Treaty-limited equipment to the levels it accepted in the Adapted treaty for the CFE “flank” region.

Russia has made important progress on many of those commitments, particularly in Georgia. While three of Russia’s four major bases in Georgia have been closed, or are nearly closed—two under a 2005 agreement dealing with Akhalkalaki and Batumi—a small number of Russian personnel and supplies remain at the Gudauta base, in the separatist Abkhazia region of Georgia. We are working on a way forward with our Russian and Georgian colleagues, in consultation with Allies, which could resolve this last, remaining issue concerning Georgia.

Russian forces also remain in the Transnistrian region of Moldova, some as peacekeepers under a 1992 ceasefire agreement, and others as guards at a large storage depot, where significant amounts of Soviet-era light arms munitions remain. Moldova wants the ammunition withdrawn or destroyed, and all Russian forces, including the peacekeepers, withdrawn, and replaced by an international presence, though not necessarily a military one; in fact, a civilian force replacement is an idea we are seriously exploring. There has been no progress on Russian withdrawal from Moldova since early 2004, but we are hoping to change that.

Mr. Chairman, our challenge has revolved around Russian authorities’ claims that they have fulfilled all those Istanbul commitments they consider to be related to the CFE Treaty. Russian authorities stress that they do not accept NATO’s linkage between the ratification of the Adapted Treaty and the Istanbul commitments. Mr. Chairman, as you know, neither the United States nor our Allies shares that view.

All of the pledges we refer to as the Istanbul commitments were reflected in the CFE Final Act, a political document agreed by the CFE member states at the time the Adapted Treaty was signed at the Summit. There never were two classes of commitments, some related to CFE, and some not.

This said, we are interested in preserving the CFE regime and finding a way forward. Russian authorities, including President Putin, have cited their frustration with NATO’s lack of movement on ratification, combined with Allies’ insistence that Russia complete the Istanbul commitments, as the reasons behind Russia’s intent to suspend implementation of the current CFE Treaty. Russia has also expressed a number of other concerns about the Treaty’s impact on its own security.

The United States and our Allies have responded clearly that we do not agree that those stated concerns, which relate primarily to NATO enlargement and its consequences, constitute a sufficient basis to suspend implementation of this major Treaty. We have held firmly on the issue of flanks. However, we are working to try to bridge what currently divides us. Russia’s threat to suspend implementation of the current CFE Treaty is a matter of serious concern to the United States and to our NATO Allies. We have said that publicly and we have certainly conveyed that message in our bilateral meetings.

With Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs Dan Fried in the lead, we have met with our Russian counterparts

again since the “2+2” meetings in Moscow to try to find a way to keep Russia from suspending while maintaining Allies and partners’ equities. We plan to hold another meeting in Europe in a few days. Working with NATO Allies, the United States has developed a set of ideas for moving forward together with Russia on parallel tracks, as a way to make progress on remaining Istanbul commitments and to move forward on ratification of Adapted CFE. If Russia is prepared to commit to move on its remaining Istanbul commitments, some NATO Allies are open to beginning the ratification process while Russia is still in the process of completing them. Allies believe that this would send an important signal of NATO’s continued support for CFE.

I want to stress that, in developing these ideas, the United States and NATO Allies have worked hand-in-glove. We also have been consulting closely with the Georgian and Moldovan governments. I personally traveled to Chisinau after the “2+2” meeting to consult with President Voronin and his government, and separately met with Georgian Foreign Minister Bezhuashvili to elicit his views as well. Assistant Secretary Fried was just in Tbilisi for further consultations. A transparent, consultative process is key to maintaining Allied unity and effectiveness.

Indeed, we have been brainstorming with Allies, and with Moldova and Georgia, to develop creative ideas to help us move forward. Georgian officials have made clear that they consider CFE and the Istanbul commitments to have been responsible for the withdrawal of nearly all of Russia’s military bases and equipment from Georgian territory. They consider this a major success and they, like we, support the Treaty and the Adapted Treaty. They recognize the difficulty of handling the Gudauta question—the facility is located in Abkhazia and Russia claims it is a support facility for its peacekeepers in the region. The Georgians have encouraged the United States to try to facilitate a resolution of this issue with Russia. And that was a major focus in our latest discussions with Russian officials two weeks ago in Berlin.

