

U.S. POLICY TOWARD RUSSIA
A Review of Policy Recommendations

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PREFACE

Six months before the election of Barack Obama, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences launched a large, multifaceted project entitled “Rethinking U.S. Policy toward Russia.” When the effort began, it would be an understatement to say that U.S.-Russian relations were in sorry shape, having begun to spiral downward in the last years of the Clinton administration. After a brief interlude following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, they continued their descent, aided by fallout from the war in Iraq, U.S. plans for missile defense in Europe, and the prospect of a new round of NATO enlargement. To many specialists in government and out, including some within the George W. Bush administration, the deterioration in U.S.-Russian relations seemed neither logical nor, more importantly, in the national interest of the United States. It did not seem logical because no deep animus drove the tension, and no narrowing gap in the power of the two countries justified a serious strategic rivalry. It was not in the U.S. national interest because, on a host of important issues – among them, managing a nuclear world, enhancing energy security, dealing with terrorism, and mitigating climate change – the United States had much to gain from cooperation with Russia.

The Academy’s project – not only sponsored but, in important respects, instigated by the Carnegie Corporation of New York – set about exploring questions that needed to be answered were the deterioration to be reversed and U.S.-Russian relations set on a more positive course. Rather than looking backward and pointing fingers, project participants focused from the start on the future – on identifying the range and scale of the stakes that the United States has in the relationship, the obstacles to realizing them, and strategies by which these obstacles might be overcome. The Carnegie Corporation, our colleagues in the Academy, and those of us guiding the project had two main goals in mind: first, to reach out and mobilize a critical number of analysts and experienced policy-makers and, with their help, to think our way through these issues; and second, to take the results directly to Congress, the interested public, and what would soon be a new administration. Thus, the project had two ambitions – one, analytical; the other, practical – and equal energy went into fulfilling both.

Early on we decided that, in an effort to serve the different constituencies, project participants would concentrate on developing as many different forms of analysis and modalities of interaction as needed, and not confine our energies to producing a single, comprehensive, one-size-fits-all report. By the early months of the Obama administration, numerous organizations were filling this niche, generating useful reports explaining what had gone wrong and offering general prescriptions for enhancing U.S.-Russia policy. We began with a series of working groups – one in Moscow and three in

Washington – each focused on an important dimension of the U.S.-Russian relationship, including nuclear weapons and other hard security issues, economics, frictions over European security and the interplay in the post-Soviet space, as well as mechanisms for managing the relationship.

After weighing the results of these workshops, a steering committee that included Deana Arsenian, Coit Blacker, James Collins, Rose Gottemoeller, Thomas Graham, Robert Legvold, Thomas Pickering, Eugene Rumer, Angela Stent, and Strobe Talbott undertook four tasks: first, it developed a strategic assessment of the relationship, prepared as a PowerPoint presentation and shared with officials, congressional leaders, portions of the media, and members of the expert community. Second, at key junctures, the committee produced memoranda for the Obama administration on (1) the reasons for, focus of, and modalities of a strategic dialogue between the U.S. and Russian leaderships, along with lessons from previous comparable efforts; (2) the utility of and possible themes for a presidential address laying out a comprehensive U.S.-Russia policy; and (3) ways of addressing the crucial strategic dilemma raised by the administration's determination to pursue an ambitious, engaged, constructive policy toward Russia, while maintaining a strong, independent, supportive policy toward Russia's neighbors. Third, on a regular basis, members of the committee consulted senior congressional leaders and key staff members to offer assistance as they planned how their committees would address major issues on the U.S.-Russian agenda and, in particular, to encourage them to adopt a broad perspective when approaching these subjects. And, fourth, committee members, in various combinations, met with prominent members of the media and with world affairs councils in Atlanta, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Seattle to share ideas from the project, and, above all, to emphasize the importance of again giving serious thought to U.S.-Russian relations.

Meanwhile, each member of the steering committee, sometimes in combination but more often individually, contributed essays, reports, op-ed pieces, and congressional testimony on key aspects of the U.S.-Russian relationship, which were accompanied by recommendations for strengthening U.S.-Russia policy. These, along with major Russia-related speeches by administration officials and congressional figures as well as the reports from sister organizations, are available on the project's website at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (<http://www.amacad.org/russiapolicy.aspx>). The site contains a wide range of materials and sources relevant to U.S.-Russia policy and is being continuously updated.

The essay that follows, by Rachel Salzman, program assistant for the Academy project, adds a further dimension to the contribution we hope the project has made. As noted, both the deteriorated state of U.S.-Russian relations and the arrival of a new U.S. administration inspired many analysts and

organizations to revisit this crucial but often underestimated relationship. So, beyond our efforts in the Academy project, the number of reports and individual analyses commenting on the state of U.S.-Russian relations and offering advice to Obama and his advisers on how they should proceed has proliferated since the spring of 2008. Much of this work is complementary, sounding similar concerns and arguing for mutually compatible approaches. It also, however, contains differences, and in some cases, they are fundamental.

Given the large volume of new work on U.S.-Russian relations, I thought it would be useful to examine key portions of it and look for common themes, consider where recommendations coincide and where they diverge, and then compare this assessment with a review of what the Obama administration has actually done to this point. This was Salzman's assignment. What follows is a comparative analysis of the key findings in several of the new reports and essays. It does not offer its own policy prescriptions – indeed, it tries to steer clear of implicit recommendations, even by way of criticism or praise of the material reviewed. It is for the reader to form her or his own judgments on this score.

Salzman's essay begins with an overview of the general approaches to Russia policy found in the recent literature, and then digs more deeply into critical dimensions of the relationship. Salzman turns first to nuclear security, a crucial dimension in U.S.-Russian relations that presents multiple policy challenges for the United States, from resuscitating strategic nuclear arms control to strengthening the nuclear nonproliferation regime, including the vexed issue of Iran's and North Korea's nuclear programs. The Obama administration has moved quickly in this sphere, and much of what it has accomplished or sought to accomplish fits closely with the urgings in the literature. Next, Salzman looks at how different studies approach the question of European security, a topic that has been reanimated by President Dmitri Medvedev's proposal for a new European security treaty. It is a complex subject, encompassing not only the frictions surrounding NATO enlargement but also the fate of conventional arms control, the role of ballistic missile defense, and proposals for strengthening the NATO-Russia Council. After a brief discussion of the priority that the issue of European security has acquired in the literature, Salzman reviews the advice offered on all of these topics.

In the third section, she turns to the closely related and still more tortured matter of U.S.-Russian tensions over developments in the post-Soviet space. As she stresses, the uneasy interaction of the two countries within what once were Soviet borders, but that now forms the frontier of Russia's external world, constitutes the area where trouble between Washington and Moscow begins. It is the great, unacknowledged (or, at least, unaddressed) dimension of the relationship, and its challenges –

including the August 2008 Russian war with Georgia, the jockeying over bases in Central Asia, and the competition over oil and gas pipelines, not to mention the antagonism over NATO's role in the region – constantly roil relations between the two countries. Much of the commentary that Salzman surveys focuses on specific instances of conflict, with less attention devoted to the underlying fears and aspirations driving the two countries' approaches to the region.

The fourth section addresses the impact of energy issues on the U.S.-Russian relationship, including the role of oil and gas and their political and economic effects. Concerns about oil and gas supplies generate a complex mix of competitive impulses and grounds for cooperation, in turn, leaving analysts divided in their policy recommendations. Some attach primary importance to the security implications of Europe's dependence on Russian gas imports, heightened by Russia's demonstrated readiness to cut off gas and oil supplies in price disputes with neighbors. Others give pride of place to the commercial side of the challenge and the search for ways of maximizing areas of cooperation, while circumscribing areas of tension and competition.

Although Salzman does not make the point – because it is not made in the literature – if thought of in security terms, nuclear security, European security, security in the post-Soviet space, and energy security constitute four of the twenty-first century's most significant security challenges for the United States. And, in all four, Russia figures prominently. Hence, when one thinks seriously about what constitutes the bedrock of the U.S.-Russian relationship and should constitute the central focus of U.S.-Russia policy, the answers are to be found here. In her essay, Salzman underlines the intertwined nature of these four security challenges, a reality that emerges clearly in the literature even when it is not recognized explicitly.

The U.S. agenda with Russia extends well beyond these four key security dimensions, and Salzman goes on to deal with the assessments and recommendations offered on U.S.-Russian economic ties; the often difficult issues of democracy, human rights, and the development of civil society; and critical "transnational issues," such as climate change, counterterrorism, and the refashioning of global governance. These subjects, too, are interwoven. At various points, energy, trade and investment, and even climate change intersect. So do counterterrorism, security in the post-Soviet space, and global governance. And, as Salzman's analysis makes plain, each presents a complex pattern of converging and diverging U.S. and Russian interests, requiring anything but a simple policy approach. Hence, the advice contained in the literature points in multiple directions. To the degree that the administration's actions parallel some of this advice, like the advice, they also are tentative, fragmentary, and second-order.

In the end, what comes across most distinctly in Salzman's report is how closely key features of the Obama administration's new Russia policy parallel the recommendations of the reports and essays favoring a more ambitious engagement of Russia, a broadening of the agenda with it, and a readiness to reconsider compromises previously rejected. This is not to suggest a direct causal link between what analysts have recommended and what the administration has done. Many of these ideas were taking shape simultaneously in both camps. Hence, the real effect appears to have been mutual reinforcement rather than ideas in one group leading to the actions of the other. Nor is this to say that the more reserved and, in some cases, sharply critical commentators included in Salzman's review have fallen silent. On the contrary, those who either viewed the scope of prospective cooperation with Russia as limited or who, still more negatively, regard Russia as more of a threat than a potential partner remain unconvinced that the Obama administration's new approach will succeed. So, the debate continues, and Salzman concludes her essay by noting that the uncertainties governing U.S.-Russian relations are unlikely to resolve it anytime soon.

One further characteristic of the body of work surveyed in this report stands out, and it underscores the reason for the last of the activities in the Academy project on "Rethinking U.S. Policy toward Russia." Of the more than 120 sources Salzman consulted, scarcely more than a half dozen involved university scholars, and none of those from the younger generation. That so little of the booming policy-relevant work on U.S.-Russia relations is generated in academia reflects a broader problem: the diminishing importance that the social sciences in the United States ascribe to scholarship addressed squarely to the policy world. As a modest first step in response, the American Academy teamed up with the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard University and the Harriman Institute at Columbia University to convene a younger group of scholars – both Russian specialists and general international relations theorists – to address the large core issues in formulating U.S.-Russia policy: first, assessing the challenge Russia poses for U.S. policy; second, constructing an effective U.S. response to this challenge; and third, dealing with the bureaucratic and political impediments that arise in implementing policy. We then asked senior policy-makers to evaluate this work and offer suggestions for making it both more useful and more accessible to the policy-making community. The result is a new volume edited by Timothy Colton, Timothy Frye, and Robert Legvold, entitled *The Policy World Meets Academia: Designing U.S. Policy toward Russia*, available at <http://www.amacad.org/publications/occasional.aspx>.

None of the activities of the Academy project, including this essay, would have been possible without the generous support of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, a foundation that has been

more central than any other in sponsoring work on Russia for many years. Nor could the project have found a better or more appropriate home than in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, where it profited immensely from the Academy's special national standing and rich resources, including the generous and energetic leadership of the Academy's Chief Executive Officer and William T. Golden Chair, Leslie Berlowitz, and her able staff. In particular, I want to thank Diane McCree for the skillful editorial hand she applied to the manuscript. Finally, no one deserves more thanks than Rachel Salzman. Her essay is but a small fraction of her contribution to the project. She more than anyone put her imprint on every phase of the project, ensuring that schedules were met, details attended to, ideas shared, reports compiled, and results disseminated. She has my deepest gratitude.

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Cambridge, Massachusetts
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INTRODUCTION

Reporting on the outcome of the July 2009 summit in Moscow before the Subcommittee on Europe of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Russia, Ukraine, and Eurasia Policy Celeste Wallander stated repeatedly that the United States was approaching Russia “pragmatically.”¹ Her fellow witness, Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Philip Gordon, made the same assertion, speaking of a “desire to build a relationship based on respect and mutual cooperation.”² Neither witness glossed over the many obstacles and disagreements that remain in the relationship nor in any way indicated that the much-vaunted “reset of relations” would be easy. Instead, both spoke consistently of the need to proceed carefully and with eyes wide open, but with the firm conviction that rebuilding the U.S.-Russian relationship is crucial to achieving larger U.S. strategic objectives.

Pragmatism, then, is the watchword of U.S.-Russian relations under President Barack Obama’s administration. Although not hewing precisely to the traditional realist school of international relations, with its strict assessment of balance of power imperatives, the president and his Russia team appear to be pursuing a policy informed by *Realpolitik*. Moreover, it is not just the administration that is adopting or advocating this approach. Since Russia’s war with Georgia in August 2008, widely agreed to have been a watershed moment in the U.S.-Russian relationship, a majority of experts and policy-makers have indicated a desire to reorient the relationship away from a focus on (presumed) shared values and “reset” it on the basis of shared interests.³ As Dmitri Trenin wrote not long before Obama took office,

¹ Celeste A. Wallander, “July 6–8, 2009, Moscow Summit,” testimony before the Subcommittee on Europe, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Washington, D.C., July 28, 2009, 1, <http://www.internationalrelations.house.gov/111/wal072809.pdf>.

² Philip H. Gordon, “The Reset Button Has Been Pushed: Kicking Off a New Era in U.S. – Russia Relations,” testimony before the Subcommittee on Europe, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Washington, D.C., July 28, 2009, 1, <http://www.internationalrelations.house.gov/111/gor072809.pdf>.

³ See, for example, Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia,” a joint project of the Nixon Center and the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs (Washington, D.C.: March, 2009); Thomas Graham, “Resurgent Russia and U.S. Purpose,” Century Foundation report (New York: Century Foundation, April 2009), <http://www.tcf.org/publications/internationalaffairs/Graham.pdf>; and Eugene B. Rumer and Angela E. Stent, “Repairing U.S.-Russian Relations: A Long Road Ahead,” April 2009, 4, http://www.ndu.edu/inss/docUploaded/Rumer_FinalBook.pdf. For dissenters, see, for example, Ariel Cohen, “How the Obama Administration Should Engage Russia,” testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Washington, D.C., March 19, 2009, <http://foreign.senate.gov/testimony/2009/CohenTestimony090319a.pdf>; Strobe Talbott, “Dangerous Leviathans,” *Foreign Policy* 172 (May/June 2009), esp. 26; and Lev Gudkov, Igor

“Washington needs to think strategically about Moscow, not ideologically or theologically.”⁴ After more than a decade of policy driven to varying degrees by values and democracy promotion, U.S. policy-makers have begun to advocate a more tempered, strategic approach to U.S.-Russian relations.

Dramatic changes both in Russia and in the global context necessitate a complete reevaluation of the U.S.-Russian relationship. Russia has experienced an economic and political resurgence in the past decade, the turmoil inflicted by the ongoing global financial crisis notwithstanding. This resurgence makes Russia a different partner than it was in the immediate post-Cold War period or even at the turn of the millennium. The world, too, has altered radically, with the emergence of catastrophic terrorism as a global security threat, the nuclear renaissance, increasing concern over the effects of climate change, the focus on energy security, and most recently the global financial crisis. The combination of these changes renders many previous assumptions and recommendations about the U.S.-Russian relationship insufficient.

As scholars and experts seek to renew the U.S.-Russian relationship, however, many are also calling for a fundamental reframing and reorientation of the American position. Rather than asking only how Russia can help the United States to achieve a particular objective, they have begun to focus on how Russia fits into U.S. foreign policy more generally, as well on the enormous stakes on both sides in building and maintaining good relations. As the Hart-Hagel Bipartisan Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia notes, “An American commitment to improving U.S.-Russian relations is neither a reward to be offered for good international behavior by Moscow nor an endorsement of the Russian government’s domestic conduct. Rather, it is an acknowledgement of the importance of Russian cooperation in achieving essential American goals.”⁵ U.S. policy experts assert that the United States needs Russia not because it “deserves” to be needed based on its history as a superpower, but for operational and long-standing reasons. As Under Secretary for Political Affairs William Burns affirmed at the World Russia Forum in April 2009, “Russia matters.”⁶

Klyamkin, Georgy Satarov, and Lilia Shevtsova, “False Choices for Russia,” *Washington Post*, Tuesday, June 9, 2009, <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=23252&prog=zru>.

⁴ Dmitri Trenin, “Thinking Strategically about Russia,” part of the series *Foreign Policy for the Next President* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, December 2008), 5, http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/thinking_strategically_russia.pdf.

⁵ Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia,” i.

⁶ William J. Burns, “Remarks at World Russia Forum,” Washington, D.C., April 27, 2009, transcript available at: <http://www.state.gov/p/us/rm/2009a/122279.htm>.

One of the other hallmarks of the recent literature on U.S.-Russian relations has been the frequent suggestion to make Russia a more responsible, invested, and engaged global stakeholder.⁷ Rather than looking to engage Russia on specific issues (no matter how wide-ranging), the United States should seek some level of permanent engagement. Under this new paradigm, the United States and Russia would cooperate on issues of mutual concern, addressing both bilateral and global problems. This approach is evident not only in the new formulation of U.S. policy toward Russia, but also in how the Obama administration conceives of foreign policy in general. In her July 2009 speech at the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton spoke of tilting the balance away from a multipolar world and toward a “multi-partner world.”⁸ Instead of a world where great powers maintain peace by hedging against one another, the Obama administration seeks to create a world where major powers work with one another to advance global interests. As President Obama said in Moscow, and repeated in his speech at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2009, “[T]he pursuit of power is no longer a zero-sum game—progress must be shared.”⁹

The opportunities for partnership and shared progress within the U.S.-Russian relationship are numerous, from the more obvious issues of nonproliferation and arms control to the newer or rising problems of catastrophic terrorism and climate change. Further, as commentators increasingly note, many of the areas of concern are inextricably interconnected. For example, the question of building alternate pipelines routes to Europe is clearly part of energy security, but it could also reasonably be classified as a problem of both European security and security in and around the Eurasian landmass. Similarly, enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), perhaps the most divisive issue in the U.S.-Russian relationship throughout much of the post-Cold War era, is also an issue of European

⁷ See, for example, Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia,” 4, on nuclear issues; and Gordon M. Hahn, “U.S.-Russian Relations and the War against Jihadism,” Century Foundation report (New York: Century Foundation, 2009), 17, <http://www.tcf.org/publications/internationalaffairs/hahn.pdf>; and Talbott, “Dangerous Leviathans.”

⁸ Hillary Rodham Clinton, “Foreign Policy Address at the Council on Foreign Relations,” Washington, D.C., July 15, 2009, transcript available at: <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/july/126071.htm>.

⁹ Barack Obama, “Remarks by the President at the New Economic School Graduation,” Gostiny Dvor, Moscow, Russia, July 7, 2009, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/REMARKS-BY-THE-PRESIDENT-AT-THE-NEW-ECONOMIC-SCHOOL-GRADUATION/; and Barack Obama, “Remarks by the President to the United Nations General Assembly,” United Nations Headquarters, New York, New York, September 23, 2009, transcript available at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-by-the-President-to-the-United-Nations-General-Assembly/.

security. But as NATO edges closer to Russia's borders, it also touches on Eurasian security and access to the energy-rich Caspian Basin. Additionally, all of these issues linked to the broader problem of interaction in and around the post-Soviet space, the nexus of trouble within the U.S.-Russian relationship. Together, the persistent intersection and crosscutting nature of the various elements of this relationship have recently led analysts to focus more on how individual issues within the relationship animate one another, and to consider policies that are comprehensive, coherent, and integrated across issue areas.

In addition, many experts argue that the United States and Russia should pursue a broad-based, strategic partnership, rather than the selective engagement others have supported.¹⁰ Advocates of strategic partnership operate from an assumption that an extensive bilateral agenda is both possible and preferable. The recommendation for broad engagement in most cases rests on a belief that Russia should have a prominent position within U.S. foreign policy. By contrast, proponents of selective engagement treat Russia as a potential partner but suggest that the relationship should be limited to cooperation on specific, mutually beneficial objectives. Suggested areas of collaboration are normally related to nonproliferation and security. Commentators leave open the possibility of an expanded bilateral agenda, but they condition such expansion on the success of initial individual endeavors. Moreover, they largely believe that a positive U.S.-Russian relationship is not mandatory to achieve most U.S. foreign policy aims. In particular, they emphasize that the entrenchment of Russia's "emergent authoritarian political system" would (or should) impede expanded U.S.-Russian cooperation.¹¹ Although recent reports continue to express unease over Russia's democracy and rule-of-law deficit, the majority of observers are less willing to allow the "values gap" to derail potentially productive cooperation on the myriad areas where the United States and Russia have compatible interests.¹²

A brief look at four relatively recent and comprehensive reports offers useful insights into the broad partnership and selective engagement approaches. They are "Russia's Wrong Direction: What the United States Can and Should Do," a Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) report of the Kemp-Edwards

¹⁰ Robert Legvold, "The Russia File," *Foreign Affairs* 88 (4) (July/August 2009): 81.

¹¹ See, for example, Stephen Sestanovich, "Russia's Wrong Direction: What the United States Can and Should Do," report of an independent task force, John Edwards and Jack Kemp, chairs; Stephen Sestanovich, project director (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2006), 70.

¹² Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, "The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia," 2; Gordon, "The Reset Button Has Been Pushed," 1; and Graham, "Resurgent Russia and U.S. Purpose," 15.

Commission, authored by Stephen Sestanovich (2006); “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia,” a Nixon Center report of the Hart-Hagel Commission (March 2009); the final chapter of *The Russia Balance Sheet*, a book by Anders Åslund and Andrew Kuchins (April 2009); and “After the ‘Reset’: A Strategy and New Agenda for U.S. Russia Policy,” a Center for American Progress (CAP) report by Samuel Charap with Laura Conley, Peter Juul, Andrew Light, and Julian Wong (July 2009). These reports for the most part do not engage directly with one another: that is, they do not represent a cross section of a broader debate on grand strategy within the literature. Each report, however, seeks to place its recommendations within a broader strategic framework. These are, loosely, either selective engagement or broad partnership.