Similarly, with President Voronin and his team, I discussed ideas for moving forward on withdrawal of Russian munitions at Colbasna; demilitarization of the current Russian-dominated peacekeeping presence; and energizing the Transnistrian political settlements talks. Russia’s military withdrawal commitment is not conditioned on a Transnistrian political settlement, but the issues are unquestionably closely related.

We hope that hard work and creative ideas will enable us to develop a package of steps that makes it possible for the Russian Federation to rescind its plan to suspend implementation of CFE on December 12, and creates the conditions for fulfillment of remaining Istanbul commitments and ratification of Adapted CFE by NATO Allies.

We were rather encouraged by progress we made in our Berlin meeting with Russian officials two weeks ago. We plan further discussions to try to narrow our differences this week. Should we not succeed, it will not be for lack of serious effort. If we do succeed, we can be comforted by the continued security, stability, and predictability CFE provides. Secretary Rice has three goals regarding this issue: to maintain a common NATO approach; to identify ways

forward to achieve fulfillment of remaining Istanbul commitments; and to establish conditions that will make it possible for Russia to continue full implementation of the current CFE Treaty, and allow NATO Allies, including the United States, to move forward to seek ratification of the Adapted CFE Treaty.

On the issue of ratification, I should make clear that the Administration is not seeking to prejudge either the calendar for Senate action on CFE, or the outcome, though we know this Treaty has long enjoyed broad bipartisan support. We would, however, consult with the Senate about ratification if we and Russia are able to reach a deal that prevents Russia from suspending and moves the ball forward on the Istanbul commitments. Our goal is to capitalize on the range of Allies' ratification processes to send a constructive signal to Moscow that NATO stands by this Treaty.

WORKING WITH THE OSCE ON ADDITIONAL SECURITY COMPONENTS

Mr. Chairman, let me shift now to address the effectiveness of the OSCE's interrelated efforts to combat terrorism, enhance border security and monitor weapons trade in the region, issues, I know, are of interest to this Commission.

The OSCE is at the forefront of counterterrorism efforts in the region and we are encouraged by the results we have seen, both as a security multiplier and in terms of cooperation among countries from the Balkans to the Baltics. The OSCE has proven responsive and effective in coordinating with other international organizations to help train authorities in the region to implement tougher security and counterterrorism practices in areas such as law enforcement, shipping, and document issuance.

One way we are supporting the OSCE's counterterrorism efforts is by exploring ways for governments to cooperate closely with the private sector and civil society to combat terrorism. The United States and Russia worked together on the Public-Private Partnership Conference held earlier this year under OSCE auspices in Vienna. We are examining concrete proposals to follow up this successful conference, such as an experts' meeting to highlight critical infrastructure protection "best practices" in 2008.

The United States and Russia are also working together on a decision within the OSCE's Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC) in support of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. We tabled this draft on October 31, and when agreed, it will provide an endorsement by all OSCE participating States for further cooperative action to combat the threat of nuclear terrorism.

In the area of border security, the OSCE plays an important role, particularly in Central Asia. The OSCE is currently examining a potential role in helping to train Afghanistan border authorities. The goal of the training would be to increase Afghan capacity to interdict narcotics and other contraband, thus helping stem the flow of goods used to finance insurgency and terrorist operations within the country. In cooperation with the OSCE, the Government of Tajikistan has developed a set of projects, including developing a border security strategy, training border guards and improving immigration controls. Similar projects are being developed and conceptualized for other Central Asian states as well.

Confidence- and security-building measures remain a vital element in the long-term security of the OSCE region, and we continue to work with the OSCE to enhance these measures further. Last year, the United States sponsored a special meeting focused on energizing participating States to begin national implementation of the provisions of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540, resulting in a Ministerial Decision that endorsed full implementation of 1540 by participating States. In doing so, the OSCE, as a regional organization, has played a key role in supporting the Resolution, and facilitating broader implementation of this key resolution aimed at preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction. This spring, the Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC) agreed to our proposal to prepare Best Practice Guides for national implementation, and the first U.S. draft guide is under review now.