The Sestanovich report, written at a time when goodwill in the U.S.-Russian relationship was fading, favors selective engagement. In the foreword to the report, Richard Haas writes, “The Task Force recommends that the United States pursue ‘selective cooperation’ with Russia rather than seek a broad ‘partnership’ that is not now feasible.”¹³ The report’s position is that although there are areas where Russian cooperation will be necessary or even indispensable, there are not enough to merit the United States pursuing a broad strategy of engagement and cooperation. This conclusion is in many ways tied to Russia’s behavior and policy choices. As Sestanovich explains in a *Foreign Affairs* article written after the 2008 war in Georgia, “Suddenly, saying that Washington has to cooperate with Moscow when possible and push back emphatically when necessary no longer seems a fully satisfactory formula. Determining the right balance between cooperating and pushing back – between selective engagement and selective containment – has become the main task of U.S. policy toward Russia.”¹⁴ Sestanovich’s assessment indicates that for scholars already inclined toward selective engagement, the Georgian war served only to reinforce that conviction. These scholars contend that, whether because of a “values gap” or simply a mismatch in national and foreign policy priorities, broad engagement is unrealistic and therefore should not be a stated objective.¹⁵ Their recommendations, therefore, do not seek to expand the U.S.-Russian relationship.

Among the four studies, the recommendations of the CAP report are most unlike those of the CFR report. The authors of the CAP report propose a “progressive strategy,” or a comprehensive and

¹³ Richard Haas, “Foreword,” in Sestanovich, “Russia’s Wrong Direction,” xi.

¹⁴ Stephen Sestanovich, “What Has Moscow Done,” *Foreign Affairs* 87, no. 6 (November/December 2008), 13–14.

¹⁵ Sestanovich, “Russia’s Wrong Direction,” 5.

wide-ranging U.S.-Russian partnership.¹⁶ Charap and his coauthors maintain that, to prevent a return to the nadir that marked the end of the George W. Bush years, the Obama administration “should adopt a comprehensive strategy and broaden the agenda.”¹⁷ For example, the group recommends U.S.-Russian collaboration on improving energy efficiency and finding ways to cooperate in the post-Soviet space, rather than continuing to operate in zero-sum terms.¹⁸ Further, whereas the CFR report considers Russia’s democratic backsliding a reason to limit the relationship, the CAP report argues that this issue would be better addressed within a wider, more ambitious and cooperative framework.¹⁹

The Hart-Hagel report also advocates a broad relationship, but unlike the CAP report, which takes a progressive approach, Hart-Hagel assumes a realist position. The report frames its recommendations explicitly in the language of advancing U.S. objectives, with little mention of U.S. ideals: “Securing America’s vital national interests in the complex, interconnected, and interdependent world of the twenty-first century requires deep and meaningful cooperation with other governments. . . . And few nations could make more of a difference to our success than Russia. . . . Rapid and effective action to strengthen U.S.-Russian relations is critically important to advancing U.S. national interests.”²⁰ The difference in conceptual framework comes through clearly in the recommendations the report presents. For example, on the issue of interaction in and around the post-Soviet space, Hart-Hagel does not envision U.S.-Russian collaboration. The commissioners argue instead that the objective should be to minimize friction, suggesting that even occasional clashes of interests need not produce conflict in the relationship.²¹ Similarly, their discussion of energy cooperation looks to the economic value of collaboration, not whether Russia manipulates energy flows for political gains.²²

In *The Russia Balance Sheet*, Åslund and Kuchins place more emphasis on values than the Hart-Hagel report, and unlike Charap and his coauthors, they are less inclined to argue that there is “no

¹⁶ Samuel Charap with Laura Conley, Peter Juul, Andrew Light, and Julian Wong, “After the ‘Reset’: A Strategy and New Agenda for U.S. Russia Policy,” report of the Center for American Progress (Washington, D.C.: Center for American Progress, July 2009), 2.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 1–2.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

²⁰ Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia,” i.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 13.

²² *Ibid.*, 12.

conflict between our ideals and our interests.”²³ At the same time, Åslund and Kuchins argue that Russian cooperation is crucial for achieving a wide range of core U.S. strategic objectives.²⁴ For this reason, despite misgivings about Russia’s conduct, they prefer a comprehensive relationship with a broad agenda. As they explain, “Moscow may reject the comprehensive effort we suggest in order to more effectively accommodate its interests and concerns. If so — and this should be clear by the end of 2009 — then the Obama administration must be prepared to quickly adjust its policies. However, we do not advocate a ‘hedging’ strategy from the outset, as that would undermine the administration’s ability to convince the deeply skeptical leadership in Moscow of US sincerity.”²⁵ Essentially, Åslund and Kuchins maintain that the administration may revert to selective engagement out of necessity, but pursuing such a policy from the outset will undercut the ability to achieve U.S. objectives. The authors therefore recommend increasing economic cooperation between the United States and Russia and renewing serious arms control negotiations; both pursuits will build trust and be of immediate benefit to the two countries.²⁶

As noted above, these four reports represent the two main views advanced by a majority of scholars and policy-makers. There are some observers, however, who fundamentally mistrust Russia’s motives and advocate instead pursuing some form of neo-containment.²⁷ These experts, who take a more conservative approach to Russia and the U.S.-Russian relationship, seek to limit bilateral cooperation to areas where it cannot be avoided (e.g., nuclear nonproliferation). In many instances, Russia’s “slide into authoritarianism,” questionable human rights record, and growing activity in the post-Soviet space are all reasons for severely curtailing cooperation.

A good example of this perspective is “How the Obama Administration Should Engage Russia,” testimony given by Ariel Cohen of the Heritage Foundation before the Senate Committee on Foreign

²³ Charap et al., “After the ‘Reset,’” 2.

²⁴ Anders Åslund and Andrew Kuchins, *The Russia Balance Sheet* (Washington, D.C.: Peterson Institute for International Economics and Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2009), 139.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 161.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 163.

²⁷ See, for example, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-Fla.), US Congress, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, “From Competition to Collaboration: Strengthening the U.S.-Russia Relationship,” 111th Cong., 1st. sess., serial no. 111-4, February 25, 2009, 5, transcript available at: <http://www.internationalrelations.house.gov/111/47667.pdf>.

Relations in March 2009.²⁸ The thrust of Cohen’s argument is that Russia is a revanchist power with neo-imperial intentions, intent on undermining U.S. objectives and manipulating its energy resources for political gain.²⁹ This is not to say that Cohen denies that Russia could be a valuable strategic partner for the United States, were it to conform more closely to Western political norms, or that he underestimates the challenge Russia poses for U.S. foreign policy (a challenge that most experts acknowledge).³⁰ Rather, Cohen claims that pursuing extensive cooperation will be pointless, and even harmful to U.S. interests, until Russia becomes a liberal democratic society.³¹ Other analysts argue that waiting for that transformation will harm U.S. interests.³²

Another useful example, for the bridge it creates between experts such as Cohen and Sestanovich, is “The Button and the Bear,” by Leon Aron of the American Enterprise Institute.³³ Aron might be termed a “moderate-conservative.”³⁴ Like Cohen, he is skeptical of the long-term prospects for a dramatically improved bilateral relationship.³⁵ Unlike Cohen, he places less emphasis on the values gap between the United States and Russia and focuses instead on ways in which the Kremlin’s political ideology precludes meaningful cooperation with the United States.³⁶ The basis of his argument is that, historically, “the substance and extent of U.S.-Russian rapprochement depend first and foremost on the ideology of the regime in the Kremlin and its vision of the country’s national interests.”³⁷ In Aron’s view, the way the current Kremlin leadership understands Russia’s national and strategic interests sets Russia in opposition to the United States. Extensive U.S.-Russian cooperation or partnership, therefore, will be

²⁸ Cohen, “How the Obama Administration Should Engage Russia.”

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² See, for example, Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia.”

³³ Leon Aron, “The Button and the Bear,” *American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research* [Why italicized?] (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, summer 2009), <http://www.aei.org/docLib/20090701-Aron-RO-g.pdf>.

³⁴ Correspondence with Robert Legvold, March 17, 2010.

³⁵ Aron, “The Button and the Bear,” 1.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid., 8.

impossible without significant “ideological and political evolution in Moscow.”³⁸ Although this is the same basic assessment as Cohen’s, Aron reaches his conclusion through analysis of Russia’s domestic political culture and imperatives, and therefore leaves a little more room for cooperation on tasks that serve both countries’ national interest.³⁹ As with Cohen, however, Aron’s perspective represents a more conservative view than that taken by the majority of recent commentators.

The purpose of this paper is neither to promote an overall approach to the U.S.-Russian relationship nor to offer recommendations for how to manage it. Instead, the goal is to show the existing range of views on how Russia should be assessed and approached. It is structured as a review essay that looks at existing recommendations for dealing with key issues in the bilateral relationship, such as strategic nuclear arms control; European security issues; economic issues; energy security; questions of democracy and human rights; and transnational global concerns. This synthesis provides a framework within which to consider the Obama administration’s evolving policy toward Russia by comparing it both with the choices of past administrations and with expert recommendations. It is therefore a road map of where U.S. policy is in the context of where it has been.

The reasoning for this paper is simple. U.S.-Russian relations are, even in the most stable periods, a moving target requiring close attention and careful management.⁴⁰ This is by no means a stable period; indeed, as one analyst argues, “the world now has entered a period of great upheaval of uncertain duration, which will not pass until a new global equilibrium emerges.”⁴¹ While the world heaves and settles, however, much can be gained from an examination of both recent and past recommendations regarding the U.S.-Russian relationship. As the Obama administration moves to solidify its Russia policy, careful analysis of each facet of the relationship and its related recommendations is a good starting place.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Steven Pifer, “Reversing the Decline: An Agenda for U.S.-Russia Relations in 2009,” Policy Paper no. 10 (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, January 2009), 3, http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2009/01_us_russia_relations_pifer/01_us_russia_relations_pifer.pdf.

⁴¹ Graham, “Resurgent Russia and U.S. Purpose,” 4.

STRUCTURING THE RELATIONSHIP

In September 2008, a gathering of former ambassadors to Russia (and the Soviet Union) and the United States outlined a proposed agenda for their countries' bilateral relationship. The group concluded that "the new administrations in Washington and Moscow must create an improved institutional framework for consultations and negotiations and for implementation of the programs and initiatives this agenda will require. Our experience suggests that such machinery will require attention and support from our Presidents."¹ Although perhaps not a new observation, a distinguishing characteristic of many of the reports published after the recent war in Georgia and the 2008 U.S. elections is the extent to which they consider the problem of how to conduct the U.S.-Russian relationship. Earlier writings speak broadly of the need for presidential engagement, but the reports written in the waning days of the George W. Bush administration and the early days of the Obama administration delve into far greater detail. This change may be a reaction to a consensus that, under Bush, summitry replaced policy.² Further, it is an explicit recognition that "if we are to take any lessons from previous chapters in the history of U.S.-Russian relations, it is the absolute requirement to give their conduct priority, structure, and above all consistent attention."³ Therefore, an accurate representation of the recommendations from late 2008 to 2009 should begin with the emphasis they place on process as an indispensable component of good policy.

The Obama administration's desire to de-emphasize U.S.-Russian presidential summits and establish channels of communication at lower levels of government does not imply a wish to remove the president from the equation: to the contrary, most observers agree that the U.S.-Russian relationship requires significant presidential leadership and support from Congress.⁴ In the past, however, a presidential relationship without bureaucratic engagement has led to an overpersonalization of

¹ Alexander Bessmertnykh, James Collins, Yuri Dubinin, Arthur Hartman, Jack Matlock, and Thomas Pickering, "U.S.-Russian Relations: The Longer View" (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, September 23, 2008), 4–5, http://carnegieendowment.org/files/2008_ambassadorial_conference.pdf.

² Åslund and Kuchins, *The Russia Balance Sheet*, 161.

³ James Collins, "Keeping Up the Momentum with Moscow," Web Commentary, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, July 28, 2009, LINK.

⁴ See, for example, Pifer, "Reversing the Decline," 3; and Andrew C. Kuchins, "Prospects for Engagement with Russia," testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Washington, D.C.: March 19, 2009, 9, <http://foreign.senate.gov/testimony/2009/KuchinsTestimony090319a.pdf>.

relations.⁵ Many analysts therefore recommend that Obama select a senior administration official to act as the point person on Russia and vest this individual with the imprimatur of the president.⁶ Ideally, Russia policy would be coordinated under that official and run through an interagency group based in the National Security Council (NSC).⁷ Running it through the NSC, which is seated at the White House, ensures a higher level of presidential engagement. In addition, having more agencies invested in the success of the endeavor (assuming they can be disciplined to coordinate aims and objectives with one another) helps to create broad political support for initiatives. Obama has mostly followed this course of action, though some observers fear that he, like his predecessors, is making the mistake of overpersonalizing the relationship.⁸

Policy implementation, however, happens at the bureaucratic rather than the executive level. The second part of structuring the U.S.-Russia relationship, therefore, is establishing channels for lower-level officials to be in touch with their counterparts. The Hart-Hagel Commission recommends that the Obama administration "[c]reate permanent bilateral forums in which sub-cabinet-level diplomats, military and security officials, and economic officials could interact regularly and cooperate on concrete projects while also developing a better understanding of decision making on each side by the other, building mutual trust, and fostering working relationships."⁹ The Obama administration has largely followed these recommendations. During the July 2009 summit in Moscow, President Obama and President Medvedev established the U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission, with the presidents acting as cochairs and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov acting as

⁵ Graham, "Resurgent Russia and U.S. Purpose," 18–19; and Samuel A. Greene and Dmitri Trenin, "(Re)Engaging Russia in an Era of Uncertainty," Policy Brief 86 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, December 2009), 5, http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/engaging_russia.pdf.

⁶ Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, "The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia," 4; Working Group on United States Policy towards Russia, "Recommendations" (New York: Century Foundation, April 2009), 4, <http://www.tcf.org/publications/internationalaffairs/grouprec.pdf>; Graham, "Resurgent Russia and U.S. Purpose," 19; and Pifer, "Reversing the Decline," 21.

⁷ Pifer, "Reversing the Decline," 21.

⁸ Åslund and Kuchins, *The Russia Balance Sheet*, 161. On overpersonalizing, see, Jamie M. Fly and Gary Schmitt, "Obama Is Making Bush's Big Mistake on Russia" *Foreign Policy Online*, March 22, 2010, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/03/22/obama_is_making_bush_s_big_mistake_on_russia.

⁹ Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, "The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia," 5.

commission coordinators.¹⁰ According to President Obama, the commission shall “serve as a new foundation for this cooperation.” It comprises “working groups on development and the economy; energy and the environment; nuclear energy and security; arms control and international security; defense, foreign policy and counterterrorism; preventing and handling emergencies; civil society; science and technology; space; health; education; and culture.”¹¹ It will also expand to include new topics and working groups as needed.¹² Groups are charged to meet “regularly” and make reports to the commission coordinators at least twice a year, and reports to the presidents at least once a year.¹³ As of October 2009, the commission consisted of sixteen working groups, about half of which had met at least once.¹⁴ According to the “Joint Statement by the U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission Coordinators on Commission Progress,” released on December 31, 2009, the commission has expanded to include a group on the environment, and all of the groups are moving forward.¹⁵

¹⁰ “Fact Sheet: U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission,” http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/FACT-SHEET-US-Russia-Bilateral-Presidential-Commission/.

¹¹ Barack Obama, “Press Conference by President Obama and President Medvedev of Russia,” Kremlin, Moscow, Russia, July 6, 2009, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Press-Conference-by-President-Obama-and-President-Medvedev-of-Russia/.

¹² “Fact Sheet: U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission.”

¹³ Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, “Bilateral Presidential Commission,” October 16, 2009, <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/fs/130616.htm>.

¹⁴ Phillip H. Gordon, “Remarks En Route to Moscow,” October 12, 2009, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2009/oct/130524.htm>.

¹⁵ “Joint Statement by the U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission Coordinators on Commission Progress,” Washington, D.C., December 31, 2009, http://moscow.usembassy.gov/st_123109.html.

NUCLEAR SECURITY

National security, particularly issues related to nuclear proliferation, will likely continue to be the central pillar of the U.S.-Russian relationship.¹ Partly because of the looming expiration of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) on December 5, 2009, the Obama administration began negotiations on nonproliferation and arms control agreements early in its tenure, something many observers and most task forces recommended.² In addition to the more obvious desire to prevent a treaty vacuum, the administration and experts alike see traditional arms control negotiations as a means to begin repairing the frayed relationship.³ As one analyst put it in the immediate aftermath of the Georgia crisis, the best way to halt the deterioration in relations is to “grab onto the existing superstructure of the U.S.-Russia relationship.”⁴

From the beginning, the most urgent issue on the agenda was negotiating a replacement to START. The joint statement released by President Obama and President Medvedev at their bilateral meeting in London in April 2009 suggested a broad view of the new treaty.⁵ During the July 2009 summit in Moscow, the two presidents announced a “joint understanding” for the START Follow-on Treaty.⁶ The

¹ Legvold, “The Russia File,” 78.

² See, for example, Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia,” 4; Pifer, “Reversing the Decline,” 12; Stephen Sestanovich, “Prospects for Engagement with Russia,” testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Washington, D.C., March 19, 2009, <http://foreign.senate.gov/testimony/2009/SestanovichTestimony090319a.pdf>. Arms control negotiations were not a priority for the Bush administration.

³ See, for example, Pifer, “Reversing the Decline,” 13; Strobe Talbott, remarks during “Prospects for U.S.-Russian Arms Control,” at “Designing U.S. Policy toward Russia,” a conference at the Library of Congress, Washington D.C., March 27, 2009; Rose Gottemoeller, “Russian-American Security Relations after Georgia,” in the series *Foreign Policy for the Next President* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, October, 2008), 3, http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/russia_us_security_relations_after_georgia.pdf; and Åslund and Kuchins, *The Russia Balance Sheet*, 153.

⁴ Gottemoeller, “Russian-American Security Relations after Georgia,” 3.

⁵ “Joint Statement by Dmitriy A. Medvedev, President of the Russian Federation, and Barack Obama, President of the United States of America, Regarding Negotiations on Further Reductions in Strategic Offensive Arm,” April 1, 2009, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Joint-Statement-by-Dmitriy-A-Medvedev-and-Barack-Obama/. President Bush preferred to avoid negotiating legally binding treaties.

⁶ “Joint Understanding,” July 6, 2009, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/The-Joint-Understanding-for-The-START-Follow-On-Treaty/.

new treaty, finalized in March 2010, “limits the number of operationally deployed nuclear warheads to 1,550 for each country.”⁷ It requires few significant reductions beyond those agreed to in the 2002 Moscow Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions (SORT), but many experts concur that the immediate START follow-on talks should mark only a beginning in new arms control negotiations and that a more robust agreement should follow.⁸ Future negotiations should focus on downloading (reducing the number of missiles a delivery vehicle can carry, e.g., putting concrete ballast in some of the missile tubes of a nuclear submarine), deeper reductions in the number of weapons held by each country, and conversion of strategic systems to conventional systems, among other topics.⁹ They should also include discussions of how to achieve the “nuclear zero” goal that Obama and Medvedev have supported.¹⁰

The new treaty also “acknowledges a link” between offensive and defensive systems (ballistic missile defense, or BMD), but it does not officially limit the development of missile defense systems.¹¹ Throughout the process, missile defense was perhaps the most visibly contentious issue and almost derailed the negotiations.¹² Whereas the U.S. Senate maintained that it would not ratify a treaty that limited missile defense, the Russian side maintained that it would not agree to one that did not address missile defense.¹³ The Obama administration has committed “to continue to discuss the topic of missile defense with Russia in a separate venue.”¹⁴ In addition, both Secretary Clinton and NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen have supported cooperation with Russia on a joint missile defense

⁷ Steve Gutterman, “Obama, Medvedev to Sign Landmark Nuclear Arms Pact,” *Washington Post*, April 2, 2010, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/04/02/AR2010040200984.html>.

⁸ Pifer, “Reversing the Decline,” 13; Sestanovich, “Prospects for Engagement with Russia,” 5; and Working Group on United States Policy towards Russia, “Recommendations,” 1. On the need for a more robust second agreement, see Pifer, “Reversing the Decline,” 13; and Gutterman, “Obama, Medvedev to Sign Landmark Nuclear Arms Pact.”

⁹ Pifer, “Reversing the Decline,” 13, 2.

¹⁰ Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia,” 4.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Ellen Barry, “Putin Sounds Warning on Arms Talks,” *New York Times*, December 29, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/30/world/europe/30russia.html>.

¹³ Josh Rogin, “All Quiet on the Nuclear Front,” *The Cable*, a blog on www.foreignpolicy.com, April 2, 2010, http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/04/02/all_quiet_on_the_nuclear_front,

¹⁴ Rose Gottemoeller, “The Long Road from Prague,” speech at Woolands Conference Center, Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, August 14, 2009, transcript available at: <http://www.state.gov/t/vci/rls/127958.htm>.

system.¹⁵ The two sides signed the new START treaty in Prague on April 8, 2010. The first formal hearings on the treaty on the U.S. side took place on May 18, 2010.¹⁶ President Medvedev and President Obama have agreed that “ratification [by the Senate and the Duma] should be simultaneous.”¹⁷

Although START I contains a provision for an automatic five-year extension, the United States and Russia elected not to implement it.¹⁸ Instead, they have stated that the existing treaty will apply “voluntarily” until the new treaty is ratified, an approach some experts recommended even before the treaty’s expiry. Others find the assertion that the expired treaty is still in force “voluntarily” very troublesome.¹⁹ Most observers, however, judged that finding a way to keep START I in force until a new treaty is ratified was necessary because, although SORT does not expire until 2012, it relies on START for its verification procedures, and it lost much of its underpinning upon the expiry of the earlier treaty.

The emphasis on the importance of the START follow-on, though representative of the majority of commentators and also of the actions of the Obama administration, has not been universal. Some argued from the beginning that the administration should use the prospect of renegotiating START to compel Russia to cooperate in addressing Iran’s nuclear ambitions.²⁰ Others have argued that the renewed focus on arms control serves only to perpetuate the Cold War relationship, given that both

¹⁵ “Remarks on Secretary Clinton’s Meetings with Foreign Minister Lavrov,” Ritz Carlton Hotel, Moscow, Russia, October 13, 2009, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2009/oct/130563.htm>; and Anders Fogh Rasmussen, “The Case for Western Missile Defence,” *Guardian*, March 31, 2010, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/mar/31/missile-defence-nato-russia>.

¹⁶ “Kerry, Lugar Announce START Hearings,” *Senatus: Daily Coverage of the United States Senate*, May 12, 2010, <http://senatus.wordpress.com/2010/05/12/kerry-lugar-announce-start-hearings/>.

¹⁷ Dmitri Medvedev, “Russia-U.S. Relations and Russia’s Vision for International Affairs,” A speech at The Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C., April 13, 2010, transcript available at: http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/events/2010/0413_medvedev/20100413_medvedev.pdf.