To better monitor weapons trade in recent years, the FSC has adopted Documents aimed at controlling stockpiles of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), and conventional ammunition. The United States has provided funding for a number of SALW destruction projects in Tajikistan, and mélange rocket fuel conversion in Armenia and Georgia. The United States also serves as Coordinator for the FSC Editorial Board charged with preparing Best Practice Guides for safeguarding SALW and Ammunition stocks.

Mr. Chairman, the United States is committed to furthering security for the people of Europe and Eurasia. Our main goals in this area, as I have explained today, are to work constructively with Russia where we can, though we may at times, of course, have to agree to disagree; to continue to press towards entry into force of the Advanced CFE treaty and complete fulfillment of Russia's Istanbul commitments. We are also committed to ensuring the success of OSCE efforts to foster and enhance security throughout the region. Thank you again for holding today's hearing. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF DANIEL FATA, DEPUTY ASSISTANT
OF DEFENSE, EUROPE AND NATO POLICY**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today. I will focus my testimony largely on the issue of missile defense, while my colleague, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Kramer, will discuss other aspects of European security, including the OSCE role.

I would like to provide a short overview of why the United States is pursuing a missile defense system in Europe. My testimony will focus on:

- What the system is and is not;
- How the system complements NATO's efforts;
- The circumstances in which we hope to move forward;
- and, finally our outreach efforts to our allies and friends in Europe, as well as to Russia.

I would like to start with a basic question: why is the United States pursuing a missile defense system in Europe? The Bush Administration made the decision upon coming into office to move from the national missile defense policy under the Clinton Administration to a broader-based approach. The idea was to ensure that the missile defense assets the United States is developing will also be capable of protecting our allies. This approach is based on the belief that the security of the U.S. and of its allies is indivisible and it recognizes the growing ballistic missile threat facing us. Beginning early in the 2001–2002 period, we started considering how to extend missile defense coverage to allies and American forces in Europe.

There are over 20 states that possess ballistic missiles, and others are seeking to acquire them. As a threat to Europe, Iran is our most immediate concern. The missile defense system against long-range ballistic missiles that we have been fielding in the U.S. has been successful in tests using a variety of means. Given that success and because there is a threat, we believe we need to press on with adding a European component to our system.

There are good reasons for urgency. It takes time to build and deploy a system. Clearly this is not something that can be done in just a year or two. Second, the ballistic missile threat is growing. Third, we believe that the system will not only destroy incoming missiles; it will also serve as a deterrent.

The knowledge that the United States has a proven, viable system capable of destroying incoming missiles may serve to dissuade some countries from embarking on the effort to develop long-range ballistic missiles. Moreover, the existence of such defenses could help deter a country that has developed long-range ballistic missiles from launching such missiles in a crisis, since an attack would be unlikely to achieve its objectives, and would result in certain retaliation.

Why the urgency? Intelligence has previously underestimated the pace of ballistic missile developments. Most notably in 1998, our intelligence community estimated that the North Koreans would not have the ability to launch a long-range ballistic missile for about 5 to 10 years. One month after that report was released, the North Koreans launched a three-stage ballistic missile over the Sea of Japan. Although the launch failed to put a satellite into orbit, it

demonstrated the potential to deliver a small payload to an inter-continental range.

Despite our efforts to limit its spread through the Missile Technology Control Regime, ballistic missile technology is freely exported by some countries such as North Korea, allowing development to be accelerated. This is an important consideration. We don't want the United States or its European Allies to be held hostage by a country or an actor with a ballistic missile capability. The longer it takes to deploy defenses, the greater the potential vulnerability.

In Europe, the system we envision consists of three parts: a radar in the Czech Republic, an interceptor site in Poland, and a third component, which would be a smaller forward-based radar within a thousand kilometers of likely launch points in the Middle East. The system would be focused on a threat emanating from the Middle East and would provide a defense to much of Europe against longer-range missiles, as well as additional protection to the United States.

The next few points, which we have emphasized from the outset, are important to avoid confusion. The missile defense system is just that—a purely defensive system. It includes 10 interceptors that are hit-to-kill, meaning essentially that they are analogous to a bullet designed to intercept another bullet. The kinetic energy of an interceptor missile will pulverize an attacking warhead outside the atmosphere. The interceptor carries no explosive warhead of its own. In short, the system is meant to deter, detect, and defend.