¹⁸ On Russia, see “Russia Wants U.S. to Limit Nuclear Delivery Vehicles,” *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, March 3, 2009, http://www.rferl.org/content/Russia_Wants_US_To_Limit_Nuclear_Delivery_Vehicles/1502761.html. On the United States, see Pifer, “Reversing the Decline,” 13; and Rumer and Stent, “Repairing U.S.-Russian Relations,” 29.

¹⁹ On this recommendation, see Pifer, “Beyond START,” 10. On disagreement, see Ariel Cohen, “A Nonstarter on Arms Control,” Heritage Foundation, January 11, 2010, <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Commentary/2010/01/A-Nonstarter-on-Arms-Control>.

²⁰ See Cohen, “How the Obama Administration Should Engage Russia,” 14. Regarding the verification vacuum after START’s expiration without a signed and ratified follow-on, the SORT treaty is judged sufficient by itself.

countries had already begun to reduce unilaterally their stockpiles.²¹ Referring to events such as Russia's actions in the 2008 Georgian war, Senate Republicans stated, "It is not obvious that Russia's actions have really earned further nuclear reductions."²² They also contended that Russia "needs" a new treaty more than the United States.²³ And when it appeared that the treaty would be concluded by the deadline, some argued that it would be imprudent to sign any new arms control treaties until the Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) had been concluded.²⁴ The administration maintained that the ongoing NPR should not be a concern because, as a first step, the NPR working groups developed a nuclear force structure and posture for use during the START negotiations.²⁵ This information was used to determine U.S. positions during the negotiations, and the NPR informed the negotiations as both processes proceeded.²⁶ After several delays, the NPR was released on April 6, 2010.²⁷

Looking beyond arms control, some commentators have considered how the United States and Russia can use their leverage in the nuclear sphere to broaden and strengthen the nuclear nonproliferation regime itself. This includes reviving existing international treaties and negotiating new ones, increasing security at nuclear facilities worldwide, and securing weapons-grade fissile material in third-party countries.²⁸ During the July 2009 summit, President Obama and President Medvedev released a joint statement on nuclear cooperation that details a commitment to, among other things, collaborating on research for proliferation-proof nuclear technology, supporting the growth of safe nuclear energy, and continuing programs such as the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism.²⁹

²¹ Douglass J. Feith and Abram N. Shulsky, "Why Revive the Cold War?" *Wall Street Journal*, August 4, 2009, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204313604574328430978849134.html#mod=rss_opinion_main.

²² U.S. Senate Republican Policy Committee, "START Follow-on Dos & Don'ts," 7.

²³ *Ibid.*, 15.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

²⁵ Gottemoeller, "Long Road from Prague."

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Barak Obama, "Statement by President Barack Obama on the Release of Nuclear Posture Review," May 6, 2010, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/statement-president-barack-obama-release-nuclear-posture-review>.

²⁸ Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, "The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia," 3.

²⁹ Barack Obama and Dmitry Medvedev, "Joint Statement by President Barack Obama of the United States of America and President Dmitry Medvedev of the Russian Federation on Nuclear Cooperation," July 6, 2009,

Both presidents also support the negotiation of a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty with verification measures.³⁰

In their joint statement, President Obama and President Medvedev also pledged to “work to bring into force the bilateral Agreement for Cooperation in the Field of Nuclear Energy.”³¹ This refers to the 123 Agreement on Civilian Nuclear Cooperation, signed by President George W. Bush and President Vladimir Putin in May 2008, just before Medvedev assumed the Russian presidency. The Bush administration submitted the 123 agreement to the U.S. Congress for ratification but withdrew it in the wake of the 2008 Georgian war.³² If implemented, the 123 agreement would allow nuclear-weapons scientists to collaborate in creating proliferation-proof nuclear energy facilities.³³ Ratification of this agreement and the ensuing cooperation would also help to reframe the nuclear relationship.³⁴ In addition, given the number of heretofore prohibited opportunities it would allow, the 123 agreement would be a commercial boon to both nations and would help to bolster economic ties.³⁵ The majority of recent reports support ratification of the agreement.³⁶ The primary argument against ratification is

http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Joint-Statement-by-President-Barack-Obama-of-the-United-States-of-America-and-President-Dmitry-Medvedev-of-the-Russian-Federation-on-Nuclear-Cooperation/.

³⁰ Dmitriy Medvedev and Barack Obama, “Joint Statement by President Dmitriy Medvedev of the Russian Federation and President Barack Obama of the United States of America,” London, England, April 1, 2009, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Joint-Statement-by-President-Dmitry-Medvedev-of-the-Russian-Federation-and-President-Barack-Obama-of-the-United-States-of-America/; and Pifer, “Reversing the Decline,” 13. Pifer does not specify whether the treaty should have verification measures.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Tony Fratto, press briefing, Crawford Middle School, Crawford, Texas, August 25, 2008, transcript available at: <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2008/08/20080825-5.html>.

³³ Robert Einhorn, Rose Gottemoeller, Fred McGoldrick, Daniel Poneman, and Jon Wolfsthal, “The U.S.-Russia Civil Nuclear Agreement: A Framework for Cooperation” (Washington, D.C.: CSIS Press, May 2008), 27, http://www.carnegieendowment.org/static/npp/reports/csis_us-russia_08.pdf.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Åslund and Kuchins, *The Russia Balance Sheet*, 156–157, Samuel Charap and Andrew C. Kuchins, “Economic Whiplash: An Opportunity to Bolster U.S.-Russia Commercial Ties?” report of the CSIS Russia and Eurasia Program (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, February 2009), 10, http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/090218_charap_econwhiplashrussia_web.pdf; and Sarah Carey, remarks during “US Economic Relations and Energy,” at “Designing U.S. Policy toward Russia.” [What is this? Full cite?]

presumed leverage to compel Russian cooperation on addressing the Iranian nuclear challenge.³⁷ The administration resubmitted the agreement to Congress on May 11, 2010.³⁸

In addition to the 123 agreement, many experts also recommend U.S. ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which was originally rejected by the Senate in October 1999 and further stymied during the George W. Bush administration.³⁹ Ratification of the agreement may have little practical benefit, given that the United States ceased nuclear testing in 1992, but it would be an important symbolic gesture demonstrating an overall U.S. commitment to nonproliferation.⁴⁰ Two of the main obstacles to U.S. ratification have been the question of verification (whether violations of the ban can be detected) and a resistance to international treaties that regulate aspects of national defenses.⁴¹ From a technical standpoint, the issue of verification has been largely overcome, because, as Jessica Mathews notes, “a global monitoring system has been built that can detect an explosion as small as one-tenth of a kiloton, and 10 times smaller in many critical regions.”⁴² Although opposition from some senators continues to pose a considerable hurdle, many current and past officials from both Republican

³⁶ See, for example, Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia,” 4; Charap and Kuchins, “Economic Whiplash,” 10; Graham, “Resurgent Russia and U.S. Purpose,” 21; and Pifer, “Reversing the Decline,” 16. For a dissenter, see Cohen, “How the Obama Administration Should Engage Russia,” 13.

³⁷ Cohen, “How the Obama Administration Should Engage Russia,” 13; Jack Spencer, “Russia 123 Agreement: Not Ready for Primetime,” WebMemo no. 1926 (Washington, D.C.: Heritage Foundation, May 15, 2008), 1, https://www.policyarchive.org/bitstream/handle/10207/13663/wm_1926.pdf?sequence=1.

³⁸ Josh Rogin, “White House sends Russia civilian nuclear deal to Congress,” *The Cable*, a blog on www.foreignpolicy.com, May 11, 2010, http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/05/11/white_house_pushes_congress_on_russia_civilian_nuclear_deal.

³⁹ Strobe Talbott, *The Great Experiment: The Story of Ancient Empires, Modern States, and the Quest for a Global Nation* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2008), 338, 348.

⁴⁰ On the symbolic nature of ratification, see *ibid.*, 339; and Phillip Taubman, “Learning Not to Love the Bomb,” *New York Times*, February 18, 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/19/opinion/19taubman.html?_r=1&scp=2&sq=russia&st=nyt.

⁴¹ Brent Scowcroft, Joseph Nye, Nicholas Burns, and Strobe Talbott, “U.S., Russia Must Lead on Arms Control,” *Politico*, October 13, 2009, <http://dyn.politico.com/printstory.cfm?uuid=4A084627-18FE-70B2-A8D8BD619BFFF486>.

⁴² Jessica Mathews, “This Time, Ban the Test,” *International Herald Tribune*, October 21, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/22/opinion/22iht-edmatthews.html>.

and Democratic administrations now support ratification.⁴³ Meanwhile the Obama administration has made ratification of the CTBT a centerpiece of its agenda for moving toward a world free of nuclear weapons.⁴⁴ In September 2009, Secretary of State Clinton led the U.S. delegation to a conference on CTBT at the UN General Assembly.⁴⁵ Following a trip to Moscow, the secretary argued that “[b]ringing the treaty into force will strengthen and reenergize the global nonproliferation regime and, in doing so, enhance our own security.”⁴⁶ Despite earlier promises, however, the administration is unlikely to make a push on CTBT before securing ratification of the START follow-on.

Beyond bringing treaties and agreements into force, another way to secure a global commitment to nonproliferation is to use the influence of both the United States and Russia to strengthen multinational bodies such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), an ambition supported in the July 2009 joint statement.⁴⁷ For example, the two countries could provide a joint team of experts to help the IAEA respond to requests from countries seeking to comply with their obligation to secure all nuclear weapons and materials (UN Resolution 1540).⁴⁸ Strengthening the IAEA and further integrating it into the U.S.-Russia relationship has had the long-standing support of international groups such as the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission and bilateral commissions such as the joint research group of the National Research Council (NRC) of the National Academies and the Russian

⁴³ See, for example, Robert Gates, “Gates: Nuclear Weapons and Deterrence in the 21st Century,” speech at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington D.C., October 28, 2008, transcript available at: http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/1028_transcrip_gates_checked.pdf; Mathews, “This Time, Ban the Test”; and Scowcroft et al., “U.S., Russia Must Lead on Arms Control.”

⁴⁴ Barack Obama, “Remarks by President Barack Obama,” Hradcany Square, Prague, Czech Republic, April 5, 2009, transcript available at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-By-President-Barack-Obama-In-Prague-As-Delivered/.

⁴⁵ Hillary Rodham Clinton, “Speech in Advance of the United Nations General Assembly,” Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C., September 18, 2009, 5, transcript available at : <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/09/129366.htm>

⁴⁶ Hillary Rodham Clinton, “Strengthening the Pillars of Global Nonproliferation,” remarks at the United States Institute of Peace, Renaissance Mayflower Hotel, Washington, D.C., October 21, 2009, transcript available at: <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/10/130806.htm>.

⁴⁷ Obama and Medvedev, “Joint Statement on Nuclear Cooperation.”

⁴⁸ Sam Nunn, remarks during “Prospects for U.S.-Russian Arms Control,” at “Designing U.S. Policy toward Russia,”; Obama and Medvedev, “Joint Statement on Nuclear Cooperation.”

Academy of Sciences (RAS).⁴⁹ In a 2005 joint report, the NRC-RAS group suggested integrating multinational organizations, such as the IAEA or the Group of Eight (G8), into the effort to manage the nuclear regime. These organizations could be integrated via regularized meetings, bilateral or multilateral initiatives, and workshops.⁵⁰ The IAEA and other multinational bodies might also establish universal standards regarding radioactive materials as a way to prevent the illegal transfer of hazardous goods. Such efforts should look not just at the mechanics of transport but also to personnel infrastructure (such as legal teams) and ways to coordinate existing export systems.⁵¹

Another way to strengthen the nonproliferation regime at the global level involves U.S.-Russian cooperation on an international spent-fuel facility located within Russia's borders. One such facility, in Angarsk, is already operational and is overseen by the IAEA, but the United States has yet to formally endorse the project. An international spent-fuel facility could help to supply third parties with nuclear fuel while preventing them from developing reprocessing facilities that would allow them to extract plutonium. Whether the United States becomes involved with the Angarsk facility or whether Washington and Moscow agree to collaborate in constructing a new facility, developing an efficient and

⁴⁹ "Appendix: Recommendations of the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission," in Hans Blix, *Why Nuclear Disarmament Matters*, A Boston Review Book (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2008), 93. The Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission is an independent body funded by the government of Sweden that strives "to identify desirable and achievable directions for international cooperation [and] present realistic proposals aimed at the greatest possible reduction of the dangers of weapons of mass destruction." See <http://www.wmdcommission.org/>; and National Research Council (U.S.). U.S. Committee on Strengthening U.S.-Russian Cooperation on Nuclear Nonproliferation, *Strengthening U.S.-Russian Cooperation on Nuclear Nonproliferation: Recommendations for Action* (Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press, 2005), 25, http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=11302..

⁵⁰ National Research Council, *Strengthening U.S.-Russian Cooperation on Nuclear Nonproliferation*. Although this report and its predecessor, *Overcoming Impediments to U.S.-Russian Cooperation on Nuclear Nonproliferation: Report of a Joint Workshop*, suggest that multilateral organizations should be more involved in the U.S.-Russia nuclear relationship, neither report offers specific recommendations. The earlier report, however, does provide examples of existing programs that might be mimicked or strengthened, such as the G8 Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction or the Multilateral Nuclear Environmental Program in the Russian Federation. See National Research Council, U.S. Committee on Strengthening U.S.-Russian Cooperation on Nuclear Nonproliferation, *Overcoming Impediments to U.S.-Russian Cooperation on Nuclear Nonproliferation: Report of a Joint Workshop* (Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press, 2004), esp. 38–39, http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=10928.

⁵¹ Brad McAllister, "Framing U.S.-Russian Security Cooperation: Neorealist and Neoliberal Alternatives to Navigating the New Security Terrain," *Demokratizatsiya* 15, no. 13 (June 2007), 289–290.

cost-effective way of placing fissile material under more secure control is a primary objective.⁵² In addition, some analysts endorse the Russian proposal to reprocess Iranian spent fuel in a joint Russian-Iranian facility within Russia.⁵³ Regardless of the location, many recommend U.S.-Russian collaboration on developing civilian nuclear reactors.⁵⁴ Ratification of the 123 agreement would facilitate that collaboration.

Significant problems resulting from differing interpretations of proliferation have hampered the fight against proliferation.⁵⁵ The United States has generally maintained that even the potential of a country becoming a nuclear power is unacceptable. In contrast, Russia has largely held that only an immediate threat represents a violation of the nonproliferation regime.⁵⁶ During the second Bush administration, the gulf between these two interpretations widened because the United States replaced a generic standard with a normative one, treating some cases of proliferation – notably Iran, Iraq, and North Korea – as unacceptable violations, and others – such as India and Israel – as acceptable.

These differing interpretations notwithstanding, U.S. commentators have become increasingly convinced that Russian cooperation is the best, and perhaps only, way to make strides against proliferation. This is particularly true in problem states such as Iran and North Korea.⁵⁷ Iran is especially worrisome from the U.S. perspective, and during the Bush administration, officials moved the goal of

⁵² Richard Weitz, *Russian-American Security Cooperation after St. Petersburg: Challenges and Opportunities*, part of the series *The U.S. and Russia: Regional Security Issues and Interests*, by the Strategic Studies Institute (Washington, D.C.: United States Government, 2007), 32–33.

⁵³ Rumer and Stent, “Repairing U.S.-Russian Relations,” 30. The Iranians have agreed in principle to export much of their enriched uranium to Russia so that it can be converted to fuel. See Steven Erlanger and Mark Landler, “Iran Agrees to Send Enriched Uranium to Russia,” *New York Times*, October 1, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/02/world/middleeast/02nuke.html?ref=world>.

⁵⁴ Pifer, “Beyond START,” 3; and Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia,” 4.

⁵⁵ Rumer, *Russian Foreign Policy beyond Putin*, Adelphi Paper 390 (Oxford, England: Routledge for the Institute for Strategic and International Studies, 2007), 37.

⁵⁶ Thomas E. Graham, “The Friend of My Enemy,” *National Interest* 95 (May/June 2008), 38.

⁵⁷ Related to North Korea, see James Clay Moltz, “U.S.-Russian Relations and the North Korean Crisis,” *Asian Survey* 45, no. 5 (September/October 2005). For Iran, there are numerous sources, but see in particular Robert D. Blackwill, “The Three R’s: Rivalry, Russia, ‘Ran,’” *National Interest* 93 (January /February 2008); and Graham, “The Friend of My Enemy.”

securing Russian cooperation on ending Iran's nuclear program to the top of the bilateral agenda.⁵⁸ Reports and studies released since Obama took office in January 2009 are no less committed than earlier works to including Russia in efforts to resolve the Iranian conundrum, but these reports are less sanguine than their predecessors about the amount of influence that Moscow wields over Tehran. In addition, they exhibit a greater awareness (or the awareness is more readily acknowledged) that, whatever its level of influence, Russia has a diverse set of interests with Iran that will likely prevent it from ever exerting the amount of pressure the United States would prefer.⁵⁹

Given these complications, many observers support the Obama administration's efforts to engage Iran directly, rather than rely on Russia's questionable influence or intent for making progress.⁶⁰ The Hart-Hagel Commission advocates striving "to make Russia an American partner in dealing with Iran and the broader problem of emerging nuclear powers."⁶¹ Although this is not a groundbreaking recommendation, the language is important: Hart-Hagel frames the need to cooperate on Iran within the larger context of curbing proliferation. This phrasing therefore appeals to the Russian generic interpretation of proliferation.

In a departure from the public posture of his predecessor, President Obama has also rhetorically recognized Iran's right to nuclear energy. At a speech in Prague on April 5, 2009, Obama stated, "My administration will seek engagement with Iran based on mutual interests and mutual respect. We believe in dialogue. But in that dialogue we will present a clear choice. We want Iran to take its rightful place in the community of nations, politically and economically. We will support Iran's right to peaceful nuclear energy with rigorous inspections. That's a path that the Islamic Republic can take. Or the government can choose increased isolation, international pressure, and a potential nuclear arms race in

⁵⁸ See, for example, Blackwill, "The Three R's," 68.

⁵⁹ Pifer, "Reversing the Decline," 14; and Rumer and Stent, "Repairing U.S.-Russian Relations," 29–30. For a Russian perspective, see the interview with Viktor Kremeniuk, deputy director of the Institute of the USA and Canada at the Russian Academy of Sciences, "Akhmadinezhad vyzhal iz konfrontatsii s Amerikoi vse, shto možno," *Gazeta*, June 25, 2009, Russian: http://www.gazeta.ru/comments/2009/06/25_x_3215148.shtml, translation: <http://worldmeets.us/gazetaru000010.shtml>.

⁶⁰ See, for example, Pifer, "Reversing the Decline," 14; and Julian Borger, "Nuclear Talks Lead to Rare Meeting between US and Iran," *Guardian*, October 1, 2009, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/oct/01/iran-nuclear-geneva-talks>.

⁶¹ Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, "The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia," 3.

the region that will increase insecurity for all.”⁶² Secretary of State Clinton reiterated Obama’s position in her speech in advance of a meeting of the UN General Assembly in September 2009.⁶³ The revelation just before the opening of the September 2009 G20 meeting in Pittsburgh that Iran has a second covert uranium enrichment plant, however, caused the administration to toughen its stance and veer away from engagement.⁶⁴ The announcement came at the same time as the UN Security Council approved, with Russia’s support, a U.S.-led resolution pushing for more ambitious efforts at working toward a world without nuclear weapons. The resolution did not mention either Iran or North Korea by name, but many experts view it as a positive step in the administration’s nuclear agenda.⁶⁵ Although the administration remains publicly committed to engaging Iran diplomatically, future steps, and the role the United States will expect Russia to play, depend on the progress made in negotiations begun with the P5 + 1 (i.e., the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany) and the European Union in Geneva on October 1, 2009.⁶⁶ President Medvedev has signaled, somewhat tepidly, that he might be amenable to harsher sanctions should these prove necessary.⁶⁷ Others in the Russian government have not reiterated that position, but Obama remains hopeful that he can gain Russian support.⁶⁸

Since the initial optimism of both Medvedev’s September 2009 statement and the first round of talks in October 2009, progress has proceeded haltingly. After much delay and obfuscation of its plans,

⁶² Obama, “Remarks by President Barack Obama.”

⁶³ Clinton, “Speech in Advance of the United Nations General Assembly,” 5.

⁶⁴ Michael D. Shear and Karen DeYoung, “Iran Reveals Existence of Second Uranium Enrichment Plant,” *Washington Post*, September 25, 2009, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/09/25/AR2009092500289.html?hpid=topnews>.

⁶⁵ Glenn Kessler, “U.N. Wrangling Spotlights Gaps between Nuclear Hopes, Reality,” *Washington Post*, September 25, 2009, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/09/24/AR2009092403708.html>.

⁶⁶ The meeting in Geneva also resulted in a “rare” bilateral meeting between U.S. and Iranian diplomats. See Glen Kessler, “Iran, Major Powers Reach Agreement on Series of Points,” *Washington Post*, October 2, 2009, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/10/01/AR2009100101294.html>.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ Clifford J. Levy, “Warmer U.S.-Russia Relations May Yield Little in Action toward Iran,” *New York Times*, September 27, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/28/world/middleeast/28russia.html?ref=europe>; Peter Baker, “Obama Plans Revival of Russian Nuclear Deal,” *New York Times*, May 6, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/07/world/europe/07prexy.html?src=tw&tw=nytimesworld>.

Iran turned down an agreement to send its fissile material to France or Russia for reprocessing. In February 2010, the Islamic Republic announced that it would begin enriching uranium for use in a medical reactor.⁶⁹ That announcement led officials in several nations, including the United States and Russia, to call for stricter international sanctions on Iran.⁷⁰ In another positive sign that Russia may be willing to support harsher sanctions, Russian officials have been quoted as saying that they would not complete the sale of an S-300 air defense system to Iran if “it leads to destabilisation in any region.”⁷¹ Thus far, however, their stated reason for not fulfilling the contract is that there are technical difficulties with the system, but they do intend to complete the sale once those issues have been successfully addressed.⁷² Ultimately, however, the future of this sale, as well as the prospect of increased U.S.-Russian collaboration in managing the Iranian challenge, will likely depend as much on the actions and answers of the Islamic Republic to the standing offers as on stated positions of either the United States or Russia.

⁶⁹ Alan Cowell and Thom Shanker, “Iran Nuclear Plans Start New Calls for Sanctions,” *New York Times*, February 9, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/09/world/middleeast/09iran.html?scp=2&sq=iran%20nuclear%20&st=cse>.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ “Russia Links Iran Arms Sale to Regional Tensions,” Reuters, February 24, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2010/02/24/world/international-uk-russia-iran-lavrov.html>.

⁷² Ibid.

NATO AND EUROPEAN SECURITY

Throughout most of the post–Cold War era, U.S. leaders from both parties have argued that NATO enlargement contributes to the goal of a “Europe whole and free,” that NATO is no longer an anti-Russian alliance, and that enlargement increases rather than imperils European security.¹ The August 2008 war between Russia and Georgia, viewed by some observers as a warning from Russia over Georgia’s Euro-Atlantic aspirations (especially for a NATO membership action plan, or MAP), was a vivid demonstration that this argument is no longer sufficient.² More important, however, it underscored that Europe will not be secure until Russia is made a stakeholder in that security.³ This fundamental assumption underlies post-August 2008 recommendations regarding European security, and it marks a radical shift in approach. The notion that Russia dislikes NATO is hardly new; the near-universal call to speak seriously about the problem and search for a new European security architecture, though, is a significant development.

The topic emerged on the international stage most prominently in June 2008, before the Georgian war, when President Medvedev called for an international conference to reform European security.⁴ He and other Russian officials have repeated that call numerous times since the war, but the details remain murky. Russia seemingly seeks to remake Europe’s security architecture with legally binding commitments, as opposed to the political commitments of, for example, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).⁵ In November 2009, Medvedev circulated a draft European

¹ See, for example, Strobe Talbott, “Why NATO Should Grow,” *New York Review of Books* 42, no. 13 (August 10, 1995), <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/1826>; and Condoleezza Rice, “Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice Addresses U.S.-Russia Relations at the German Marshall Fund,” Renaissance Mayflower Hotel, Washington, D.C., September 18, 2008, transcript available at: <http://www.gmfus.org/event/rice-russia.cfm>.

² Trenin, “Thinking Strategically,” 6.

³ Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia,” 10; Åslund and Kuchins, *The Russia Balance Sheet*, 150; Gottemoeller, “Security Relations after Georgia,” 5; and Trenin, “Thinking Strategically,” 6.

⁴ Åslund and Kuchins, *The Russia Balance Sheet*, 152.

⁵ Sergei Lavrov in “A Conversation with Russia,” Brussels Forum 2009, Brussels, Belgium, March 21, 2009, transcript available at: <http://www.gmfus.org/brusselsforum/2009/transcripts.html>. Some experts fear that this entails legal limits on both how NATO deploys forces and further NATO enlargement.

security treaty, but reaction to the draft text has been largely negative.⁶ Nevertheless, there is now widespread agreement on the need to engage on the issue.⁷ The idea has taken root among American, Russian, and European analysts, and several track II projects are under way to address this question.⁸

In official circles, the OSCE is overseeing the Corfu Process, launched in June 2009 “to tackle European security challenges with concrete steps to restore confidence.”⁹ The Obama administration has endorsed the Corfu Process, and in a speech at L’Ecole Militaire in Paris on January 29, 2010, Secretary of State Clinton spoke about the need to revisit standing security arrangements.¹⁰ She stated, “The institutions that guarded Europe’s and North America’s security during the 20th century were not designed with 21st century threats in mind. . . . Tanks, bombers, and missiles are necessary but no longer sufficient to keep our people safe. . . . The transatlantic partnership has been both a cornerstone of global security and a powerful force for

⁶ “European Security Treaty,” unofficial translation, <http://eng.kremlin.ru/text/docs/2009/11/223072.shtml>. On negative reactions, see, for example, “Russia Unveils Proposal for European Security Treaty,” *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, November 30, 2009, http://www.rferl.org/content/Russia_Unveils_Proposal_For_European_Security_Treaty/1891161.html.

⁷ See, for example, Dmitri Trenin, “Comment on the Draft Treaty on European Security Proposed by Russian President Dmitry Medvedev,” Carnegie Moscow Center, Moscow, Russia, November 30, 2009, <http://www.carnegie.ru/en/pubs/media/83465.htm>.

⁸ For American sources, see Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia,” 10; Graham, “Resurgent Russia and U.S. Purpose,” 24; and Rumer and Stent, “Repairing U.S.-Russian Relations,” 1. For a Russian perspective, see Trenin, “Thinking Strategically,” 6. In terms of projects and events, see, for example, “Towards a New European Security Architecture?” Institute for International Strategic Studies in partnership with the Valdai International Discussion Club and the Council for Foreign and Defence Policy, London, England, December 8–9, 2009, <http://www.iiss.org/programmes/russia-and-eurasia/conferences/conferences-2009/towards-a-new-european-security-architecture/>; and the ongoing project at Carnegie Endowment for International Peace “The Euro-Atlantic Security Initiative” (www.carnegieendowment.org/easi). The author works on the Carnegie Endowment project.

⁹ “‘Corfu Process’ Launched to Take European Security Dialogue Forward, Says OSCE Chairperson,” press release, Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Corfu, Greece, June 28, 2009, http://www.osce.org/cio/item_1_38493.html. For Clinton’s speech, see Hillary Rodham Clinton, “Remarks on the Future of European Security,” L’Ecole Militaire, Paris, France, January 29, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/01/136273.htm>.

¹⁰ On endorsing the Corfu Process, see James Steinberg, in “Statement by Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg, Press Availability of Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg and Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs Dora Bakoyannis,” OSCE Conference, Corfu, Greece, June 28, 2009, http://athens.usembassy.gov/steinberg_corfu.html.

global progress. Now we are called to address some of the great challenges in human history. And to meet them, we are required to modernize and strengthen our partnership.”¹¹ In line with OSCE principles, Clinton spoke of a comprehensive definition of security – one that encompasses not only nuclear weapons and conventional arms but also climate change, human security, and the security of energy supplies. More important, she also spoke of security that is “indivisible.”¹² As Clinton explained, “Security in Europe must be indivisible. For too long, the public discourse around Europe’s security has been fixed on geographical and political divides. Some have looked at the continent even now and seen Western and Eastern Europe, old and new Europe, NATO and non-NATO Europe, EU and non-EU Europe. The reality is that there are not many Europes; there is only one Europe. And it is a Europe that includes the United States as its partner. And it is a Europe that includes Russia.”¹³ In this speech, the most detailed statement by a member of the Obama administration on this issue, Clinton stated unequivocally that security is no longer zero-sum, and that the problem of European security will not be solved until Russia feels invested in, not alienated from, the existing system.

Revising Europe’s security architecture is a long-term goal, however, so analysts also give considerable thought to short-term action that might lessen escalating tensions. As with the recommendations regarding arms control, the idea of “seizing the superstructure” of the relationship again applies. As regards European security, this means bringing Russia back into compliance with the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) and strengthening the NATO-Russia Council.

Russia suspended its adherence to CFE in late 2007, after nearly a decade of conflict with NATO over ratification of the Adapted CFE and the Istanbul Commitments.¹⁴ Reviving the treaty, however, could serve an important function at both a policy and a technical level.¹⁵ On a policy level, revived CFE negotiations would complement the ongoing Corfu Process on developing a new European security architecture, because a majority of the key players in Euro-Atlantic security are also signatories to the

¹¹ Clinton, “Remarks on the Future of European Security.”

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Charap et al., “After the ‘Reset,’” 25–26. The Istanbul Commitments were stipulations for bringing the 1999 Adapted CFE into force. These stipulations include Russia’s withdrawal of “treaty-limited weapons and military forces” from Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia, and from Transdniestria in Moldova. For more, see *ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 25–26. On policy, specifically, see Gottemoeller, “Security Relations after Georgia,” 5.

treaty.¹⁶ On a technical level, the purpose of CFE is to ensure a strategic balance among European powers.¹⁷ In light of the violence in the South Caucasus and accusations from both Russia and Georgia that the other side is amassing troops at the disputed border, preventing future buildups of forces is crucial to European security.¹⁸ One suggestion is a revival of the Parallel Actions plan, first proposed by the United States in the fall of 2007.¹⁹ Under this arrangement, NATO countries would ratify the Adapted CFE, and Russia would simultaneously fulfill the Istanbul Commitments.²⁰

Some experts have also suggested pursuing the Parallel Actions plan with modifications. For example, to provide “additional inducements” for Moscow to cooperate, “the allies could declare lower territorial and national ceilings,” and the Baltic states could indicate their future national and territorial ceilings.²¹ These declarations would have political effect only until the Adapted Treaty entered into force.²² Alternatively, the United States could try to persuade the allies to continue on the Parallel Actions course while agreeing to begin negotiations on flank limitations, a primary concern for Russia.²³ Finally, the allies could instead provisionally apply the Adapted CFE Treaty for a set period of time (six to eighteen months), to encourage Russia to resume implementation. This course of action would require certain preconditions, including Russian implementation of the Adapted Treaty for the same period, a pledge from Moscow “to engage on the package of measures for Georgia,” and Russia’s agreement to “resume talks on a multilateral mandate for its ‘peacekeepers’ in Moldova.”²⁴ All of these proposals seek

¹⁶ Charap et al., “After the ‘Reset,’” 27; and Gottemoeller, “Security Relations after Georgia,” 5.

¹⁷ Charap et al., “After the ‘Reset,’” 25.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 26.

¹⁹ Charap et al., “After the ‘Reset,’” 26; and Pifer, “Reversing the Decline,” 19.

²⁰ Charap et al., “After the ‘Reset,’” 26. This arrangement will require additional negotiations that take into account the changed European security landscape. Therefore, NATO should work on Russian withdrawal from Moldova first, given that the issue of Russian troops in Abkhazia and South Ossetia will be far more complicated and will likely necessitate resort to the Geneva process or similar multilateral options. See *ibid.*

²¹ Anne Witkowsky, Sherman Garnett, and Jeff McCausland, “Salvaging the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty: Options for Washington,” Brookings Arms Control Series Paper 2 (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, March 2010), 2.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

to reestablish what was once the cornerstone of European security, while remaining cognizant of the changed European security context.²⁵

The other short-term suggestion is to expand the purview of the NATO-Russia Council. On a macro level, there is hope that “[g]reater creativity in the NATO-Russia channel could, over the longer term, reshape how Moscow views the Alliance and European security.”²⁶ On a more operational level, as one Russian analyst argued, the NATO-Russia Council “is the place to engage the Russians in serious discussions, both formal and informal, on the issues of common concern. It needs to be an all-weather operation.”²⁷ NATO Secretary-General Rasmussen has stated that maintaining communication throughout stressful periods in the relationship, such as the Georgia war, is crucial to building confidence and eventually rebuilding damaged relations.²⁸ Whether Russia will ever revise its view of NATO is unclear, but the idea of, at least in the interim, increasing transparency and using the Russia-NATO Council to further cooperation on mutual interests is widely supported.²⁹ Potential areas of cooperation include counterpiracy operations, counterterrorism, missile defense, conflict prevention, and arms control.³⁰ The goal, while new arrangements are being debated, is to create “normal relations” between Russia and NATO.³¹

The Obama administration has signaled its intent to use the NATO-Russia Council as a forum for resolving problems. During a speech on February 22, 2010, Secretary of State Clinton

²⁵ Ibid., 1.

²⁶ Pifer, “Reversing the Decline,” 2.

²⁷ Dmitri Trenin, “NATO’s New Strategic Concept – A Few Thoughts Related to Russia,” remarks at the Conference at NATO Headquarters, Brussels, Belgium, July 7, 2009, 1, transcript available at: http://www.carnegie.ru/en/pubs/media/12168trenin_strategic_concept_memo.pdf.

²⁸ Anders Fogh Rasmussen, “NATO and Russia: A New Beginning,” speech by the NATO secretary-general, Carnegie Endowment, Brussels, Belgium, September 18, 2009, transcript available at: http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/NATO_Rasmussen.pdf.

²⁹ See, for example, Working Group on United States Policy towards Russia, “Recommendations,” 3; Hahn, “U.S.-Russian Relations and the War against Jihadism,” 17; and Trenin, “NATO’s New Strategic Concept,” 2.

³⁰ On counterterrorism and countertrafficking, see Hahn, “U.S.-Russian Relations and the War against Jihadism,” 17. On counterpiracy, see Pifer, “Reversing the Decline,” 18. On conflict prevention, arms control, and missile defense, see Trenin, “NATO’s New Strategic Concept,” 2.

³¹ James F. Collins, “Opportunities for the U.S.-Russia Relationship,” speech to the Tucson Committee on Foreign Relations, Tucson, Arizona, March 12, 2009, transcript available at: <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=22889&prog=zru>.

asserted, “We intend to use the NATO-Russia Council as a forum for frank discussions about areas where we disagree. We will use it to press Russia to live up to its commitments on Georgia and to reiterate our commitment to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all states. We will use it to challenge the assertion put forward in Russia’s new military doctrine that NATO’s enlargement and its global actions constitute a military danger to Russia. We will also use the Council to advocate on behalf of human rights and individual liberty – these are principles and values that Russia committed to uphold when it accepted the NATO-Russia Founding Act.”³²

In addition to emphasizing the importance of looking to the NRC to diffuse tensions, Clinton spoke of using it to further NATO-Russia cooperation in areas of joint concern. She explained, “At the same time, we should use the Council to advance our common interests, including the indivisibility of our common security ...[W]e have agreed to cooperate in training counternarcotics officers from Afghanistan and Central Asia. And Russia is now allowing NATO to transit non-lethal goods across its territory in support of our ISAF [International Security Assistance Force] operations. And we hope to extend that cooperation to other fields, again, most notably in the area of missile defense.”³³ This outline – using the NRC both to address differences and to further cooperation – is in line with the recommendations of many American and Russian scholars, as well as with statements of Secretary-General Rasmussen.³⁴ Whether these statements have translated into a rejuvenation of the NATO-Russia Council’s work, however, is unclear.

With regard to the issue of how to handle Georgia and Ukraine, many commentators suggest that the European Union should offer both states a clear path to EU membership.³⁵ NATO membership has traditionally preceded EU membership, but the latter seems a less contentious issue for the

³² Hillary Clinton, “Remarks at the NATO Strategic Concept Seminar,” Ritz-Carleton Hotel, Washington, D.C., February 22, 2010, transcript available at: <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/02/137118.htm>.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ See, for example, Hahn, “U.S.-Russian Relations and the War against Jihadism”; Pifer, “Reversing the Decline”; Rasmussen, “NATO and Russia: A New Beginning”; and Trenin, “NATO’s New Strategic Concept.” Rasmussen has also suggested that the NRC could serve as a venue for expanded discussion about the future of European security. See Anders Fogh Rasmussen, “NATO-Russia: Partners for the Future,” Carnegie Moscow Center, Moscow, Russia, December 17, 2009, transcript available at: http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/1217_transcript_rasmussen_moscow.pdf.

³⁵ Rumer and Stent, “Repairing U.S.-Russian Relations,” 2; and Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia,” 3.

Russians.³⁶ Given its stricter rules for accession, the EU need not suggest that inclusion is imminent, but defining a road to accession while maintaining a “special relationship” (without a formal MAP) between the two countries and NATO might alleviate tensions.³⁷ There has also been a suggestion to “Finlandize” Ukraine (i.e., to find a way to institutionalize Ukraine’s neutrality while giving it appropriate security guarantees) at least provisionally until firmer arrangements are reached.³⁸ For the moment, the newly designed Annual Membership Program (ANP) appears to be serving the role of a MAP with Georgia as regards the country’s development goals. In practical terms, significant domestic political instability and ongoing border disputes in both Georgia and Ukraine currently render both countries ineligible for NATO membership.³⁹ In addition, following the February 2010 election of Victor Yanukovich as Ukraine’s new president, and the subsequent dissolution of the Orange Coalition, Ukraine’s future intentions toward both NATO and the EU are in flux, and pressure on the enlargement issue momentarily relieved.

Putting EU accession ahead of a MAP, as well as the creation of the ANP alternative, could provide a respite in tensions. It does not, however, resolve the larger question of Georgia’s and Ukraine’s ultimate wishes to join NATO.⁴⁰ If Russia continues to view NATO primarily as an adversary and a security threat, the question of NATO’s standing “open door policy” will remain an obstacle in the U.S.-Russian relationship.⁴¹ Commentators present different recommendations for how to address this problem. On the Russian side, Dmitri Trenin argues that “NATO’s expansion has reached safe limits, and

³⁶ Rumer and Stent, “Repairing U.S.-Russian Relations,” 28.

³⁷ Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia,” 3.

³⁸ Graham, “Resurgent Russia and U.S. Purpose,” 25. The idea of “Finlandizing” Ukraine was deemed “odious” by another analyst, who argued that “Ukraine should have a say in its own future.” See David J. Kramer, “The Russia Challenge: Prospects for U.S.-Russian Relations,” Wider Europe policy brief, German Marshall Fund, June 9, 2009, 5, http://www.gmfus.org/doc/Kramer_Russia_Final2.pdf.

³⁹ Graham, “Resurgent Russia and U.S. Purpose,” 23.

⁴⁰ Georgia is of more concern because most polls indicate that a majority of Ukrainians are opposed to NATO membership.

⁴¹ In an interview with a French paper in February 2010, President Medvedev declared, “The issue is that NATO’s endless enlargement, by absorbing countries that were once part of the Soviet Union, or who are our immediate neighbors, is of course creating problems because NATO is after all, a military bloc.” Medvedev was indicating that the rapprochement between the United States and Russia in recent months has in no way alleviated Russia’s objection to continued NATO enlargement. For more, see Conor Sweeney, “Medvedev Objects to ‘Endless’ NATO Expansion,” Reuters, February 25, 2010, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE61020Q20100225>.

any move in the direction of Ukraine and Georgia is fraught with real danger.”⁴² In his view, the open door must be closed and remain closed. American analysts, by contrast, are hesitant to make such decisive statements, though some suggest ways around making a decision either way. For example, the Hart-Hagel Commission argues that while Georgia and Ukraine must be free to work toward NATO membership, so too is NATO free to decide that it is not in the interest of the security of the alliance to offer admission to all applicants.⁴³ Others remain committed to the idea of the open door, maintaining that Russia cannot have a de facto veto over intra-alliance decisions.⁴⁴ The Obama administration has emphasized its support of both Georgia’s and Ukraine’s aspirations to join NATO, provided its members agree and the countries meet accession requirements.⁴⁵

Until the Obama administration decided to pursue an alternative **missile defense** installation in September 2009, another significant area of contention between Russia and the United States regarding European security was missile defense.⁴⁶ Even before the change in direction was announced, support for TMD in the Obama administration was much lower than it had been under the Bush administration. In July 2009, Assistant Secretary of State Gordon indicated that the Obama administration would pursue missile defense in Europe only if the technology proved effective and the threat proved definitively.⁴⁷

⁴² Trenin, “Thinking Strategically,” 6.

⁴³ Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia,” 9.

⁴⁴ Pifer, “Reversing the Decline,” 17. One twist on the open door policy, which had faded but is again ascendant in some quarters, is a call for NATO to extend a membership offer to Russia. See, for example, Charles A. Kupchan, “Russia in NATO,” working paper of the Euro-Atlantic Security Initiative, February 2010.

⁴⁵ On Georgia, see, for example, Philip H. Gordon, “Georgia: One Year after the August War,” testimony before Subcommittee for Europe, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, August 4, 2009, 6, <http://foreign.senate.gov/testimony/2009/GordonTestimony090804p.pdf>; and Alexander Vershbow, “Georgia: One Year after the August War,” testimony before Subcommittee for Europe, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Washington, D.C., August 4, 2009, 6, <http://foreign.senate.gov/testimony/2009/VershbowTestimony090804p.pdf>. On Ukraine, see Joseph Biden, “Remarks by Vice President Biden in Ukraine,” Ukraine House, Kyiv, Ukraine, July 22, 2009, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-By-Vice-President-Biden-In-Ukraine/.

⁴⁶ Barack Obama, “Remarks by the President on Strengthening Missile Defense in Europe,” Diplomatic Reception Room, White House, Washington, D.C., September 17, 2009, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-by-the-President-on-Strengthening-Missile-Defense-in-Europe/.

⁴⁷ Gordon, response during question-and-answer portion of “The Reset Button Has Been Pushed: Kicking Off a New Era in U.S. – Russia Relations,” Subcommittee on Europe, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Washington, D.C., July 28, 2009, webcast available at: <http://www.internationalrelations.house.gov/schedule.asp?showdate=7/28/2009&adj=7/6/2009>. Even before the

Although the decision not to push ahead with the sites in Poland and the Czech Republic was expected to improve U.S.-Russian relations, in announcing the decision, Obama and other government officials stated that the change in course resulted from updated intelligence about Iranian missile capabilities rather than Russian objections to the planned system.⁴⁸ Based on a new threat assessment of Iran's short-range and medium-range missile capabilities, the administration now intends to pursue "a four-phased, adaptive approach for missile defense in Europe."⁴⁹ The plan relies on "distributed interceptor and sensor architecture" that obviates the need for the fixed radar system in the Czech Republic, and it uses alternate interceptor technology that does not necessitate the fielding of ground-based interceptors originally slated for Poland.⁵⁰ Instead, the new system will first deploy the sea-based Aegis Weapon System and other mobile components. Later stages may include land-based elements, but the second phase is not set to begin until around 2015.⁵¹ As noted in the previous section, the administration is simultaneously exploring missile defense cooperation with Russia, an idea that Secretary-General Rasmussen has also supported.⁵²

The Obama administration's decision to suspend work on the current missile defense system in Europe generated some criticism. Citing conversations with Russian officials, Ariel Cohen argues that the "decision to abandon ballistic missile defense in Central Europe will encourage Iranian truculence and

decision to alter the system was made, the case for delay or redirection was also helped somewhat by a joint U.S.-Russian threat assessment report released by the EastWest Institute. The report concluded that the planned systems do not offer the protection they claim, and no system has ever demonstrated the technical capabilities necessary to protect against the perceived Iranian threat. See "Iran's Nuclear and Missile Potential: A Joint Threat Assessment by U.S. and Russian Technical Experts" (New York: EastWest Institute, May 2009), esp. 13–14, <http://docs.ewi.info/JTA.pdf>.

⁴⁸ Peter Baker, "Obama Offered Deal to Russia in Secret Letter," *New York Times*, Tuesday, March 3, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/03/washington/03prexy.html?ref=washington>; Obama, "Remarks by the President on Strengthening Missile Defense in Europe"; and Clinton, "Speech in Advance of the United Nations General Assembly," 2.

⁴⁹ "Fact Sheet on U.S. Missile Defense Policy: A 'Phased, Adaptive Approach' for Missile Defense in Europe," September 17, 2009, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/FACT-SHEET-US-Missile-Defense-Policy-A-Phased-Adaptive-Approach-for-Missile-Defense-in-Europe/.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ "Fact Sheet on U.S. Missile Defense Policy."