The system poses no threat to Russia. It cannot catch Russian missiles, and the ten interceptors we propose to deploy in Poland would be no match for hundreds of Russian missiles with over a thousand warheads. In no way, shape, or form do plans for missile defense in Europe affect Russia's strategic deterrent or serve as a legitimate catalyst for a new arms race.

As many of you know, Russia has its own antiballistic missile defense capability. It has had it for decades. There are approximately 80 nuclear-armed interceptor missiles that surround Moscow. This contrasts with what we seek to provide to Europe—a system with no warheads at all. And we can assert with confidence that the Moscow ABM system poses no threat to US strategic deterrent forces, which—if necessary—could easily overwhelm these defenses.

The United States would pay for the system to be deployed in the Czech Republic and Poland, which would also help defend the United States. The approximate price of the proposed system would be about 4 billion dollars. As you well know, we are working closely with Congress on the funding aspects of this system.

The United States system would complement NATO's ongoing work on its own Active Layered Theater Ballistic Missile Defense, or ALTBMD, which is intended to provide command and control for defense of deployed forces against short and medium range ballistic missiles. NATO approved this system in 1999, and we hope initial deployment can occur around 2010. The United States system will provide the long range complement to NATO's system. The combination of the US system and NATO's ALTBMD program could lay the groundwork for defense of NATO territory against short, medium, and long range ballistic missile threats. The U.S. cur-

rently is working to ensure that the command and control of the NATO and U.S. systems will be compatible.

Who is currently involved in this system against long-range ballistic missiles? Among Allies and partners, it is the United States; the UK, which has a radar system that has just been upgraded to support this mission; and Denmark, which has a radar that is about to be upgraded. We are now in bilateral discussions with potential new partners, the Czech Republic and Poland.

We have been discussing deployment of long-range missile defenses with NATO allies for years. In January 2007, the President made a decision to approach the Czechs and the Poles to begin formal negotiations aimed at obtaining approval for missile defense deployments in those countries.

We have also discussed this issue with the Russians. Following President Putin's remarks in February questioning certain aspects of the system, we intensified our outreach efforts in Europe, including with Russia, to explain our aims.

Since February, we have conducted intensive briefings of allied and other European countries, both bilaterally and in multilateral fora, including in the NATO Russia Council, The NATO Parliamentary Assembly, and the OSCE, where I gave a keynote address on missile defense to the Annual Security Review Conference. We have supplied technical data and explained what our system is and is not and how it complements NATO's efforts.

The talks with the Poles and the Czechs have been underway since earlier this year. Our goal is to be able to complete negotiations with both countries by the end of this year.

At some point early next year, we would hope that both governments will be able to take a positive decision to host the U.S. assets. If we are successful, then the United States would hope to begin construction at some point late in 2008, reaching initial operating capability several years later, and ideally full operating capacity in 2013.

The United States will go forward only if those governments agree. There seems to be a common misunderstanding that the U.S. would somehow impose its will on the Czech Republic and Poland. That is simply not the case. We are dealing with sovereign governments, and only they can decide whether to permit deployment of missile defense systems on their territories.

In fact, we have made steady progress in our negotiations with both countries. Acting Under Secretary of State Rood has led inter-agency negotiating teams to Warsaw and Prague. The teams have been working with their Polish and Czech colleagues on draft missile defense basing agreements. We have steadily identified areas of agreement and areas where further discussion is required. Although our negotiations are not complete, the U.S. is pleased with the serious and constructive approach our counterparts have taken to these negotiations, and we remain confident that we will be able to reach agreements with each.

The last aspect I want to cover is the Russian dimension of our missile defense planning and outreach. For over two years, the Department of Defense has been engaging Russia on our system plans. In fact, we were talking to the Russians almost as extensively as we were talking to the Allies. I have been part of these

conversations with Secretary Rumsfeld and more recently with Secretary Gates. Throughout this process, we have offered full transparency on the threat, why it needs to be countered, and our plans for doing so. We have offered a variety of ideas and projects for cooperation with Russia to provide transparency and reassure the Russian government that our missile defense system is not directed toward or against them. We have invited Russian officials to visit our missile defense sites in Alaska and California. We have suggested jointly undertaking test bed experimentation, and the sharing of radar data. Last April, a U.S. team traveled to Moscow with a comprehensive proposal for cooperation across a broad spectrum of missile defense activities.