⁵² "NATO and Russia: A New Beginning,"

will not generate Russian good will or support for the US on Iran sanctions.”⁵³ Conservative leaders in Congress as well as numerous experts on Central and Eastern Europe have made similar arguments, contending that the decision amounts to an “abandonment” of the region.⁵⁴ Perhaps to allay these fears, the Obama administration offered Poland and the Czech Republic roles in the new plan for missile defense, and both have agreed to cooperate on the system.⁵⁵ Overall, the majority of the criticism has focused on the decision not to pursue the system as a question of relations with Russia and Europe rather than as one of how best to counter a potential Iranian missile strike, the yardstick the administration professes to have used.⁵⁶ Some criticism also addressed how the administration made the announcement, which came on September 17, the anniversary of the Soviet Army’s invasion of Poland during World War II. Although they found the timing insensitive, these critics agree with the decision to suspend missile defense in Central Europe.⁵⁷

⁵³ Ariel Cohen, “Obama’s Rookie Blunder on Missile Defense Concessions,” *The Foundry*, blog of the Heritage Foundation, September 18, 2009, <http://blog.heritage.org/2009/09/18/obama%E2%80%99s-rookie-blunder-on-missile-defense-concessions/>.

⁵⁴ See, for example, A. Wes Mitchell, “The Perils of Losing Mitteleuropa,” *RealClearWorld*, September 22, 2009, http://www.realclearworld.com/articles/2009/09/22/the_perils_of_losing_mittleuropa_97183.html; and Office of Senator Lindsey Graham, “Graham Opposes Obama Administration on Missile Defense,” Washington, D.C., September 17, 2009, http://lgraham.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=PressRoom.PressReleases&ContentRecord_id=c8dc3ceb-802a-23ad-41ec-66ecfab42d9f,

⁵⁵ Walter Pincus, “Poland, Czech Republic May Get Roles in Missile Defense,” *Washington Post*, October 1, 2009, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/10/01/AR2009100104217.html>; Gareth Jones, “Poland Ready to Take Part in Obama Missile Defense,” *Washington Post*, October 21, 2009, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/10/21/AR2009102100345.html>; and Karen Travers, “Biden Announces Cooperation from Czech Republic on Missile Defense,” *ABC News (Political Punch Blog)*, October 23, 2009, <http://blogs.abcnews.com/politicalpunch/2009/10/biden-announces-cooperation-from-czech-republic-on-missile-defense.html>.

⁵⁶ On criticism, see David E. Sanger and William J. Broad, “New Missile Shield Strategy Scales Back Reagan’s Vision,” *New York Times*, September 17, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/18/world/europe/18assess.html?scp=7&sq=Sanger&st=cse>. On the administration’s method of evaluation, see Michael McFaul, in “Press Briefing by Gary Samore, National Security Council Coordinator for Arms Control and Nonproliferation; Ambassador Alex Wolff, Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations; and Mike McFaul, Senior Director for Russian Affairs on Thursday’s UN Security Council Meeting and the President’s Meeting today with President Medvedev of Russia.” [Where? When?]

⁵⁷ See, for example, Gerald Posner, “How Obama Flubbed His Message,” *Daily Beast*, September 18, 2009, <http://www.thedailybeast.com/blogs-and-stories/2009-09-18/how-obama-flubbed-his-missile-message/>.

Medvedev has evinced cautious optimism about Obama's decision to suspend missile defense in Europe, but other Russian officials believe that phases 3 and 4 of the new system will be equally unacceptable.⁵⁸ Further complicating the situation, in February 2010, the Obama administration announced that Romania had agreed to host missile interceptors for the new system, a development that sparked considerable concern in Russia.⁵⁹ As noted in the previous section, the controversy over missile defense was also one of the primary hindrances in concluding the START follow-on negotiations. Misunderstandings about the resolution of the issue in the treaty now feature in U.S. arguments against ratification.⁶⁰ Ultimately, much will likely hinge on both the progress made during the ongoing multilateral negotiations with Iran and on the bilateral negotiations regarding cooperation on a joint missile defense system. The situation will also be influenced by what progress, if any, is made on reforming European security more generally either through official channels or through ongoing track II efforts.

⁵⁸ "Russia Still Suspicious of U.S. Missile Defense Plans," Reuters, September 29, 2009, http://www.rferl.org/content/Russia_Still_Suspicious_Of_US_Antimissile_Plans/1839430.html.

⁵⁹ Vladimir Isachenkov, "Russia Fumes at US Missile Defense Plan," Associated Press, February 26, 2010, http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/E/EU_RUSSIA_US_MISSILE_DEFENSE?SITE=NYMID&SECTION=HOME&TEMP_LATE=DEFAULT.

⁶⁰ John McCain and Jon Kyl, "Statement by Senators John McCain and Jon Kyl on START Treaty," April 8, 2010, http://mccain.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=PressOffice.PressReleases&ContentRecord_id=df90e762-ac97-607d-3378-0870f4da6d28&Region_id=&Issue_id=.

POST-SOVIET SPACE

The United States' policy toward the post-Soviet space is arguably at the core of U.S.-Russian conflict. Many observers argue that it is the main reason for the lack of progress on other items on the bilateral agenda.¹ Not only is it explicitly related to Russia's dislike of NATO enlargement and larger issues of European security, but it hinders counterterrorism cooperation and bears directly on energy security both in the region and in Western and Central Europe. Further, the factors causing this tension – notably the inability of the United States to define its priorities in the region and Russia's desire to maintain its traditional sphere of influence – exist in a macrocosm within the overall U.S.-Russian relationship. The core challenge for the Obama administration is pursuing a constructive, independent policy toward the regional states without further damaging the U.S.-Russian relationship.

Russia's 2008 war with Georgia was a turning point in this regard, if only because it graphically demonstrated the difficulty of the United States in balancing these competing policy tracks. The challenge for the United States has two parts. First, Russia sees foreign relations, particularly in its former republics and satellites, in zero-sum terms.² It reacts almost reflexively to Western activity in former Soviet states, viewing all such forays – including initiatives such as NATO's Partnership for Peace, the European Union European Neighborhood Policy, and the new Eastern Partnership – as further evidence of Western attempts to encircle Russia. Thus, as one analyst has put it, "Alone among the great powers, Russia presents us with the challenge of trying to get it to conceive its interests in a fundamentally different, less confrontational way."³ The argument, essentially, is that until Russia believes that Western activity in its border states is not inherently inimical to its national interests, little progress will be possible. Efforts to reorient the Russian view are complicated by Russia's historical ties

¹ Participant at Stent-Rumer Working Group Meeting, Washington, D.C., August 25, 2008; Roderic Lyne, Strobe Talbott, and Koji Watanabe, "Engaging with Russia: The Next Phase," Triangle Papers, no. 59 (Washington, D.C., Paris, and Tokyo: The Trilateral Commission, 2006), 172, http://www.trilateral.org/library/stacks/Engaging_With_Russia.pdf; Thomas Graham and Arnold Horelick, report of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Working Group, *U.S.-Russian Relations at the Turn of the Century*. Reports of the Working Groups organized by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington D.C. and the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy, Moscow (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2000), 39.

² Charap et al., "After the "Reset,"" 37.

³ Sestanovich, "Prospects for Engagement with Russia," 7.

to the area and its conception that control of these border lands is crucial both to its national security and to global prestige as a great power.⁴

The second part of the problem is that, since the end of the Cold War, the United States has pursued a largely Russo-centric policy in the post-Soviet space. The driving argument, particularly in the years immediately following the Soviet Union's collapse, was that given Russia's size and historical role as the region's anchor, a stable, democratic Russia was the only way to achieve stability throughout the area.⁵ Although efforts were made to promote a market economy in the so-called New Independent States in the earlier post-Cold War period, the dominant belief was that if Russia succeeded in its democratization and marketization efforts, so too would the other regional states.⁶ Commentators cautioned against pursuing a policy with Russia that alienated these other states, but at the same time, they advised easing Russia's concerns over its recent loss of empire.⁷ Nearly two decades later, the correct balance between supporting the sovereignty of post-Soviet states and respecting reasonable Russian activity in the region has yet to be found.

One of the primary difficulties the Obama administration faces in determining its regional and country-specific priorities is that the United States and the West, in general, have tended to view most of the states of the former Soviet Union through the prism of their relations with Russia.⁸ In so doing, the West has encountered two problems. First, it perpetuates the idea of the West versus Russia, because almost invariably those states that were closer politically or economically to Russia were considered less amenable to Western overtures (and vice versa). Second, an approach that defines supposedly sovereign states with regard to their relationship to another country acknowledges at some level a Russian sphere of influence, despite repeated Western objections to its validity. It is this conflict

⁴ Dmitri Trenin, "Russia's Spheres of Interest, Not Influence," *Washington Quarterly* 3, no. 4 (October 2009), 4, http://www.twq.com/09october/docs/09oct_Trenin.pdf

⁵ Dimitri K. Simes, "America and the Post-Soviet Republics," *Foreign Affairs* 71, no. 3 (Summer 1992), 77.

⁶ Eugene Rumer, "The United States and Central Asia," in Eugene Rumer, Dmitri Trenin, and Huasheng Zhao, *Central Asia: Views from Washington, Moscow, and Beijing*, intro. Rajan Menon (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2007), 22.

⁷ See, for example, Simes, "America and the Post-Soviet Republics," 87–88; and Paul Kubicek, "Russian Foreign Policy and the West," *Political Science Quarterly* 114, no. 4 (Winter 1999–2000), 568.

⁸ Robert Legvold, "The United States, the European Union, NATO, and the Economics of Ukrainian and Belarusian Security," in Robert Legvold and Celeste A. Wallander, eds., *Swords and Sustenance: The Economics of Security in Belarus and Ukraine* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2004), 194.

that makes the post-Soviet space the nexus of both conceptual and operational difficulties within the bilateral relationship: conceptual, because the United States and Russia seem unable to move past their differing visions of the other's intentions, and operational because without well-defined U.S. policies or mutual understanding about the former Soviet states, many immediate objectives are unattainable.

As mentioned above, the main point of friction is the question of a Russian sphere of influence, which Medvedev describes more obliquely as "a zone of privileged interests." The U.S. concern is that Russia expects an unfettered *droit de regard* in the region, something that the United States cannot accept.⁹ This lack of recognition, however, does not mean that Western analysts seek to encumber all Russian activity in the region. To the contrary, a raft of reports released in the past decade profess that the West has no problem with "legitimate" Russian interests in the post-Soviet space.¹⁰ The friction arises because few policy-makers are willing to elaborate beyond this broad statement. Part of the problem is distinguishing between "legitimate" and "illegitimate" interests (or even in using similarly value-laden terminology). For example, disentangling legitimate and illegitimate Russian investment in the region, in the form of pipelines in Ukraine or military bases in Central Asia, is not a straightforward task. Further, to the extent that they are not coercive, lingering attachments between Russia and its neighbors could form the basis of new relations, which in turn could diffuse the volatile issue of Western activity in the post-Soviet states.

Therefore, if Russia can be convinced that the border states need not choose between positive relations with Moscow and positive relations with Washington, much of the rancor would disappear. To that end, some experts suggest that U.S. policy toward Russia should include efforts to improve relations between Moscow and its neighbors. One option might be to encourage post-Soviet states to approach the West together with Russia, instead of seeking protection from Russia, a tactic that Ukraine occasionally employed before the 2004 Orange Revolution (and may again following the election of Yanukovich) and that the leaders of some Central Asian and Caucasus states have practiced.¹¹ The

⁹ Biden, "Remarks by Vice President Biden in Ukraine."

¹⁰ See, for example, Graham and Horelick, CEIP Report, *Turn of the Century*, 40; Lyne, Talbott, and Koji, "Engaging with Russia," 172; and Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, "The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia," 13.

¹¹ Legvold, "The United States, the European Union, NATO, and the Economics of Ukrainian and Belarusian Security," 223; David L. Stern, "Kazakhstan Seeks to Balance East and West," *New York Times*, October 5, 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/06/world/asia/06rice.html>; Sabrina Tavernise, "A Northern Neighbor Grows and Azerbaijan Reassesses Its Options," *New York Times*, October 22, 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/23/world/europe/23azeri.html>; and Phillip P. Pan, "New Ukrainian President

challenge “is a seeming conviction that Russian interests and those of other states, especially the U.S. and its European allies, are inevitably in conflict.” The goal, therefore, is to convince Russia to move past that conviction, so that active engagement with the West is not automatically understood as a move against Russia.¹²

This interconnectedness of issues is also closely related to the question of European security. Some observers argue that eliminating (or ameliorating) the problem of U.S.-Russian interaction in the post-Soviet space will be impossible without also solving the problem of Euro-Atlantic security.¹³ Part of the reason for Moscow’s heightened sensitivity over U.S. engagement in Russia’s former satellites is that Russia is not part of the current security architecture on the continent. Given this situation, the efforts of Russia’s neighbors to join this system are easily interpreted as hostile. Therefore, until leaders are able to agree on a more inclusive, more modern, and more durable structure to govern European security, Russia will continue to be suspicious of Western overtures toward its neighboring states.

On a more specific level, free-trade agreements between Russia and the surrounding states could help to improve the situation.¹⁴ Such agreements would further economic integration of the region, thereby bolstering interdependence and political stability. At the same time, they would encourage transparency. The formalization of trade agreements could obviate the need for opaque foreign direct investment designed to increase Russian leverage without reciprocal benefit for the other nation. Some current Russian financial activity in the neighboring states, however, is designed to reinforce Russian regional hegemony and undermine state sovereignty.¹⁵

The United States cannot unilaterally mend relations between Russia and the former Soviet republics. To the extent possible, therefore, it should try to avoid becoming embroiled in regional debates where no (or only minor) U.S. interests are involved. In addition, it should remain aware that “its interests are not identical to those of Russia’s neighbors and avoid becoming their instrument in

Could Disappoint Supporters in the Kremlin,” *Washington Post*, March 1, 2010, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/02/28/AR2010022802599.html>.

¹² Sestanovich, “Prospects for Engagement with Russia,” 7.

¹³ Robert Legvold, “A New European Security Architecture: Getting from Here to There,” [paper ?] prepared for the Brussels Forum, Brussels, Belgium, March 26–28, 2010, 1.

¹⁴ Carey, “US Economic Relations and Energy.”

¹⁵ Trenin, “Russia’s Sphere of Interests,” 10–11.

dealing with Russia.”¹⁶ It does not serve U.S. interests for the United States to be pitted against Russia by smaller states pursuing balance of power politics. One analyst has suggested that the United States stop supporting explicitly anti-Russian activity in the region, such as GUAM (a loose coalition of Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova) or incendiary statements by Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili.¹⁷ More broadly, the United States will have to determine its priorities in the region and pursue its policy accordingly, a prescription that applies to every facet of the U.S.-Russian relationship.¹⁸

None of these efforts, however, address the core dispute: How can the United States and Russia continued to be involved in the region without further damaging their bilateral relationship? The only long-term answer is to develop a serious, sustained strategic dialogue about each side’s regional interests and intentions,¹⁹ a dialogue that “gets at the deep underpinnings of the U.S.-Russian relationship,” where no topic is out of bounds.²⁰ As with the broader recommendations regarding how to structure the relationship, this dialogue would involve senior advisors on both sides with immediate access to their countries’ presidents and a willingness to think creatively about how to solve, or at least manage, this dilemma.

There is, of course, another side to this issue, and that is the relationship between the United States and the regional states themselves. Russia’s neighbors, particularly Georgia and Ukraine, have evinced significant concern that that the “Russian reset” will come at their expense. Members of the Obama administration have repeatedly stressed that this is not the case, a position reiterated in speeches delivered by President Obama in Moscow and Vice President Biden in Kyiv and Tbilisi.²¹ To reassure these countries, some analysts recommend that the administration help Georgia and Ukraine meet the development requirements for NATO membership without formal MAPs.²² Others suggest that

¹⁶ Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia,” 13.

¹⁷ Graham, “Resurgent Russia and U.S. Purpose,” 27.

¹⁸ Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia,” ii–iii.

¹⁹ Legvold, “The Russia File,” 90.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 89.

²¹ Obama, “Remarks at the New Economic School”; Biden, “Remarks by Vice President Biden in Ukraine”; and Joseph Biden, “Remarks by the Vice President to the Georgian Parliament,” Parliament Hall, Tbilisi, Georgia, July 23, 2009, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-By-The-Vice-President-To-The-Georgian-Parliament/.

²² Pifer, “Reversing the Decline,” 17. As noted in the previous section, NATO’s ANP somewhat addresses this issue.

the administration implement the Charters on Strategic Partnership, signed with Georgia and Ukraine in the twilight of the Bush administration.²³ The Obama administration has taken this step in the case of Georgia and continues its rhetorical support for Georgia's territorial integrity and desire to join NATO.²⁴ Some observers caution, however, that U.S. initiatives undertaken with the regional states should be managed so as to least offend Russia.²⁵ Although the number of ideas on how to accomplish this is small, the most prominent is to maintain absolute transparency with both the Russian government and the governments of the neighboring states about U.S. dealings in the region.²⁶

History suggests that there is a functional relationship between tensions over activity in the post-Soviet space and tensions within the overall U.S.-Russian relationship. As a case in point, one of the reasons the 2008 war between Russia and Georgia spurred such harsh rhetoric and reactions from American politicians was that the U.S.-Russian relationship itself was in tatters. Nearly two years later, the relationship has improved, thus lessening the extent to which ongoing disagreement over activity in the region is likely to derail broad-spectrum cooperation. For example, the flashpoints of MAPs for Georgia and Ukraine and missile defense in Central Europe either have been moved to the back burner or have been eliminated, opening up space to make progress on other objectives.²⁷ Recognizing how different aspects of the bilateral relationship impinge on one another is important, especially with regard to issues concerning the post-Soviet space. As one group of analysts have cautioned, "The United States cannot treat these issues in isolation from its Russia policy."²⁸

Interaction in the post-Soviet space could well be termed the Gordian knot of the U.S.-Russian relationship. Although the situation has been somewhat diffused or overtaken by other world events, it has not been resolved. Until it is, determining how the United States can conduct a positive and independent policy with the post-Soviet states in a way that does not undermine Washington's relationship with Moscow will remain a primary, and pressing, challenge.

²³ Cohen, "How the Obama Administration Should Engage Russia," 15.

²⁴ Biden, "Remarks by the Vice President to the Georgian Parliament." The administration emphasizes, however, that it supports only peaceful means of attracting the breakaway provinces back under Georgian control.

²⁵ Legvold, "The Russia File," 93.

²⁶ Working Group on United States Policy towards Russia, "Recommendations," 3; and Pifer, "Reversing the Decline," 17.

²⁷ Trenin, "Russia's Spheres of Interest," 3.

²⁸ Charap et al., "After the 'Reset,'" 17.

ENERGY SECURITY

Russia's cut-off of gas to Ukraine in January 2009 over price disputes was a reminder that Europe needs to reevaluate and reform its energy policy.²⁹ The reason Russia gave for the cut-off was that Ukraine had failed to pay its debt and would not agree to pay market prices. The reality, however, may have been more complicated. Although there was a clear commercial element, many observers also saw strong political motivations. Russia's action was the latest in a string of gas cut-offs that many experts believe is evidence of Russia using energy as a political weapon.³⁰ For example, Russia's July 2008 stoppage of fuel to the Czech Republic was largely viewed as a response to the signing of the missile defense agreement.³¹ Similarly, the January 2009 gas war between Russia and Ukraine, which left much of Central and Eastern Europe without heat during one of the coldest winters in recent memory, was believed by some to have been at least partially motivated by a Russian desire both to warn Ukraine of the repercussions of pursuing NATO membership and to weaken the already divided leadership.³² These annual gas wars have been so disruptive that they have led some experts to worry that Russia's energy manipulation could eventually necessitate the invocation of Article V of the NATO charter.³³

²⁹ Åslund and Kuchins, *The Russia Balance Sheet*, 157.

³⁰ See, for example, *ibid.*, 157; Charap et al., "After the 'Reset,'" 18–19; and Cohen, "How the Obama Administration Should Engage Russia," 9.

³¹ Judy Dempsey, "Russia Further Cuts Its Oil Deliveries to Czech Republic," *International Herald Tribune*, July 30, 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/30/world/europe/30iht-czech.4.14893867.html>. The effect was mitigated somewhat by the Czech Republic's decision in the 1990s to diversify its oil sources. See *ibid.*

³² Ariel Cohen, "Russia's Gas War," *Washington Times*, Tuesday, January 13, 2009, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/jan/13/russias-gas-war/>; and Adrian Karatnycky, "The Gas War May Rehabilitate Ukraine's Yushchenko," *Wall Street Journal Europe*, January 20, 2009, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123240746998495659.html>.

³³ Article V states, "The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence recognised by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area." See <http://www.nato.int/docu/basic/txt/treaty.htm>. The only time it has been invoked was after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

Those who fear the negative consequences of invoking Article V believe that NATO must find another way to confront the problem.³⁴ Others disagree. None, however, doubt the seriousness of the issue. These analysts note, though, that on an operational level, Russian manipulation of energy supplies is more of an immediate concern for Europe. Therefore, the United States should not be the primary Western interlocutor on this issue.³⁵ As Eugene Rumer and Angela Stent argue, “The United States cannot be more worried about Europe’s dependence on Russian gas than Europe itself.”³⁶ In remarks outlining the Obama administration’s Eurasian energy policy in January 2010, Ambassador Richard Morningstar, special envoy for Eurasian energy, made much the same point.³⁷ These admonitions are complicated, however, by Europe’s internal divisions on the issue. Europe has no common energy policy, and the widening rift between Western Europe, on one side, and Central and Eastern Europe, on the other, in how they view relations with Russia is becoming an ever more intractable obstacle to stabilizing energy politics in the region.³⁸

The basic conflict arises from Russia’s desire to monopolize energy flows in the region for both political and economic reasons, while the West supports multiple supply routes.³⁹ As with the question

³⁴ Richard G. Lugar, “Lugar Calls for European Leaders to Act on Energy Security,” press release, August 28, 2008, <http://lugar.senate.gov/record.cfm?id=302415&>. Lugar reiterated this point during a speech at the Atlantic Council of the United States on September 28, 2009. See James Joyner, “Lugar: Energy Cutoff Equivalent to Armed Invasion,” *New Atlanticist Policy and Analysis Blog*, September 28, 2009, http://www.acus.org/new_atlanticist/lugar-energy-cutoff-equivalent-armed-invasion.

³⁵ Åslund and Kuchins, *The Russia Balance Sheet*, 157; and Rumer and Stent, “Repairing U.S.-Russian Relations,” 30.

³⁶ Rumer and Stent, “Repairing U.S.-Russian Relations,” 30.

³⁷ Richard L. Morningstar, “2010 Outlook for Eurasian Energy,” remarks at the Center for American Progress, Washington, D.C., January 28, transcript available at: http://www.americanprogress.org/events/2010/01/av/morningstar_remarks.pdf. Morningstar, however, did speak of the administration’s support for diversify energy corridors in the region, provided any new pipelines are viable.

³⁸ For an interesting exposition of growing rifts within Europe over “the Russia question,” and concurrent trouble between the United States and parts of Europe, see Valdas Adamkus, Martin Butora, Emil Constantinescu, Pavol Demes, Lubos Dobrovsky, Matyas Eorsi, Istvan Gyarmati, Vaclav Havel, Rastislav Kacer, Sandra Kalniete, Karel Schwarzenberg, Michal Kovac, Ivan Krastev, Alexander Kwasniewski, Mart Laar, Kadri Liik, Janos Martonyi. Janusz Onyszkiewicz, Adam Rotfeld, Vaira Vike-Freiberga, Alexandr Vondra, Lech Walesa, “An Open Letter to the Obama Administration from Central and Eastern Europe,” *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, from *Gazeta Wyborcza*, July 16, 2009, <http://www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1778449.html>.

³⁹ Trenin, “Russia’s Sphere of Interests,” 15–16.

of foreign activity in the post-Soviet space, there is a fundamental geopolitical conflict that will be hard to overcome completely. Further, the problem of energy security is intertwined with other threads of the relationship, including nuclear security (in the drive to find environmentally friendly energy sources); transnational/global issues, including climate change and the future of the Arctic; and interaction in and around the post-Soviet space (transit countries). The overarching imperative, therefore, is to avoid exacerbating other tensions while managing and minimizing the various competing interests. On the issue of energy security, the aim is to create a system where suppliers and transit countries make decisions based on commercial rather than political calculations.

Many observers contend that the United States' chief geostrategic interest with regard to energy security in the region is to prevent a Russian monopoly on regional energy flows; they suggest that the best way to avoid this outcome is by helping Europe to diversify its energy supply, primarily by supporting the construction of pipelines that bypass Russian territory.⁴⁰ Examples include the already operational Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline and the still-unrealized Nabucco pipeline.⁴¹ BTC has proven successful, but Nabucco has been beleaguered by a lack of suppliers. On July 13, 2009, Austria, Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, and Turkey signed an intergovernmental agreement on the Nabucco pipeline, which was undercut somewhat by Turkey's agreement the following month to host the competing South Stream pipeline in its territorial waters.⁴² Nabucco and South Stream would follow similar paths and compete for suppliers; the primary political difference is that Nabucco bypasses Russian territory, whereas South Stream, which will run under the Black Sea, bypasses Ukrainian territory. The troubles that Nabucco and South Stream have encountered in gaining commitments from supplier countries illustrate the danger of supporting pipelines whose construction is politically rather

⁴⁰ Åslund and Kuchins, *The Russia Balance Sheet*, 158; Charap et al., "After the 'Reset,'" 19; and Cohen, "How the Obama Administration Should Engage Russia," 15.

⁴¹ The Nabucco pipeline will bring gas from the Caspian and the Middle East to European markets. It will begin both at the Iranian/Turkish border and the Georgian/Turkish border, and will travel through Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary before terminating in Austria. For more see <http://www.nabucco-pipeline.com/project/project-description-pipeline-route/project-description.html>.

⁴² Ian Kelly, "Signing Ceremony for the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Nabucco Pipeline," Department of State, Washington, D.C., July 13, 2009, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2009/july/125968.htm>; and Lybov Pronina and Ali Berat Meric, "Turkey Offers Route for Gazprom's South Stream Gas Pipeline, Bloomberg, August 6, 2009, <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601100&sid=a.TM4QijmIMk>.

than economically motivated. For that reason, some commentators qualify their recommendation by demanding that these projects be “commercially viable.”⁴³

Although diversification of pipelines out of the Caspian Basin may help to ensure that Europe does not experience yearly gas crises, this strategy does not solve the problem of Russia as an unreliable supplier (or Ukraine or Belarus as unreliable transit countries). Further, as some analysts note, Russia will likely always be the dominant local supplier, so Europe must find ways to manage this reality.⁴⁴ Antagonizing Russia, as some of these projects seem to do, one group argues, is unproductive.⁴⁵ There seems to be wide agreement that the global community needs to find a better way to regulate energy supply guaranteeing the interests of consumers, transit countries, and suppliers alike.⁴⁶ As a first step, the United States might consider acceding to the Energy Charter and entering negotiations, in concert with Europe, to find ways to make this agreement more acceptable to the Russians.⁴⁷ Alternatively, the major parties could design and negotiate an organization modeled on the World Trade Organization (WTO) that would govern energy issues.⁴⁸ This organization would replace the beleaguered Energy Charter Treaty.⁴⁹ On a more general level, Europe, the United States, and Russia could try to depoliticize the issue by framing it as one of economic rather than political security.⁵⁰

Indeed, although many analysts focus on the political side of the issue, energy also presents a significant economic and commercial opportunity. Russian downstream investment in Europe or the United States could serve as a financial boon to all involved and would also serve as an important political stabilizer.⁵¹ Another option, suggests Thomas Graham, is “to develop ways American, European, and Russian firms can cooperate in the exploration and development of upstream resources in Russia,

⁴³ Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia,” 12.

⁴⁴ Rumer and Stent, “Repairing U.S.-Russian Relations,” 30.

⁴⁵ Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia,” 12.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁴⁷ Åslund and Kuchins, *The Russia Balance Sheet*, 157.

⁴⁸ Carey, “US Economic Relations and Energy.”

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Thomas Graham, in Thomas Graham and Eugene Rumer, “Rethinking U.S.-Russian Relations,” [speech delivered at the?] World Affairs Council, Kane Hall, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, April 23, 2009.

⁵¹ Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia,” 12.

the construction of pipelines, and the final distribution to customers in Europe.”⁵² The recent decline in oil prices might make the Russian government more amenable to cooperation in this area than it was during the years of high oil prices.⁵³ Further, the huge expenditures that Russia needs to maintain or increase current levels of production, especially in older fields, may force the Russian government “to reconsider its nationalistic energy policy” and allow increased foreign investment.⁵⁴ Indeed, in the face of the first budget deficit in several years, Prime Minister Putin has indicated a willingness to privatize some businesses and allow increased foreign investment, though it is unclear whether this liberalization will extend to energy companies.⁵⁵

The Bilateral Presidential Commission includes two working groups related to energy: one on nuclear energy and nuclear security, chaired by the head of Rosatom, Sergei Kiriyenko, and Deputy Secretary of Energy Daniel Poneman, and the other on energy and environment, chaired by Minister of Energy Sergei Shmatko and Secretary of Energy Steven Chu.⁵⁶ The Nuclear Security Working Group met for the first time in September 2009, and discussed ways to increase cooperation on civil nuclear technologies.⁵⁷ The co-chairs of the Energy and Environment Working Group met in October 2009, and cooperation has been ongoing.⁵⁸ The two working groups will also address questions of energy efficiency, as some experts have recommended.⁵⁹ Others, however, note that discussions on energy cooperation would be more effective if they were reconstituted as a trilateral dialogue with the United

⁵² Graham, “Resurgent Russia and U.S. Purpose,” 28.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ Åslund and Kuchins, *The Russia Balance Sheet*, 157-158.

⁵⁵ Alexander Kolyander and William Mauldin, “Putin Signals Push for Privatization,” *Wall Street Journal*, September 29, 2009, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125424308492749839.html?mod=googlenews_wsj.

⁵⁶ “Fact Sheet: U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission.”

⁵⁷ “DOE Deputy Secretary and Rosatom Director Visit Y-12, Oak Ridge National Laboratory during First Meeting of U.S.-Russian Nuclear Energy and Nuclear Security Working Group,” September 29, 2009, <http://www.energy.gov/8083.htm>.

⁵⁸ Morningstar, “2010 Outlook for Eurasian Energy.”

⁵⁹ Hillary Rodham Clinton, “Remarks with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov,” Osobnyak Guest House, Moscow, Russia, October 13, 2009, transcript available at: <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/10/130505.htm>; and Charap et al., “After the ‘Reset.’” 27.

States, the EU, and Russia.⁶⁰ Another suggestion is to create a forum that incorporates voices from East Asia as well.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Åslund and Kuchins, *The Russia Balance Sheet*, 157.

⁶¹ Graham, "Resurgent Russia and U.S. Purpose," 28.

TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Trade and investment are rising items on the U.S.-Russian agenda, both for their financial benefits and for their politically stabilizing side effects. During the 2009 St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF), U.S. Ambassador to Russia John Beyrle argued that, although governments are limited in what they can do to moderate the amplitude of cycles (both positive and negative) in the U.S.-Russian relationship, strong business relationships act as an effective “shock absorber.”¹ Indeed, many commentators argue that deeper economic cooperation is the best way to gain leverage in the relationship and would be effective in preventing, or at least managing, mounting tensions such as those that led to the 2008 Georgia war. As became apparent in the immediate aftermath of the war, the United States has few levers to convince Russia to pause and reconsider its actions. Politicians and business leaders believe that a stronger bilateral business relationship would have built in constraints limiting reckless behavior.² During his talk at the SPIEF, Beyrle indicated that the Obama administration is committed to building trade and economic ties between the two countries and to further embed Russia into the global economy, goals that are increasingly supported by many observers.³

The global financial crisis currently dominates discussion of the bilateral business relationship, particularly with regard to its potential long-term implications. The extent of the crisis in Russia has demonstrated to observers and Russian officials alike that Russia’s economy is already significantly integrated into the global system. Despite Putin’s early proclamation that Russia would be “an island of stability” amid the global economic turmoil, its economy has been one of the worst hit.⁴ At one point,

¹ John Beyrle, in “Economic Cooperation as a Basis for ‘Resetting’ Russia-US Relations,” St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, St. Petersburg, Russia, June 4, 2009, video available at: <http://www.forumspb.com/eng/tv/4/>.

² See, for example, U.S.-Russia Business Council, “Recommendations to the Obama Administration,” 1; and “Economic Cooperation as a Basis for ‘Resetting’ Russia-US Relations.”

³ Beyrle, in “Economic Cooperation as a Basis for ‘Resetting’ Russia-US Relations.” For other support, see, for example, Åslund and Kuchins, *The Russia Balance Sheet*, 155–157; U.S.-Russia Business Council, “Recommendations to the Obama Administration; Charap and Kuchins, “Economic Whiplash,” 1; and Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia,” 11.

⁴ Lee Spears and Lyubov Pronina, “Putin and Wen, ‘Cocky’ No More, Pay Davos Price for Recession,” Bloomberg, January 28, 2009, <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601085&sid=aefflextaHslc&refer=europe>; “IMF Revises Up Global Forecast to Near 4% for 2010,” *IMF Survey Online*, January 26, 2010, <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/survey/so/2010/NEW012610B.htm>; and Andrew E. Kramer, “In Russia, Data Signals a Leveling Off of the Decline,” *New York Times*, August 11, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/12/business/economy/12ruble.html>.

the International Monetary Fund (IMF) forecasted barely 1 percent growth for Russia in 2010 (though that has been raised to 3.6 percent), and Russian Finance Minister Alexei Kudrin has posited that growth will not reach precrisis levels for the next four or five years.⁵ According to the IMF, the Russian economy contracted by approximately 9.0 percent in 2009 – the first such contraction in seven years.⁶ In some ways, this constellation of events brought about a more confrontational Russian stance: for example, in his speech at the World Policy Forum in Evian, France, in October 2008, President Medvedev blamed the United States for causing the crisis.⁷ In March 2009, he suggested revisiting the dollar’s place as the world’s sole reserve currency.⁸ Such statements would seem to indicate that the financial crisis has made Russia less amenable to increased economic cooperation with the United States.

Some analysts have suggested, however, that the crisis represents a unique opportunity to greatly expand U.S.-Russian commercial ties.⁹ They argue that because both the United States and Russia have been brought so low by the economic downturn, a possibility exists to reframe the economic relationship “in positive and cooperative terms.”¹⁰ Further, although Russia has not fully retreated from some of its more controversial foreign policy positions, history indicates that it is more willing to cooperate during times of economic downturn.¹¹ Therefore, the U.S. government should actively support initiatives that would strengthen the bilateral commercial relationship. Potential

⁵ Dmitry Zhdannikov, “Russian GDP Fall Deepens in Q2 to Worst on Record,” Reuters, August 11, 2009, <http://in.reuters.com/article/economicNews/idINIndia-41690420090811?sp=true>.

⁶ “World Economic Outlook Update,” January 26, 2010, <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2010/update/01/pdf/0110.pdf>.

⁷ Anna Arutunyan, “Medvedev’s Plan,” *Moscow News*, no. 40, October 10, 2008, <http://mnweekly.ru/news/20081010/55350645.html>.

⁸ Gleb Briyanski, “China Backs Talks on Dollar as Reserve-Russian Source,” Reuters, March 19, 2009, <http://www.reuters.com/article/usDollarRpt/idUSLJ93633020090319>. World Bank President Robert Zoellick noted that the United States would be remiss “to take for granted the dollar’s place as the world’s predominant reserve currency.” He suggested that going forward there will be other options to challenge the dollar’s preeminence. For more, see Robert Zoellick, “After the Crisis?” speech given at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, Washington, D.C., September 28, 2009, transcript available at: <http://www.sais-jhu.edu/news-and-events/pdf/Zoellick-SAIS-092809.pdf>.

⁹ Charap and Kuchins, “Economic Whiplash,” 1; and Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia,” 10–11.

¹⁰ Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia,” 11.

¹¹ Charap and Kuchins, “Economic Whiplash,” 4.

measures include increasing support for the Russia-based activities of bodies such as the Export-Import Bank, the Trade and Development Agency, and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.¹² Exploring enterprise funds or small loan programs to spur private-sector lending to U.S. companies interested in operating in Russia may also prove useful.¹³

One major concern about increasing bilateral economic integration is the lack of transparency within Russian businesses. To help solve this problem, many commentators favor student exchanges – in particular the placement of young Russians in MBA programs in the United States. These authors hope that Russian students in such programs would bring the U.S. business practices to which they are exposed back home. Along the same lines as educational exchanges, American business leaders have suggested more flexible Russian immigration policies to allow Americans to work in Russia.¹⁴ This recommendation is connected to the belief that Russia needs to invest more heavily in its human capital and educational infrastructure before the Russian workforce can meet all the needs of American companies. While Russia is building its workforce, it would be helpful for American companies interested in doing business in Russia to be able to bring in more of their own workers.¹⁵

To increase the level of foreign direct investment in the two nations, Russia and the United States should negotiate, sign, and ratify a Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT).¹⁶ BITs can help to spur bilateral cooperation by providing safeguards and assurances to companies on their investments, including limits on expropriation; a guarantee of prompt and proper compensation in the event of expropriation; protection of investments even in countries where investor rights are not protected; and the right to submit a dispute with a government to international arbitration rather than having to pursue the case in that country's domestic courts.¹⁷ These protections mitigate the risk of foreign investment. The United States and Russia signed a BIT in 1992, but the Russian Duma did not ratify it.

¹² Ibid., 10.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Mary A. Laschinger, president, International Paper EMEA, in "Economic Cooperation as a Basis for 'Resetting' Russia-US Relations."

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Charap and Kuchins, "Economic Whiplash," 10.

¹⁷ Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, "Bilateral Investment Treaties," <http://www.ustr.gov/trade-agreements/bilateral-investment-treaties>.

The text of the 2008 Sochi Framework, however, indicates that Russia would be amenable to signing a new BIT.¹⁸

The Bilateral Presidential Commission created at the July 2009 summit includes the Business Development and Economic Relations Working Group (BDERWG), chaired by Minister of Economic Development Elvira Nabiullina and Secretary of Commerce Gary Locke.¹⁹ The group met for the first time in February 2010 in Washington.²⁰ In March 2010, it released a detailed work plan that pledges, among other things, cooperation on energy efficiency, modernization, and the development of small and medium-sized businesses.²¹ Indicating again the interconnectedness of issues on the bilateral agenda, the BDERWG has promised to coordinate its activities in the sphere of energy efficiency with the energy working groups that are also part of the Bilateral Presidential Commission.²² The work plan sets out an ambitious agenda; the question, as with the broader strategic framework the Obama administration has attempted to craft, is how dedicated the group leaders will be in fulfilling these commitments.

Beyond the bilateral relationship, many observers encourage promoting Russia's integration into the world economy and strengthening bilateral economic relations because they believe that "economic integration is likely to facilitate reform."²³ Despite continued unease about corruption and state involvement in business, Russia offers a rich market for investors, and its current laws governing investment and other business fundamentals generally meet international standards.²⁴ Further, as individual Russian businesses attempt to internationalize and list on global exchanges, they will be forced to adopt more transparent practices.²⁵ Therefore, many analysts argue that by Russia being subject to the rules and regulations of organizations such as the WTO, an already encouraging situation

¹⁸ Åslund and Kuchins, *The Russia Balance Sheet*, 155.

¹⁹ "Fact Sheet: U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission."

²⁰ "Joint Statement by the U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission Coordinators on Commission Progress."

²¹ See "Work Plan for U.S.-Russia Business Development and Economic Relations Working Group," https://www.usrbc.org/government/presidential_commission/.

²² Ibid.

²³ Charap and Kuchins, "Economic Whiplash," 7.

²⁴ Carey, "US Economic Relations and Energy."

²⁵ Discussion at Stent-Rumer Working Group, Washington, D.C., June 23, 2008.

will in all likelihood improve.²⁶ Not everyone agrees, however, with the assessment that the legal framework is sufficient or encouraging.²⁷

American commentators, however, widely support Russian entry into the WTO. In the wake of the 2008 Georgia crisis, the question of Russia's accession to the WTO was put on hold, but in early June 2009 both European Union Trade Commissioner Catherine Ashton and Economic Minister Elvira Nabiullina expressed greater optimism that a deal might be completed by the end of 2009.²⁸ Yet shortly after the trilateral talks with Russian, U.S., and EU trade representatives in June 2009, Russia announced that it intended to withdraw its WTO bid in favor of a three-party bid with Belarus and Kazakhstan (at the time, Russia was in the process of forming a customs union with these two nations).²⁹ Some observers have suggested that, at its core, Russia's declaration was an expression of its frustration with the sixteen-year-long WTO accession negotiations, particularly given that Medvedev retreated from the idea of the joint bid at the 2009 G8 summit in L'Aquila, Italy. He suggested instead that Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan should "coordinate," but join the WTO individually.³⁰ Russia still contends that it is seeking "to pursue autonomous, yet simultaneous, accession" to the WTO with Belarus and Kazakhstan, but it has since formalized the abovementioned union with a unified customs tariff.³¹ The way forward is unclear, but if Russia does decide to pursue WTO accession as a customs union, it will delay its entry for

²⁶ Carey, "US Economic Relations and Energy."

²⁷ Anne Garrels, "In Russia, Business World Still Lacks Transparency," *National Public Radio*, September 29, 2009, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=113303596>.

²⁸ "EU, Moscow Say Russia Should Join WTO This Year," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, June 4, 2009, http://www.rferl.org/content/EU_Moscow_Say_Russia_Should_Joint_WTO_This_Year/1747149.html.

²⁹ Ira Iosebashvili, "Putin Ditches Unilateral WTO Bid," *Moscow Times*, June 10, 2009. Alexander Shokhin, president of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, alluded to this customs union during the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, saying that it would be best for all if the rules of the union were based on the rules of the WTO, but this would happen only if Russia were already in the WTO. For more, see "Economic Cooperation as a Basis for 'Resetting' Russia-US Relations."

³⁰ Iosebashvili, "Putin Ditches Unilateral WTO Bid"; and "Russia's Medvedev Says Joint WTO Bid 'Problematic,'" Associated Press, July 10, 2009, <http://www.businessweek.com/ap/financialnews/D99BLH1O2.htm>.

³¹ James Collins and Bennett Stancil, "Russia and World Trade: Out in the Cold," *International Economic Bulletin*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, January 2010, <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=24760>.

many years, further deferring the benefits that both the United States and Russia could reap from Russian WTO membership.³²

Some commentators argue that Russia should be encouraged to seek membership in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).³³ The advantage of OECD membership is that, unlike the WTO, which deals strictly with trade, OECD members must also commit to substantive governmental reforms.³⁴ The technical requirements for accession (regarding issues such as corruption and transparency) are both stringent and hard to reverse once enacted.³⁵ According to the OECD bylaws, WTO membership must precede OECD membership. Some observers have suggested, however, that if Russia met the technical requirements for OECD accession, the United States and other OECD member states could consider waiving that requirement.³⁶

Numerous other partnerships could also facilitate Russia's integration into the global economy. For example, Russia should have a better delineated economic relationship with the EU.³⁷ In addition, as global financial systems are reevaluated in the face of the ongoing economic crisis, some experts argue that the United States should ensure that Russia is part of any effort to redesign the global financial system.³⁸

Perhaps the biggest irritant to progress on the economic agenda is the Jackson-Vanik amendment, which is attached to the Trade Act of 1974. Congress passed the amendment so that the United States could impose sanctions in response to Soviet constraints on Jewish immigration.³⁹ It has granted Russia a waiver every year since 1994, but the amendment's continued formal application

³² Ibid.

³³ Charap and Kuchins, "Economic Whiplash," 8.

³⁴ "World Trade Organization," 1–2, http://www.wto.org/english/res_e/doload_e/inbre.pdf; and "The OECD: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development," 8, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/15/33/34011915.pdf>.

³⁵ Charap et al., "After the 'Reset,'" 33.

³⁶ Ibid., 34.

³⁷ Carey, "US Economic Relations and Energy."

³⁸ See, for example, Working Group on United States Policy towards Russia, "Recommendations," 3; Charap and Kuchins, "Economic Whiplash," 14; and Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, "The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia," 4.

³⁹ Charap et al., "After the Reset," 44.

prohibits the granting of permanent normal trade relations (PNTR) to that country. Once Russia becomes a member of the WTO, the United States will have to graduate Russia, but traditionally graduation is delayed until a country has formally acceded to the WTO.⁴⁰ At this point, however, the amendment has become a significant point of irritation between the two countries. Further, although some remain reluctant to graduate Russia, given ongoing concerns about democracy and human rights abuses in the country, others assert that discussing human rights in connection with Jackson-Vanik is no longer useful.⁴¹ The majority of commentators argue that the United States should, without fanfare, graduate Russia from the Jackson-Vanik amendment and grant Russia PNTR without waiting for its accession to the WTO.⁴² Doing so will require strong leadership from the White House, because many in Congress are unwilling to repeal the amendment without a reciprocal concession from the Kremlin.⁴³

In addition to government actions, treaties, and initiatives, business leaders are quick to point out that extensive private-sector involvement is critical to strengthening the U.S.-Russian economic relationship. Public-private partnership in U.S.-Russian relations has proved especially effective.⁴⁴ In a meeting of business leaders during the July 2009 summit, President Obama emphasized this point. He stated that “government can promote this cooperation. We can help to get out of the way. And we will. But ultimately, individual entrepreneurs and businesses have to advance the agenda.”⁴⁵ The president

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ On reluctance, see, for example, Rep. Thomas Lantos of California, “Statement of the Hon. Tom Lantos, a Representative in Congress from the State of California,” *To Explore Permanent Normal Trade Relations for Russia: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Trade of the Committee on Ways and Means*, House of Representatives, 107th Congress, 2nd sess., serial no. 107-64, April 11, 2002, 15; and Julie Ginsburg, “Reassessing the Jackson-Vanik Amendment,” *Council on Foreign Relations*, July 2, 2009, <http://www.cfr.org/publication/19734/#p5>. On inapplicability in the modern context, see Charap et al., “After the Reset,” 45.