Until last June, our offers to the Russian government had been neither accepted nor rejected. In June, President Putin proposed that we might use data from the Qabala radar in Azerbaijan to monitor the Iranian ballistic missile program, instead of deploying U.S. missile defense assets to Europe. Although we do not plan on suspending plans and negotiations for missile defenses in Europe, we have welcomed the Russian proposal and continue to analyze it. Since then, in September, a U.S. team visited the Qabala radar on a fact-finding mission.

Last July, Presidents Bush and Putin agreed to hold experts' meetings to find common ground for missile defense cooperation. Three such meetings were held since July, leading up to the October "2+2" meeting of our Secretaries of State and Defense with their Russian counterparts. Although we continue to disagree in key areas, including how soon Iran could possess long-range ballistic missiles, both sides presented ideas for cooperation and have had an exceptionally open exchange of information regarding Iranian ballistic missile development programs and the potential threats they pose.

At the recent 2+2 meeting in Moscow, the U.S. put forward proposals which would further transparency and information sharing on our proposed missile defense system.

Secretary Gates told his Russian colleagues the U.S. will continue negotiations with Poland and the Czech Republic on the deployment of missile defense assets. We did not accept the Russian position that the U.S. freeze these negotiations, a point Secretary Rice also made clear in her public statements. We told the Russians that our intent to complete these negotiations and construction of the proposed system need not be an impediment to further discussions with Russia about how we might cooperate on missile defense. The U.S. proposed to develop a joint regional missile defense architecture that could incorporate both U.S. and Russian missile defense assets. This architecture could eventually incorporate U.S., Russian, and European missile defense elements with the aim of defending the U.S., Europe, and western Russia from missile attack.

The U.S. also expressed its willingness to work with the Russians to provide assurances to address Russian concerns. We discussed transparency efforts, such as the potential for visits to U.S. and Russian missile defense sites. Possible Russian visits to missile defense sites in Poland and the Czech Republic would, of course,

require prior host nation agreement before we negotiated such an idea with the Russians.

We also discussed the possibility of “phasing” the activation of missile defense assets in Europe, based on further developments in the Iranian threat. We continue to further develop this proposal. The concept is that we would continue with negotiations and current plans for construction, but perhaps phase the activation of the system with Iranian development of intermediate and long range ballistic missiles.

Although we did not resolve our differences at the 2+2, we did agree on a way forward:

- We will continue and intensify our expert-level talks in order to flesh out the newest U.S. proposal and to give Russia the opportunity to contribute its own ideas.
- We will work toward a new Strategic Framework document that will outline a strategic partnership on a number of issues.
- We will conduct another 2+2 meeting in Washington in about six months to review our progress.

I wanted to leave you with just a few key points on missile defenses in Europe: The U.S. has been very proactive in explaining what our missile defense is and that it is defensive only. Second, NATO understands the intent of our system and that it complements NATO’s ongoing short and medium range system development. And third, for some time now, we have been working with the Russian government to explain what our system is and offering full transparency and cooperative projects.

Although I have devoted most of my testimony to missile defense, I would like to add just a few remarks to those of my colleague regarding the conventional arms control agreements with which the Defense Department has been most actively involved. An early contribution of the OSCE, when the Cold War was in full swing, was the development of confidence and security building measures. These measures, which are part of today’s Vienna Document, provided transparency that played an important role in preventing dangerous miscalculation and misunderstanding about military forces and their activities.

These measures were a step on the road to later agreements, including the Conventional Armed forces in Europe Treaty, known as CFE, which remains a cornerstone of European security. That Treaty, as you know, played a key role in hastening the process of post-Cold War conventional arms reductions and in building confidence that lower levels would be maintained. Under the Treaty, Europe saw the reduction of over 60,000 pieces of treaty-limited equipment—tanks, artillery, armored combat vehicles, combat aircraft, and attack helicopters. As a result, the Treaty has contributed to a more stable situation in Europe and has helped to reduce a once heavy military burden on the United States. Today the U.S. retains in Europe only a few hundreds of treaty limited-items in each category and is well below CFE limits.