⁴² See, for example, U.S.-Russia Business Council, “Recommendations to the Obama Administration,” 4; Charap et al., “After the Reset,” 44; Ginsburg, “Reassessing the Jackson-Vanik Amendment,”; Legvold, “The Russia File,” 86; and Pifer, “Reversing the Decline,” 16–17.

⁴³ Legvold, “The Russia File,” 86.

⁴⁴ Jean Philippe Courtois, president, Microsoft International, in “Economic Cooperation as a Basis for ‘Resetting’ Russia-US Relations.”

⁴⁵ Barack Obama, “Remarks by the President at Parallel Business Summit,” Manezh Exhibition Hall, Moscow, Russia, July 7, 2009, transcript available at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-By-The-President-At-Parallel-Business-Summit/.

also advocated increasing bilateral trade and easing restrictions so that American and Russian companies may more easily invest in each other's country.⁴⁶

Not all commentators are convinced of the wisdom of bolstering bilateral trade and investment. Concerns over Russian business practices and the extent of state involvement in industry lead some of these individuals to suggest that the West should limit how Russian companies purchase and invest outside their country.⁴⁷ Others suggest that, although U.S. business should be free to invest in Russia, Russian businesses remain so corrupt and have such a high-level of state involvement that the U.S. government should not actively promote bilateral ties or ease restrictions on investment by either party.⁴⁸ Still others suggest that Russia should have faced economic repercussions for its actions in Georgia during the 2008 war.⁴⁹ As noted in a previous section, the Bush administration did withdraw the potentially lucrative 123 agreement from Congress in response to the war, though the withdrawal was motivated by an expectation of the agreement's failure in Congress rather than by economic considerations.

The U.S. reaction to the Georgia war illustrates how economic cooperation has been viewed throughout much of the post-Cold War era. Over the years, despite the seeming consensus on its many benefits for both the United States and Russia, economic cooperation has frequently been the most apt to be manipulated to serve other objectives.⁵⁰ More broadly, however, economic cooperation has been subordinate to (rather than viewed as connected with) agenda items such as arms control. Neither country, two experts argue, seems fully cognizant of the diverse benefits of increased bilateral trade or is willing to make the compromises necessary to increase trade and investment.⁵¹ As a result, bilateral trade has remained anemic. If, however, both governments and their countries' private sectors

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Edward Lucas, *The New Cold War: Putin's Russia and the Threat to the West* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 209.

⁴⁸ Kramer, "The Russia Challenge," 8.

⁴⁹ Cohen, "How the Obama Administration Should Engage Russia," 15.

⁵⁰ Jeff Procak, "Advancing a Constructive Agenda for US-Russia Relations: Insights and Recommendations from Leading Experts," [paper? speech?] EastWest Institute, [city/state?] April 2007, 8. Procak and many others note, in particular, the success of ethnic lobbying groups in persuading Congress to use trade discrimination as a stick. See *ibid.*, 8–9.

⁵¹ Charap and Kuchins, "Economic Whiplash," 8; and Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, "The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia," 11.

capitalize on the opportunities provided by the recent downturn, commercial ties could conceivably help to stabilize and enrich the relationship.⁵²

⁵² Charap and Kuchins, "Economic Whiplash," 1.

DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the main argument for supporting efforts to build democracy in Russia continues to be that Russian democracy is a national security concern for the United States.¹ Over the years, the United States has vacillated not only in the level of its interventionist policies toward Russia, but also in the level of its rhetorical condemnation of perceived democratic abuses in Russia. Reports released toward the end of 2008 and in the early months of the Obama administration advocate continued support of Russian democracy, while avoiding lecturing or intervening directly in Russian domestic affairs.

Critics of democracy-building efforts in Russia often accuse the United States of employing a double standard. Steven Pifer writes, “[I]f Washington publicly takes Moscow to task on democracy while ignoring similar (or worse) problems in Central Asia or in oil-rich friends in the Middle East, it should not be surprised if the Kremlin concludes that the goal is embarrassing Russia rather than promoting democratic norms.”² Others concur with the Russian allegation that Russia is held to a higher standard than other nations.³ The issue was further complicated during the Bush years, as the United States’ human rights and democracy record was damaged in the face of Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo, and other departures from the democratic norm.⁴ As a result of the United States’ own shortcomings, U.S. condemnations of Russian behavior were believed to have lost their moral underpinning and were therefore more easily challenged.⁵ Indeed, studies have shown that U.S. behavior, rather than funding or rhetoric, “has far more weight in terms of its ability to bolster or undermine democracy, human rights and the rule of law in other countries.”⁶ The point, say many experts, is that the United States will have

¹ Bill Clinton, “Remarks to the American Society of Newspaper Editors in Annapolis,” Annapolis, Maryland, April 1, 1993, transcript available at: http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2889/is_n13_v29/ai_14081142/print?tag=artBody;col1; and Sarah E. Mendelson, “U.S. Russian Relations and the Democracy and Rule of Law Deficit,” report of the Century Foundation (New York: Century Foundation, 2009), 10, <http://www.tcf.org/publications/internationalaffairs/US-RussianRelationsandtheDemocracyandRuleofLawDeficit.pdf>.

² Pifer, “Reversing the Decline,” 20.

³ Åslund and Kuchins, *The Russia Balance Sheet*, 159.

⁴ Mendelson, “U.S.-Russian Relations and the Democracy and Rule of Law Deficit,” 3; and Charap et al., “After the ‘Reset,’” 34.

⁵ Mendelson, “U.S.-Russian Relations and the Democracy and Rule of Law Deficit,” 4.

to adjust its practices if it is to regain its soft power, before it can press the issue directly with Russia (or elsewhere).⁷

Inconsistencies in U.S. actions toward Russia in this regard may not be the only impediment. Sestanovich argues that, while U.S. officials have “good reasons to make the issue of democracy a less contentious part of U.S.-Russian relations,” Russian officials have actually benefited from the discord over U.S. efforts to promote democracy.⁸ Sestanovich contends that President Putin used the unpopularity of the Bush “Freedom Agenda” to build an internal consensus against foreign intervention in Russian domestic affairs, a tactic that has proved useful in consolidating the “Power Vertical” and cementing Putin’s popularity.⁹ Therefore, Russian domestic political imperatives may dictate that the Kremlin continue to make democracy and civil society a rallying point against increased rapprochement with the United States.¹⁰

Despite the problems posed by both the United States’ tarnished image and Russian domestic politics, most analysts agree that some form of democracy promotion is likely to continue to play a role in U.S. foreign policy, given the significance of American values to the country’s self-identity.¹¹ That said, commentators suggest that the Obama administration will have to find a new way to address this constellation of issues with the Russians, without denying basic U.S. values.¹² On a procedural level, many of these individuals recommend that Obama seek a “balance between public and private diplomacy.”¹³ Although public statements may sometimes prove necessary, raising U.S. concerns during private discussions would be less poisonous to the relationship.¹⁴ The Working Group on Civil Society at the Bilateral Presidential Commission, chaired by First Deputy Chief of Staff, Presidential Administration,

⁶ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁸ Sestanovich, “What Has Moscow Done?” 23.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 22.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 23.

¹¹ See, for example, Graham, “Resurgent Russia and U.S. Purpose,” 30; and Rumer and Stent, “Repairing U.S.-Russia Relations,” 30–31.

¹² Rumer and Stent, “Repairing U.S.-Russian Relations,” 31; and Pifer, “Reversing the Decline,” 2.

¹³ Charap et al., “After the ‘Reset,’” 35.

¹⁴ Pifer, “Reversing the Decline,” 19; and Charap et al., “After the ‘Reset,’” 36.

Vladislav Surkov and Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Russia at the National Security Council Michael McFaul,¹⁵ held its second meeting on January 27, 2010, in Washington, D.C. Participants at the meeting focused on how civil society can help to combat state corruption.¹⁶ Future topics include prison reform and migration.¹⁷

In addition to recommending that the United States develop different tactics to express concern about specific issues, experts suggest adjusting the tone of discussions about Russian democracy and human rights. Instead of lecturing, civil society leaders and government officials should engage Russia on topics of mutual concern surrounding the development of democracy.¹⁸ They should focus on issues such as corruption, immigration, terrorism, and other challenges facing both nations.¹⁹ The goal is to share experiences about how to handle these threats to democratic societies.²⁰ Additionally, lawmakers can raise issues of democracy and human rights within the context of international treaties that Russia has signed or through international institutions.²¹ By embedding discussions of U.S. concerns within international norms and principles, the United States can avoid the appearance of double standards and focus instead on commitments Russia has made on these issues. The U.S. Senate–Federation Council working group, chaired by Senator Ben Nelson (D-Neb.) and Chairman of the International Affairs Committee, Federation Council, Mikhail Margelov – in addition to the parliamentary exchange between Chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs Howard Berman (D-Calif.) and Chairman of the

¹⁵ “Fact Sheet: U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission.”

¹⁶ “Joint Statement by the U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission Coordinators on Commission Progress”; and Heather Maher, “Interview: McFaul on U.S., Russian Stereotypes and His Controversial Co-Chair,” *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, January 28, 2010, http://www.rferl.org/content/Interview_Michael_McFaul_On_The_Surkov_Controversy_And_The_Importance_Of_Engagement/1942014.html.

¹⁷ Maher, “Interview: McFaul on U.S., Russian Stereotypes and His Controversial Co-Chair.”

¹⁸ Graham, “Resurgent Russia and U.S. Purpose,” 30; James F. Collins and Robert Legvold, “Rethinking U.S.-Russia Relations,” talk at the Southern Center for International Studies, Atlanta, Georgia, May 21, 2009, video available at: <http://www.pba.org/afn/event.php?forumEventId=2624>; and Legvold, “The Russia File,” 93.

¹⁹ Graham, “Resurgent Russia and U.S. Purpose,” 30.

²⁰ For an example of this in action, see *Preliminary Priorities, Recommendations, and Action Plans*, U.S.-Russia Civil Society Summit, Moscow, Russia, July 6–7, 2009, esp. p. 1, http://csis.org/files/publication/090707_Civil_Society_Summit_Preliminary_Report.pdf.

²¹ Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, “The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia,” 5; and Charap et al., “After the ‘Reset,’” 37.

State Duma International Affairs Committee Konstantin Kosachev, – are other available forums for dialogue on this subject.²²

In his democracy agenda, President Obama has stressed his readiness for open dialogue and respect for others' sovereignty. During the Civil Society Summit, which occurred parallel to the Moscow summit in July 2009, the president stated, "No community is the same and every country will follow its own path. So let me be very clear: Russia's future is up to the Russian people. Not every choice that's good for the United States is going to be good for Russia. Not every model of organization or development or democracy may be easily transplantable from one country to the next. But let me also say that we can learn from each other – and I do think there's some universal principles. So I commend you for this summit, designed not to lecture, but to listen, as was already pointed out; not teach or impose solutions, but to learn from each other, from the bottom up."²³ The president also stressed the importance of strengthening links between American and Russian societies through "cooperation in confronting common challenges."²⁴ He underlined the United States' commitment to what he termed "universal values," but was careful to avoid any impression of meddling in Russia's internal affairs. During his speech at the New Economic School on July 7, the president also spoke of U.S. shortcomings and efforts to improve, further evidence of a new democracy policy based on mutual dialogue and engagement.

One of the cornerstones of the reorientation in American democracy policy is an emphasis on multilevel, multidimensional engagement of Russian society. As Obama said at the Civil Society Summit, "The fresh starts have to be between more than just two Presidents. They have to be between our two peoples, our two societies. They have to be more than just common security – the Cold War weapons we dismantle. It must be about our common opportunity – the future of progress and prosperity that we build together."²⁵ These ambitions have translated into a renewed emphasis on professional

²² On Nelson/Margelov, see "Bilateral Relations: Time to Start a New Chapter," *Russia: Beyond the Headlines*, April 27, 2009, http://rbth.ru/articles/2009/04/27/270409_bilateral.html. On Berman/Kosachev, see Roxana Tiron, "Berman Urges U.S.-Russia Cooperation in Moscow," *The Hill*, October 14, 2008, <http://www.hcfa.house.gov/110/press101408a.pdf>.

²³ Barack Obama, "Remarks by the President at Parallel Civil Society Summit," Metropal Hotel, Moscow, Russia, July 7, 2009, transcript available at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-By-The-President-At-Parallel-Civil-Society-Summit/.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

exchanges and direct, sustained contact between civil society and nongovernmental organizations in the United States and Russia, as recommended by many experts.²⁶ To further this effort, the Bilateral Presidential Commission has created the Working Group on Educational and Cultural Exchanges, chaired by Special Presidential Representative for International Culture Cooperation Mikhail Shvydkoy and Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Judith McHale.²⁷ The working group met for the first time in December 2009 and “agreed to develop new educational and research initiatives in science, language acquisition, teacher education, and professional development; to organize events in both countries celebrating the cultural traditions, accomplishments, and aspirations of our two peoples; and to initiate a pilot exchange of young nonprofessional student athletes in several team sports, starting with basketball and hockey.”²⁸ In March 2010, the group coordinated a meeting of business leaders in technology and innovation.²⁹ In May 2010, the group coordinated a youth basketball exchange.³⁰

Supporting Russian initiatives to improve democracy and related issues is also critical. Most prominent among these is President Medvedev’s professed desire to strengthen the rule of law and lower the incidence of corruption in his country. During his speech at the Civil Society Summit, Obama endorsed these efforts.³¹ Continuing in that vein, some analysts suggest that “[T]he United States should see if there is interest in the Russian government for technical assistance to advance the anticorruption and rule-of-law agenda.”³² Similarly, the United States should let Russian needs rather than the U.S. political agenda dictate how “democracy assistance” funds are allocated.³³ Allowing Russian experts to

²⁶ Åslund and Kuchins, *The Russia Balance Sheet*, 159; Collins and Legvold, “Rethinking U.S.-Russia Relations”; Charap et al., “After the ‘Reset,’” 35; and “Community Development Working Group: Recommendations and Action Plan,” in *Preliminary Priorities, Recommendations, and Action Plans*.

²⁷ “Fact Sheet: U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission.”

²⁸ “Joint Statement by the U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission Coordinators on Commission Progress.”

²⁹ Hillary Rodham Clinton, “Remarks with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov,” Moscow, Russia, March 19, 2010, transcript available at: <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/03/138671.htm>.

³⁰ Office of the Spokesperson, “U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission’s Youth Basketball Exchange,” Washington D.C., May 14, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2010/05/141849.htm>.

³¹ Obama, “Remarks by the President at Parallel Civil Society Summit.”

³² Charap et al., “After the ‘Reset,’” 35.

³³ Mendelson, “U.S.-Russian Relations and the Democracy and Rule of Law Deficit,” 17.

determine how the money would best be used should not only lessen the appearance of interventionism but should also increase the impact of each dollar spent.³⁴

Some observers suggest that one of the most effective starting places is in the area of public health. Russia is undergoing a national health crisis. It has one of highest infection rates of HIV/AIDS outside Africa and some of the lowest life expectancies in the developed world – life expectancy for males is below sixty years of age, and drug use is growing at an alarming rate.³⁵ The Public Health Working Group at the Civil Society Summit recommended “joint research into effective social marketing techniques” that could help to inform Russians about health risks such as excessive alcohol consumption, tobacco use, and dietary salt intake.³⁶ The working group also suggested improving the free flow of critical health-care data (“information liquidity”) within and across health-care institutions in the United States and Russia, increasing exchanges of medical professionals, and sharing experiences and best practices.³⁷ A discussion group organized by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) made similar recommendations and suggested “an annual U.S.-Russia forum on reform of national health systems, with a special focus on financing, cost controls, and evaluation mechanisms.”³⁸ A joint Brookings Institution and CSIS delegation from 2005 proposed similar ideas; the group also recommended that the United States significantly increase its support of nongovernmental organizations that focus on high-risk groups, including intravenous drug users, sex workers, and young people. The group also suggested that the United States allocate more funding for scientific researchers working to develop vaccines.³⁹

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 18.

³⁵ Rumer and Stent, “Repairing U.S.-Russia Relations,” 15; and Megan K. Stack, “Heroin Addiction Spreads Like Wildfire in Russia,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 25, 2009, <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-russia-heroin25-2009sep25,0,2349140.story>.

³⁶ “Public Health Working Group: Summary of Discussions,” in *Preliminary Priorities, Recommendations, and Action Plans*. On the issue of alcohol consumption, President Medvedev launched a large public campaign in August 2009 to curb drinking. For more information, see Simon Shuster, “Russia’s Medvedev Launches a New War on Drinking,” *Time Magazine*, August 23, 2009, <http://www.time.com/time/printout/0,8816,1917974,00.html>.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ “The US and Russia: Confronting Common Challenges Strategic Collaboration on Health,” Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C., (?) May 12, 2009, http://www.csis.org/media/csis/events/090512_ruseura_russiahealth.pdf.

³⁹ J. Stephen Morrison and Celeste A. Wallander, *Russia and HIV/AIDS: Opportunities for Leadership and Cooperation*, report of the CSIS Task Force on HIV/AIDS Brookings/CSIS Joint Delegation to Russia, February 20–26,

U.S.-Russian cooperation on improving public health could be furthered under the auspices of the memorandum of understanding on health that Obama and Medvedev signed during the July 2009 summit. In the memorandum, the two presidents agree to collaborate to improve public health and medical science through the Bilateral Presidential Commission Working Group on Health.⁴⁰ In December 2009, the Working Group on Health “launched cooperation on combating infectious and non-infectious disease, promoting healthy lifestyles and maternal and child health.”⁴¹ In addition, “the U.S. National Institutes of Health, National Academies of Science and the Institute of Medicine signed a Statement of Intent with the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences to increase collaboration through academic conferences, exchanges and research in these priority areas.”⁴²

Over the years, there has been frequent criticism regarding the lack of clear metrics by which to judge Russian progress. Writing in 2009, for example, Sarah Mendelson suggested looking into Russian efforts to close the cases of the murders of Paul Klebnikov, Anna Politkovskaya, Stanislav Markelov, and Anastasia Baburova;⁴³ assessing the independence of the judiciary; analyzing the presence of Kremlin critics on television; examining concerns over freedom of assembly; and reviewing the treatment of nongovernmental organizations.⁴⁴ She noted that “the noninterference by Russian authorities in the planning” of the Civil Society Summit was in itself a positive sign.⁴⁵ Mendelson’s suggestion picked up on a similar recommendation made in 2004 by Michael McFaul, who suggested forming a blue ribbon bipartisan commission to assess the state of democracy in Russia. He noted in his recommendation that establishing metrics on Russian democratic progress could be useful in later assessments of progress on

2005 (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, May 2005), 15, http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2005/05russia_fixauthorname/200505russia_taskforce.pdf.

⁴⁰ “Fact Sheet: Moscow Summit, July 6-8,” Office of the Press Secretary, July 6, 2009, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/FACT-SHEET-Moscow-Summit-July-6-8/.

⁴¹ “Joint Statement by the U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission Coordinators on Commission Progress.”

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Klebnikov and Politkovskaya were journalists who were known to be fierce critics of the Russian leadership. Markelov was a human rights attorney. Baburova, also a journalist who worked for the same paper as Politkovskaya and was walking with Markelov, was killed when she tried to intervene in his attack.

⁴⁴ Mendelson, “U.S.-Russian Relations and the Democracy and Rule of Law Deficit,” 17.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

the same issues in Afghanistan and Iraq.⁴⁶ McFaul's recommendation in many ways comes back to the aforementioned issue of policy consistency: the condemnation of Russian democratic abuses but not those in the surrounding states sends a garbled message, while the evolution toward or away from democratic progress in Russia has broader implications for democracy building in U.S. policy elsewhere. Abandoning democracy promotion in Russia and the post-Soviet space affects how the U.S. commitment to democracy is understood in other parts of the world.

Finally, no matter the tactic or tone, engagement on issues of democratic development and civil society will not be easy. Part of the problem, beyond what Sestanovich notes has been the Russian leadership's manipulation of the democracy issue, the legacy of the Boris Yeltsin era and its negative effect on the Russian public's view of democracy promotion.⁴⁷ More recently, Russians have had to deal with the social havoc wrought by the ongoing financial crisis. For years it seemed as though the Russian people had accepted a de facto social contract with their government, sacrificing political freedoms for economic stability.⁴⁸ As the extent of the financial crisis has become clear, however, that bargain is beginning to unravel.⁴⁹ The strikes in the factory town of Pikalevo and the hunger strikes of KrasAir flight attendants have strengthened the impression that without the financial stability promised by Putin's system, society is no longer willing to uphold its end of the bargain.⁵⁰ If the Russian government decides that the crisis is not manageable, U.S. efforts to reengage Russia on issues of democratic development would likely suffer, because the government's priority may shift to stabilization rather than liberalization.⁵¹

⁴⁶ Michael McFaul, "Russia's Transition to Democracy and U.S.-Russia Relations: Unfinished Business," Center for American Progress, January 2004, 8, http://www.americanprogress.org/kf/russia_mcfaul.pdf.

⁴⁷ Charap et al., "After the 'Reset,'" 34.

⁴⁸ Andrew E. Kramer, "Political Aide Says Kremlin May Need to Ease Control," *New York Times*, February 9, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/10/business/worldbusiness/10ruble.html>.

⁴⁹ Ibid; and Graham, "Resurgent Russia and U.S. Purpose," 9.

⁵⁰ Ellen Barry, "Putin Plays Sheriff for Cowboy Capitalists," *New York Times*, June 5, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/05/world/europe/05russia.html?ref=europe>; and "Russian Flight Attendants Continue Hunger Strike," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, May 21, 2009, http://www.rferl.org/content/Russian_Flight_Attendants_Continue_Hunger_Strike/1736404.html.