The Department of Defense was an integral part of the process of negotiating the Adapted CFE Treaty, which adjusted CFE provisions to better reflect the situation in post-Cold War Europe. We have actively participated in, and supported, the current negoti-

ating process. We hope it succeeds. If we are successful, DoD will fully support the ratification of the Adapted Treaty.

We must preserve the gains we have made in reducing the conventional threat, while responding effectively to new challenges that affect both the United States and our European allies. That concludes my prepared remarks. Mr. Chairman I look forward to your questions.

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. NICOLAE CHIRTOACA,
AMBASSADOR, REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA**

Chairman Hastings, Co-chairman Cardin, distinguished members of the Commission, excellences, and colleagues:

It is an honor and a privilege to appear before you today to discuss the developments related to security in the OSCE region, as well as the possible impact on the regional security and stability of the recent evolutions related to the CFE Adapted Treaty. In the past few months, the challenge of the possible reconsideration of the existing military security system in Europe has taken center stage on the agenda of policy makers not only in Washington and Moscow, but also in the capitals of the countries disturbed by the possible revisionist approach to the existing multilateral agreements in the field of military security, including Chisinau, the capital of Moldova.

My Government considers that the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Adapted Treaty is the cornerstone of the current European security system. Its ratification will further strengthen the confidence and will consolidate peace and security in the Eurasian space. Adapted in 1999, during the Istanbul OSCE Summit, the Treaty takes into the account the new geopolitical realities, in particular the break-up of the former Soviet Union and the enlargement of the North-Atlantic Treaty Alliance. The adapted version of this Treaty underlines the importance of a crucial CFE provision and one of the basic principal of the international law—the required consent for the stationing of foreign troops on a sovereign territory. Here, the Russian Federation has assumed the obligation and responsibility to withdraw its illegal military presence from the territories of sovereign Moldova and Georgia.

The unlawful presence of Russian troops in Moldova and Georgia constitutes one of the key security challenges that the OSCE confronts with today. It is also the main remaining obstacle to the CFE Treaty ratification by Western allies. In this context, I would like to mention that Moldova is grateful to all the countries that support the unconditioned and early withdrawal of Russian troops from the Transnistria region of Moldova, as well as from the Gudauta base in Georgia, as the initial step in a sequence of moves to bring the 1999 Adapted CFE Treaty into force and accommodate Russia on other treaty-related issues.

We also support the United States Department of State known as the “parallel actions” plan—the proposal to Russia that outlines a possible sequence of steps that would bring the unratified CFE Treaty into force and keep Russia on board with this Treaty. In the first two steps, Russia would withdraw its troops from the Transnistria region of Moldova and Gudauta base in Georgia and would then join an international peacekeeping operation in Transnistria.

The withdrawal of Russian troops from Moldova and Georgia, as well as a “creative solution” to peacekeeping in the Eastern region of Moldova, are prerequisites to this whole process. My Government supports this official position of the United States Government, which is shared, as far as we know, by the representatives of the allies countries. The resumption of “five-plus-two” negotiations on Transnistria conflict settlement, the withdrawal of Rus-

sian troops and munitions, internationalizing the peacekeeping force, manageable solution to Transdnistria separatist crisis that respects Moldova's sovereignty and territorial integrity and the promotion of democratic and economic reforms throughout the entire region are all important principles aimed at Transnistria conflict resolution.

Russia's suspension of compliance with CFE Treaty means the failure of the Russian Federation to fully fulfill its international obligations in order to advance on the way of this Treaty ratification. This approach to one of the main multilateral international agreements in the area of military security in the modern Europe can undermine the entire system of conventional arms control on the Eurasia territory, raising a number of serious security concerns for the wider OSCE area.