⁵¹ Robert Legvold, "U.S.-Russian Relations: Looking to the Future under Obama," roundtable at the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, Chicago, Illinois, March 12, 2009, audio available at: http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/podcast_details.php?podcast_id=144.

Ultimately, as President Obama said during his speech at the 2009 Civil Society Summit, the U.S. approach is guided by the principle that “Russia’s future is up to the Russian people.” Russia is still a society in deep transition, and the full transformation to capitalism and liberal democracy, if and when it happens, will take generations.⁵² This reality dictates a larger degree of “strategic patience” than the United States has perhaps exercised in the past.⁵³ Therefore, as analysts have recommended, the Obama administration appears to have decided that the safest and most productive course of action is to stay involved, while remaining responsive to Russian opinion about U.S. assistance and allow allowing Russian initiatives to take precedence.

⁵² Trenin, “Thinking Strategically,” 6.

⁵³ Kuchins, “Prospects for Engagement with Russia,” 7.

TRANSNATIONAL ISSUES

The current watchwords of international politics seem to be multipolar, multipartner, and multilateral. There is a consensus that the world has grown too interdependent and too interconnected (two other popular descriptors) to allow problems to be solved unilaterally. Further, the biggest problems in the international arena – for example, climate change, catastrophic terrorism, and the world financial crisis – are not the problems of any one nation.¹ Instead, they are shared obstacles that can best be tackled through global partnership. Part of a redesigned U.S.-Russian relationship, therefore, involves not only how the two countries can work together on areas of mutual interest, but also how they can confront global challenges together, with or without other major powers.

Near the top of the transnational agenda is climate change. Russia is the world's third-largest emitter of carbon dioxide, one of the leading contributors to global warming.² As mentioned in the "Energy Security" and "Trade and Investment" sections, the Obama administration has expressed interest in cooperating with Russia on developing renewable energy sources (including nuclear energy, as under the 123 agreement), increasing energy efficiency, and combating emissions.³ On renewable energy research, some experts recommend using the ongoing U.S.-Chinese collaboration on reaching energy efficiency benchmarks as a model for a similar initiative with Russia.⁴ As noted in a 2005 study, the United States and Russia have complementary technical expertise that could make cooperation hugely beneficial: the United States specializes in environmental simulation and digital mapping, and Russia is skilled in translating physical and chemical concepts into large-scale engineering projects.⁵ Pooling this knowledge could further cooperation in combating climate change.⁶

¹ Susan Rice, "A New Course in the World, A New Approach at the UN," remarks at New York University's Center for Global Affairs, New York, New York, August 12, 2009, transcript available at: http://www.realclearworld.com/printpage/?url=http://www.realclearworld.com/articles/2009/08/13/a_new_course_in_the_world_a_new_approach_at_the_un__97050.html; and Obama, "Remarks of President Obama to the United Nations General Assembly."

² Commission on U.S. Policy toward Russia, "The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia," 12.

³ On combating emissions, see Burns, "Remarks at World Russia Forum."

⁴ Charap et al., "After the 'Reset,'" 30.

⁵ National Research Council, *Strengthening U.S.-Russian Cooperation on Nuclear Nonproliferation*, 30.

⁶ *Ibid.*

Climate change has also raised questions about control of the Arctic and access to the region's hydrocarbons. Preliminary reports suggest that the Arctic contains as much as 25 percent of the world's remaining undiscovered oil and gas reserves.⁷ The Arctic has become a growing area of dispute, and Russia has angered some by laying claim to a significant portion of its seabed, arguing that the submarine Lomonosov Ridge is contiguous with the Siberian continental shelf and therefore an extension of Russian territory.⁸ Some observers recommend that the United States ratify (or renegotiate) the Law of the Sea Treaty (UNCLOS) and take the lead in addressing this problem.⁹ Secretary of State Clinton has asserted that she will work to convince the Senate to ratify UNCLOS.¹⁰ Because this treaty does not cover all contingencies of the problem, others suggest negotiating an international Arctic-specific treaty, in addition to ratifying UNCLOS.¹¹ Still others suggest that the United States should update its icebreaker fleet.¹² Those who fear Russian dominance in the Arctic region recommend that the United States conduct a new survey of strategic resources and coordinate policies with NATO and the United States' Nordic allies.¹³ Others suggest joint U.S.-Russian exploration of the region's resources or joint management of new shipping routes that emerge as the ice melts.¹⁴ Indeed, if control of Arctic resources is incorporated into cooperation in combating climate change and further broadening scientific and economic cooperation, competition between the United States and Russia might be avoided and a cooperative approach to the region adopted.¹⁵

⁷ Scott G. Borgerson, "Arctic Meltdown: The Economic and Security Implications of Global Warming," *Foreign Affairs* 87, no. 2 (March/April 2008), 67.

⁸ Borgerson, "Arctic Meltdown, 74"; and "Russia Plays Down Talk of Arctic Resource Conflict," Reuters, June 10, 2009, <http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSLA1051234>.

⁹ Borgerson, "Arctic Meltdown," 75; and Åslund and Kuchins, *The Russia Balance Sheet*, 158.

¹⁰ Charap et al., "After the 'Reset,'" 41.

¹¹ Borgerson, "Arctic Meltdown," 75.

¹² *Ibid.*; Charap et al., "After the 'Reset,'" 41; and Cohen, "How the Obama Administration Should Engage Russia," 16.

¹³ Cohen, "How the Obama Administration Should Engage Russia," 16.

¹⁴ On scientific cooperation, see Charap et al., "After the 'Reset,'" 41. On shipping routes, see Borgerson, "Arctic Meltdown," 76.

¹⁵ Burns, "Remarks at World Russia Forum"; Robert Legvold, "Strategic Assessment" (The Goal: A Vision of U.S.-Russia Relations Four or Ten Years from Now), [mhtml:http://www.amacad.org/russia/6goal.mhtml?6goal_files/slide0024.htm](http://www.amacad.org/russia/6goal.mhtml?6goal_files/slide0024.htm).

Catastrophic terrorism is another major transnational issue where U.S.-Russian cooperation could be enormously beneficial. One of the more common recommendations is to explore expanded intelligence sharing. A similar initiative was successful immediately after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and it could be revived in the context of the July 2009 summit agreement on military-to-military cooperation.¹⁶ Moscow's decision not to suspend its agreement with NATO allowing transit across Russia to Afghanistan, despite Russian suspension of other components of NATO-Russia cooperation in the wake of its war in Georgia, suggests that Russia still views collaboration in Afghanistan as serving a vital security interest.¹⁷

The July 2009 U.S.-Russian agreement to allow air transport of military equipment and personnel to Afghanistan is a recent example of promising cooperation on this front.¹⁸ As the text of the agreement notes, "The Russian Federation's decision to open these valuable transit routes supplements its already robust airlift support and provision of commodities to Coalition efforts in Afghanistan, and further illustrates that Russia is a valuable member of the international coalition supporting the security, stability, and reconstruction of Afghanistan."¹⁹ In practical terms, the agreement promises to save the U.S. military time and money; it also helps to diversify available transportation routes.²⁰ The agreement permits as many as 4,500 flights yearly; the first airlift took place on October 8, 2009.²¹ As of March

¹⁶ For more on the military cooperation agreement, see "United States-Russia Military to Military Relations," July 6, 2009, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/United-States-Russia-Military-to-Military-Relations/.

¹⁷ Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, "Speech at the Royal United Service Institute (RUSI)," Brussels, Belgium, September 18, 2008, transcript available at: <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2008/s080918a.html>.

¹⁸ "United States-Russia Military Transit Agreement," July 6, 2009, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/FACT-SHEET-United-States-Russia-Military-Transit-Agreement/. Such cooperative gestures are undermined, however, by Moscow's presumed involvement in Kyrgyz President Kurmanbek Bakiyev's decision to evict the United States from the Manas Air Base in February 2009. The Manas Air Base is hugely important to the effort in Afghanistan and, though it will ultimately remain open, the drawn-out affair cast a pall over some of Russia's other, more accommodating actions.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*; Jeff Schogol, "U.S. Sends First Lethal Cargo to Afghanistan through Russian Airspace," "Stripes Central," in *Stars and Stripes*, October 8, 2009, <http://blogs.stripes.com/blogs/stripes-central/us-sends-first-lethal-cargo-afghanistan-through-russian-airspace>.

2010, there had been 111 flights carrying more than 15,000 soldiers.²² By April 2010, the number of troops transported had jumped to 20,000, with an average of two flights daily. The agreement allows for up to 12 flights per day and 4,500 per year.²³

In addition to renewing and expanding military cooperation, analysts recommend that NATO work with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Cooperative Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), two regional security groupings in which Russia is a leading member.²⁴ Developing formal ties with these organizations (especially the SCO, given China's membership) will institutionalize the relationship between the United States and regional states. Additionally, it could legitimate some U.S. activity in the post-Soviet space and prove beneficial to U.S. and NATO efforts in Afghanistan.²⁵ As an opening step, the United States can seek "dialogue partner" status in the SCO and structure cooperation around the SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure.²⁶ The United States reportedly investigated requesting observer status in 2006 but was discouraged by the Kremlin. Changes in leadership in both nations, however, as well as the newly created "dialogue partner" option, make quietly revisiting the issue worthwhile.²⁷ Alternatively, the NATO-Russia Council and the OSCE could serve as venues to further counterterrorism cooperation among international actors.²⁸

Reflecting recommendations that the United States and Russia improve their bilateral counterterrorism efforts, the Presidential Commission created the Counterterrorism Working Group, chaired by Daniel Benjamin, coordinator for counterterrorism and Anatoly Safonov, special representative for cooperation on counterterrorism.²⁹ The group met in November 2009 and "agreed to

²² Hillary Rodham Clinton, "Remarks with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov," Moscow, Russia, March 18, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/03/138531.htm>.

²³ "20,000 US troops transited through Russia for Afghanistan," AFP, April 14, 2010, <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5iYXz9HahKUgNoJ6aWcjuBrQhWiNA>.

²⁴ On SCO, see Charap et al., "After the 'Reset,'" 38–39; on CSTO and SCO, see Hahn, "U.S.-Russian Relations and the War against Jihadism," 20; and Legvold, "The Russia File," 88.

²⁵ Charap et al., "After the 'Reset,'" 38.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Hahn, "U.S.-Russian Relations and the War against Jihadism," 17.

²⁹ "U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission," https://www.usrbc.org/government/presidential_commission/. On recommendations, see, for example, Hahn, "U.S.-Russian Relations and the War against Jihadism," 17.

work together in the multilateral arena to strengthen international counterterrorism norms and increase capacity building; counter the ideological dimension of violent extremism; improve our transportation security; and discuss Afghanistan in the counterterrorism context.”³⁰ Since that initial meeting, bilateral cooperation has apparently proceeded well. The Counterterrorism Working Group also contributes to the broader goal of institutionalizing Russia’s role in fighting catastrophic terrorism and increasing its status as a global stakeholder.

The idea of U.S.-Russian cooperation on counterterrorism has been popular for much of the past decade, particularly in relation to scientific collaboration on how to prevent biological and radiological attacks. For example, in 2002, members of a task force exploring ways to expand the Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program suggested that the United States and Russia introduce a global health monitoring system able to detect outbreaks of infectious disease. Such a system would both serve a clear operational purpose and, in its attention to the threat of biological attack, would help reinforce the Biological Weapons Convention.³¹ The National Academy of Science and the Russian Academy of Sciences have conducted several joint workshops on counterterrorism and released four reports on the subject, most recently a 2009 report on the 2007 meeting dealing with “potential attacks involving biological agents, transportation networks, and energy systems.”³² A 2006 report on combating urban terrorism in the United States and Russia proposed that the two countries begin “reciprocal observation of and participation in simulations of terrorist attacks.” The group suggested that both sides have much to learn from the other’s direct experience in dealing with the practical aspects of the terrorist threat. The report also recommends collaborating to develop sensors and other technical means of monitoring at-risk facilities.³³ The 2005 joint task force recommended forming a bilateral technical working group

³⁰ “Joint Statement by the U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission Coordinators on Commission Progress.”

³¹ Working Group on U.S.-Russian Nonproliferation Cooperation, “Beyond Nunn-Lugar,” in Henry D. Sokolski and Thomas Riisager, eds., *Beyond Nunn-Lugar: Curbing the Next Wave of Weapons Proliferation Threats from Russia* (Washington, D.C.: Nonproliferation Policy Education Center, April 2002), 5, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdf/files/pub131.pdf>.

³² Glenn E. Schweitzer, rapporteur, “Countering Terrorism Biological Agents, Transportation Networks, and Energy Systems: Summary of a U.S.-Russian Workshop,” Committee on Counterterrorism Challenges for Russia and the United States, Office for Central Europe and Eurasia, National Academies of Sciences, in cooperation with the Russian Academy of Sciences (Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press, 2009), vii, http://books.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=12490&page=1.

³³ Glenn E. Schweitzer and A. Chelsea Sharber, eds., *Countering Urban Terrorism in Russia and the United States: Proceedings of a Workshop*, Committee on Counterterrorism, Challenges for Russia and the United States, Office

dedicated to combating radiological terrorism.³⁴ As the NRC-RAS series of reports suggest, and Glenn Schweitzer, director of Eurasian Programs at the National Academies, argues, “[U]nlocking laboratory doors can be an important step in building confidence between both individuals and governments.”³⁵ Research to prevent different forms of potential terrorist attacks could therefore have more wide-reaching effects on the U.S.-Russian relationship than simply the benefit of eliminating a common threat.³⁶

Counterterrorism and global warming are the most obvious (and perhaps most critical) individual transnational issues for the bilateral agenda. As stressed in many of the reports, however, numerous other issues also merit serious attention and could prove fruitful areas for collaboration. These include managing the rise of other global powers so that they become fully integrated into the international system and working to stem trafficking in humans, as well as drugs and other illicit materials.³⁷ Russian influence would also be helpful in efforts to stabilize the broader Middle East – not just the aforementioned issues of Afghanistan and Iran, but also, for example, the Israeli-Palestinian quagmire. Utilizing Russia’s relationship with Syria could be helpful in recruiting other regional powers in finding a successful, durable solution to the conflict.³⁸ Russian leaders have said repeatedly that they want engagement in multilateral efforts to be “a key part of their foreign policy approach.”³⁹ Including discussions of these issues on the bilateral agenda would both strengthen the relationship and provide necessary global leadership in addressing these problems.⁴⁰

for Central Europe and Eurasia, National Research Council, in cooperation with the Russian Academy of Sciences (Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press, 2006), 4, http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=11698.

³⁴ National Research Council, *Strengthening U.S.-Russian Cooperation on Nuclear Nonproliferation*, 6. In 2007 the National Research Council published a report entitled “U.S.-Russian Collaboration in Combating Radiological Terrorism,” available at http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=11801#toc.

³⁵ Glenn Schweitzer, “Reset Cooperation with Russia,” *Science*, 324 (June 12, 2009), 1365.

³⁶ Pifer, “Reversing the Decline,” 19.

³⁷ Legvold, “Strategic Assessment” (The Goal: A Vision of U.S.-Russia Relations Four or Ten Years from Now), 79.

³⁸ Robert Legvold, “Strategic Assessment” (U.S. Foreign Policy Priorities and Russia's Place in Them), [mhtml:http://www.amacad.org/russia/2priorities.mhtml?2priorities_files/frame.htm](http://www.amacad.org/russia/2priorities.mhtml?2priorities_files/frame.htm). This will necessitate discussions on Russian arms sales to Syria and Iran. See Graham, “Resurgent Russia and U.S. Purpose,” 27–28.

³⁹ Pifer, “Reversing the Decline,” 19.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

Finally, there is the task of reforming global governance and the international financial infrastructure. This subject was mentioned earlier in the discussion of European security and economic cooperation, but it is worth reiterating in this context as well. The United States will remain the preeminent world power for some time to come. But conditions are changing, and international institutions such as the United Nations are proving insufficient in managing the crises of a globalized and interdependent world.⁴¹ Even as Russia sorts through the domestic repercussions and implications of the financial crisis, it will continue to have the capacity to act as either a global partner or a global spoiler in efforts to reach a new international equilibrium. Therefore, as many observers have argued, efforts “to reform international financial and security institutions will be optimized only if Russia is given a chance to contribute constructively.”⁴² Russia has made plain that it wishes to play an active role in these negotiations; most analysts agree that the United States should support that aim.

⁴¹ Graham, “Resurgent Russia and U.S. Purpose,” 5.

⁴² Legvold, “The Russia File,” 79.

CONCLUSION

During the 2009 Moscow summit, President Obama gave what was billed as the “third major foreign policy address” of his presidency at the graduation ceremony of the New Economic School in Moscow.¹ In the speech, the president stated that “America wants a strong, peaceful, and prosperous Russia.”² He emphasized his belief in the possibility of robust cooperation between the two countries and outlined a wide-ranging agenda, including efforts such as working toward nuclear nonproliferation, combating climate change, fighting violent extremism, and increasing economic cooperation. The speech did not ignore the more explosive issues – Obama reiterated the United States’ support for Georgia’s territorial integrity, the right of all states to choose their own security arrangements, and democracy. Yet, he seemed careful to avoid the appearance of lecturing, and he softened his criticisms by noting that even the United States has work to do to reach the democratic ideal.³ This was the first major presidential address on U.S.-Russian relations since President Clinton’s April 1993 speech in advance of his summit in Vancouver, Canada, with Boris Yeltsin, and it underscores the Obama administration’s commitment to “getting Russia right.”

The success of the 2009 Moscow Summit seemed to demonstrate that the Obama administration had successfully “hit the reset button.” The United States and Russia appeared to have embarked on a substantive and ambitious agenda.⁴ Perhaps even more important, the Obama administration had begun emphasizing the need to place cooperation with Russia within a larger framework. For example, in response to a question about what compelled President Medvedev to change his stance on sanctions toward Iran at the 2009 UN General Assembly meeting, Michael McFaul attributed the shift in part to administration efforts “to develop a strategic relationship with Russia.” The current approach, he said, rests on placing interests within the broader context. McFaul stressed

¹ Jonathan Weisman, Gregory L. White, and Alan Cullison, “U.S. Hardens Its Stance ahead of Summit with Russia,” *Wall Street Journal*, July 3, 2009, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124648454414282621.html>. The previous two addresses were the speech on nuclear disarmament in Prague in April 2009 and the speech on U.S.-Muslim relations in Cairo in June 2009.

² Barack Obama, “Remarks by the President at the New Economic School Graduation.”

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ James Collins, “Obama and the Moscow Summit: A Job Well Done,” Web Commentary, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (July 9, 2009), <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=23383&prog=zru>.

that “we have common interests that are not just this thing for that thing, but a bigger framework.”⁵ The administration realizes that considering cooperation on discrete issues in isolation from an understanding of the relationship as whole or broader U.S. objectives ultimately cripples any attempt at collaboration. The early priority the administration gave to the relationship with Russia also demonstrates a clear conviction that, as the September 2008 gathering of former ambassadors argued, the relationship will continue to need support and “should not be left hostage to political inertia.”⁶

More than a year after Vice President Biden declared that it was “time to hit the reset button,” however, political inertia is a growing concern. Considering the arduous course of the START negotiations, the as-yet-unresolved issue of Iran’s nuclear ambitions, and continuing (if lessened) friction over the neighborhood and security arrangements, there are those who feel that Obama should decrease his emphasis on the U.S.-Russian relationship, and instead devote more intention to what are perceived as more important problems. Negative reviews of the “reset” now appear more frequently, in part because despite a measurable improvement in atmospherics, the administration has few concrete achievements to show for its efforts.⁷ Even those who contend that the remarkable improvement in the tenor of the relationship is in and of itself a considerable achievement note that without swift progress on a host of agenda items, including prominent issues such as repealing the Jackson-Vanik amendment as well as ratifying the new START and the CTBT, serious trouble lies ahead.⁸

⁵ Michael McFaul, in “Press Briefing by Gary Samore, National Security Council Coordinator for Arms Control and Nonproliferation; Ambassador Alex Wolff, Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations; and Mike McFaul, Senior Director for Russian Affairs on Thursday’s UN Security Council Meeting and the President’s Meeting today with President Medvedev of Russia.”

⁶ Bessmertnykh et al., “U.S.-Russian Relations: The Longer View,” 5.

⁷ See, for example, Nikolas Gvosdev, “Ditch the Reset,” *National Interest Online*, January 12, 2010, <http://www.nationalinterest.org/Article.aspx?id=22756>; and Ariel Cohen, “Obama’s Russia Policy: A Disappointing First Year,” *The Foundry*, blog of the Heritage Foundation, January 19, 2010, <http://blog.heritage.org/2010/01/19/obamas-russia-policy-a-disappointing-first-year/>. There is also some debate as to what can rightly be termed an achievement. For example, administration officials state that the problems with the lethal transit agreement resulted technical difficulties and not Russian obstructionism. Those who are more hawkish on Russia, however, tend not to believe this explanation.

⁸ Robert Legvold, during Thomas Graham and Robert Legvold, “A Conversation on Evolving U.S. Policy toward Russia,” American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Cambridge, Massachusetts, January 28, 2010; audio available at: <http://www.amacad.org/events/recent.aspx>.

Long-term success will depend on the ability of President Obama and President Medvedev to compel their governments to follow through on their commitments.⁹ It will further rest, however, on the Obama administration's ability to communicate to the American public the extremely high stakes the United States has in strengthening the relationship and in being able to prioritize its interests and objectives along the way.¹⁰ At this point, achieving the long-cited goal of a Russia fully ensconced in the Euro-Atlantic framework seems remote, not least because that framework itself may be shifting to accommodate a more multipolar (or multipartner) world. This does not mean that a strong strategic partnership, such as that the administration seems to envision, is no longer conceivable. It does suggest that such a partnership is unlikely to be built around the idea of Russia as a Westernizing country with traditional Western values and objectives. It further suggests that, as security structures and international relationships are reformed and reconstituted, it will likely be pressing shared interests that serve as the immediate impetus for improving relations.

Whether the U.S.-Russian relationship ultimately evolves to rest on shared values, or proceeds as a delicate balance of cooperation and competition based on convergent interests, it is a relationship that will require careful tending and dedicated attention.¹¹ In addition, it will require a deep, nuanced understanding of the relationship as a whole, and not just the disembodied pieces. As emerges from much of the recent work on U.S.-Russian relations, only after identifying how structural and specific problems relate to and impinge upon one another can the United States define a coherent policy adequate to this complex and profoundly important relationship.

⁹ Bessmertnykh et al., "U.S.-Russian Relations: The Longer View," 5.

¹⁰ The Commission for U.S. Policy toward Russia, "The Right Direction for U.S. Policy toward Russia," ii.

¹¹ Bessmertnykh et al., "U.S.-Russian Relations: The Longer View," 5.

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