The Russia's unilateral action could also be considered as an attempt to find a way out of the commitments, undertaken by the Russian Federation at the 1999 Istanbul OSCE Summit, namely to fully and unconditionally withdraw its military presence from the territories of Moldova and Georgia. You may also want to know why the unconditioned compliance of Russian Federation with CFE Treaty and Istanbul conditionality is so important for my country?

First, because the Russian military presence on the territories of Moldova, as well as of Georgia, is a clear infringement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity of our countries, both members of the GUAM Organization, and violates the basic principles of the international law.

Second, along with political and economic support, the Russian military is a crucial ingredient of maintaining and fueling separatist regimes in Moldova and Georgia, which are still instrumental for Moscow policy in the ex-Soviet space;

Third, Russian military presence in Moldova and Georgia is Russia's reaction to the struggle of our countries towards the real freedom and European reintegration, which means: efficient democracy, rule of law, respect for human rights and free economic development.

Speaking about the status of the Istanbul Commitments regarding Moldova and Georgia and their relationship to CFE, I would like to underline that, to this day, they remain unfulfilled. In defiance of its international commitments and despite the financial resources made available for the withdrawal through the OSCE Voluntary Fund, the Russian Federation has stopped the withdrawal process in March 2004, when the last trainload with Russian military equipment left the territory of the Republic of Moldova. The remaining components of their conventional presence—the munitions (about 20,000 tons at the Cobasna depots) and the military personnel (over 1200 soldiers), continue to be stationed in Moldova, some of them under the auspices of a so-called peace keeping force, set up against all internationally recognized standards for such operations.

Another serious problem is the presence on the territory of Moldova of a significant number of Unaccounted Treaty Limited Equipment (UTLE), illegally transferred by the Russian Federation to the separatists in the breakaway Transnistria region of Moldova during the military phase of the conflict. According to a number of

assessments, including the information made public by the separatist regime, their so-called “armed forces” of about 7,500 persons (potentially 25,000 with reservists), possess about 70 tanks, 150 armored combat vehicles, 122 pieces of 100 mm artillery, and 29 air vehicles, including combat helicopters.

As far as the third issue on the agenda of today’s hearings is concerned, namely the proposed U.S. deployment of ground-based missile defense installations in Poland and the Czech Republic, let me just state that my Government fully respects the sovereign right of the governments of the United States, Czech Republic and Poland to decide on bilateral legal arrangements and their technical implementation in order to ensure their national security.

My country is also ready to further contribute to strengthening the effectiveness of the OSCE efforts to monitor weapons trade, enhance border security and joint efforts aimed at maintaining and upgrading OSCE confidence and security building measures in light of these key issues. But my Government remains worried by the failure of the international multilateral institutions to contribute to the effective settlement of the existing conflicts that is eroding with every passing year their credibility as security actors and guardians of international law.

The position of the Republic of Moldova on the issue of OSCE Security Area from the perspective Adapted CFE Treaty ratification remains unchanged: the Moldovan Parliament will proceed with the ratification of this Treaty only upon the proved, full and unconditional withdrawal of Russian forces from Moldova.

Thank you very much for your attention. I appreciate the opportunity to testify here today and welcome any question that you may have.

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. VASIL SIKHARULIDZE,
AMBASSADOR, GEORGIA**

Distinguished Colleagues,

It is my honor to attend the hearings "Twenty-First Century Security in the OSCE Region." I thank you for your continuing interest in the critical issues of arms control and security in Europe.

Georgia considers the CFE Treaty as a cornerstone of the European security and, like other nations, is greatly interested in seeing the Adapted Treaty enter into force. It must be emphasized, that since the Istanbul OSCE Summit of 1999, Georgia has done its utmost to foster the complete implementation of all obligations undertaken in the Istanbul Joint Statement.

As you know, the Istanbul Joint Statement provided for the withdrawal of the Russian military personnel and equipment and the closure of Russian military bases on the territory of Georgia. Georgia considers the full implementation of the commitments as a necessary precondition for the ratification of the Adapted CFE Treaty. This is a view shared by almost all signatories to the CFE Treaty.

There has been progress in implementing the Joint Statement, but much remains to be done.

In particular, the Russian side fulfilled its obligations concerning the reduction in the levels of Russian Treaty-Limited Equipment (TLE) before 30th of December 2000, the withdrawal or utilization of the TLE located at the Russian military base at Vaziani and the repair facilities in Tbilisi, the withdrawal of the Vaziani Russian military bases from the territory of Georgia by 1st of July 2001.

The Joint statement called also for Georgia to assist in the process of reduction and withdrawal of the Russian forces by providing conditions necessary for their unimpeded withdrawal. Georgia has fully complied with this requirement. The financial assistance provided by the international community through OSCE Voluntary Fund was also important in facilitating the Russian withdrawals to date.

Finally, the Joint Statement stated that Russia and Georgia would complete negotiations regarding the duration and modalities of the functioning of the Russian military bases at Batumi and Akhalkalaki within the territory of Georgia during the year of 2000. Despite our best efforts—with the strong support of the OSCE, the US and many others—agreement with Russia was not achieved until May 30, 2005 with the signing of a Foreign Ministerial statement in which Russia agreed to complete the withdrawal of the remaining Military Bases and other facilities by 2008. This Statement was codified in an agreement signed on March 31, 2006 in Sochi. Implementation of the 2006 Sochi agreement is underway. The base at Akhalkalaki was already closed, all Russian TLE were withdrawn from Georgia and the Russian military base at Batumi will be closed next year.

The most significant outstanding issue is the Russian military base at Gudauta. The facilities of this base have not been legally transferred to Georgian authority. According to information provided by Russia to the Georgian side Gudauta contains combat hel-

icopters, about 60 vehicles, more than 200 active military personnel. In fact, this means that today, the base is actively used by the Russian military forces. And the access to the base has never been provided to the Georgian Government or to the international observers to independently verify any aspect of its scope or operations except the OSCE group's visit in 2000 with limited scope and without possibility to make a conclusion on the modalities of the base. At the same time, Georgia has never provided host-nation consent for any military base at Gudauta and, therefore, the continued Russian presence has no basis in international law. Until Russia has completely withdrawn its forces from Gudauta, a core part of the Istanbul Commitment will remain unfulfilled. Georgia has been and remains committed to negotiate with Russia on this issue to aid and facilitate the entry into force of the Adapted CFE Treaty. Georgia would like nothing more than to see this chapter of history closed once and for all.

At this point, allow me to express Georgia's concern regarding the Russian decision to suspend its compliance with the CFE Treaty. This unfortunate decision jeopardizes a cornerstone of the OSCE regional security system and we stand with the international community in urging Russia to return to compliance with the CFE Treaty. We are concerned about a potential Russian military build up in the flank zones which would further complicate regional security. Georgia supports the idea of a parallel action plan introduced by the US, and we believe that a common approach by the CFE community is essential to preserve the CFE mechanisms and its important confidence building measure and security roles.

Finally, let me also touch on the issue of the effectiveness of OSCE efforts to monitor weapons trade, enhance border security and combat terrorism. Unfortunately, we have direct experience what it means to have uncontrolled borders. The so called "grey zones" that exist on the territory of Georgia as a result of the conflicts are a danger to Georgia and to the region as a whole. While we value the efforts of the OSCE, it has not been enough. Russia vetoed the extension of the Border Monitoring Operation in 2004, the Roki tunnel on our northern border remains inaccessible to OSCE monitors, and OSCE freedom of movement in South Ossetia is limited. The OSCE mission has expressed its serious concerns about the presence of heavy military equipment (over 100 mm calibre) brought into the zone of conflict by the Ossetian forces. Likewise, the OSCE has reported a build-up of armoured combat vehicles by the Ossetians. Tskhinvali region is landlocked and the only way for a military build-up in this region is by the transfers of weapons and armaments to the secessionist regimes from and by the Russian Federation—ostensibly a "mediator" in the conflict resolution process. These are the concrete problems Georgia is facing that result from uncontrolled borders in the "grey zones" both in the S. Ossetia region as well as in Abkhazia.

Georgia supports the involvement of the OSCE in its historic mission of preventing and resolving conflicts. But we also recognize the limitations of the existing arrangements in "grey zones" and support greater involvement of other international actors committed to preserving Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

Thank you for the opportunity to address these important issues, and for your continued interest in the security and freedom of my country, and of Europe as a whole.



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