

## AVOIDING U.S.-RUSSIA MILITARY ESCALATION DURING THE HYBRID WAR

DMITRI TRENIN | JANUARY 2018

Since February 2014, the Russian leadership has been in a de facto war mode with regard to the United States. The Kremlin saw the developments in Ukraine that led to the ouster of former president Viktor Yanukovich as a threefold threat: a U.S.-supported political invasion of Russia's vital strategic buffer, an attempt to prevent Moscow-led integration in post-Soviet Eurasia, and a move to build a barrier between Russia and the rest of Europe. Russian President Vladimir Putin, taken by surprise, responded with the use of force in Ukraine—first to secure Crimea for Russia and then to protect a rebel stronghold in Donbas. The events that followed have developed into a virtual Russo-American war—but a different kind of war compared to those the countries have fought in the past.

The crisis over Ukraine put an end to a quarter century of cooperative relations between Russia and the West and resulted in Russia's confrontation with the United States and its estrangement from Europe. This confrontation has often been labeled a second Cold War.<sup>1</sup> The analogy, however, is flawed: the world has changed too much since the 1980s to suggest that today's antagonism is merely a revival of an old conflict. The new confrontation is better described as a Hybrid War—a term which, like its predecessor, is capitalized here to highlight its distinct place in the history of international relations. This time, the U.S.-Russia conflict is not central to the world system, but, nevertheless, its outcome will help shape the future of that system.

The current Hybrid War is a conflict essentially between Russia and the United States over the issue of the world order. It is not the result of misunderstanding or miscalculation but rather the opposite; Russia, in particular, has a deliberate outcome in mind.<sup>2</sup> Moscow is pursuing a set of objectives—the most important of which is to reassert its role as a great power with a global reach. In Europe, specifically, it seeks to prevent NATO from moving forward into former Soviet territory, particularly Ukraine. As for Ukraine itself, the Kremlin wants it to serve as a buffer between Russia and NATO. Russia has important objectives outside of Europe as well, including in the Middle East. Since September 2015, Moscow has been waging a military campaign in Syria. The main purpose of the intervention—apart from the immediate need to prevent a major victory for Islamist extremists—was to return Russia to the regional and global stage as an active geopolitical player with considerable military capabilities. Russian actions in these and other areas therefore undermine the United States' global dominance of the post-Cold War period, even though the Russian Federation (unlike the Soviet Union) does not seek to impose its own model on the world.

Even as Russia opposes U.S. global hegemony and favors a more distributed balance of power among several major nations (including itself), the United States feels the challenge to the international liberal order that it began building after the end of World War II and has dominated since the end of the Cold War. As long as all major powers, including China

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Dmitri Trenin**, director of the Carnegie Moscow Center, has been with the center since its inception. He also chairs the research council and the Foreign and Security Policy Program.

*This article is part of a collection of publications by prominent U.S., Russian, and European experts on pressing challenges in Russia's troubled relationship with the West. It is intended to expand the range of views represented in ongoing debates about transatlantic security, Russia, and U.S.-Russian relations. This project is supported, in part, by the Carnegie Corporation of New York.*

and Russia, subscribed to the rules and norms of that order—and, in China's case, also benefited from it<sup>3</sup>—it was a genuine Pax Americana: a state of peace among the major powers, who all deferred to the United States. With Russia's breakout from the post-Cold War system, that unique period of peaceful relations among the principal players is now history.

Even though the scale of the current conflict is much smaller, the stakes are high once more. For the Kremlin, this is a battle for survival—of Russia's status as an independent player capable of defining and defending its interests and of the Russian leadership, which has been personally targeted by Western financial sanctions and various public accusations ranging from corruption to war crimes. Originally, Moscow believed that this conflict would be a short-term problem, but it now appears to be more prolonged than previously anticipated and may take a generation to resolve.

## FEATURES OF THE HYBRID WAR

This Hybrid War's most distinguishing feature is that it is being fought in a truly global, virtually borderless environment. International interaction is no longer restricted by walls or other state-imposed barriers. Traditional distinctions between strategy and tactics have been all but erased. The hybrid warriors include many more players than was the case during the Cold War—from national governments and transnational corporations to nongovernmental actors and even private individuals.

The war is being fought simultaneously in a number of spheres, on different levels, and in the never-ending, twenty-four-hour news cycle. This aspect of warfare is particularly true of the field of information, which is of prime importance in the Information Age that emerged with the end of the Cold War. From cyber conflicts and the use of artificial intelligence to the predominance of propaganda and fake news, the main battles of the Hybrid War are taking place outside of the purely physical realm and in the domain of new information technologies. Just as important to the Hybrid War is economics, which has been the key driver of globalization that has paralleled the rise of these innovative information technologies. The prominence of the U.S. media and the United States' immense financial power give it a huge advantage in both fields. As a result, the weapons of choice in the Hybrid

War are those that use information and economic power to discredit and sanction one's adversaries.<sup>4</sup>

Politically, the Hybrid War includes the outside stimulation of political changes in other countries through street activism and the promotion of specific values, parties, or popular movements. It has been characterized by interference in elections, political transitions, and other political processes, including various efforts to hack sensitive information, spread compromising or damaging materials and fake news, encourage character assassinations, and impose personal and other noneconomic sanctions (for example, restrictions on travel, seizure of assets, imprisonment, or deportation) on opponents. The existence of a common information space makes waging political warfare on foreign territory much easier and more attractive than ever before. Cross-border promotion of democracy and support for the color revolutions that dominated the 2000s (for example, the 2003 Rose Revolution in Georgia and the 2004 Orange Revolution in Ukraine) have now found counterparts in emerging solidarity among those who espouse more conservative and traditionalist values, such as political systems based on authoritarian models and strict national sovereignty.<sup>5</sup>

Military power is not out of the picture—though its use is different than in the Cold War. The static standoff of million-strong armies in Europe and the long shadow of the nuclear arms race have drawn down or faded. Nuclear deterrence between Russia and the West remains in place but at lower and more stable levels than during the Cold War. Today's risks of miscalculation derive from potential incidents involving conventional forces. A token military standoff has reemerged along Russia's border with NATO countries, but, to date, this standoff bears no resemblance in either scale or scope to the forces that faced each other during the Cold War. The main focus is on developing new military technologies and novel means and ways of prosecuting warfare—from outer space to cyberspace—that blur or eliminate the distinction between wartime and peacetime. Like its predecessor, the Hybrid War is a war in the time of peace. Even more than in the past, however, the onus is on national leaderships to minimize the number of casualties, ideally to zero.

Russian military strategists had developed the concept of hybrid warfare even before the actual conflict broke out in

earnest between the United States and Russia in early 2014. Analyzing the experience of the post-Soviet color revolutions and the 2011 Arab Spring, Chief of the General Staff Valery Gerasimov wrote in February 2013 that the “consequences of new conflicts are comparable to those of a real war”; in many cases, nonmilitary methods “are substantially more effective than the power of arms,” and greater emphasis is placed on “political, economic, information, humanitarian, and other nonmilitary means” and “covert military measures,” including “information warfare and actions by special forces.” In this environment, “overt use of military force, often in the form of peacekeeping or crisis management, takes place only at a certain stage, mainly to achieve final success in a conflict.”<sup>6</sup> With regard to the U.S.-Russia confrontation, another key feature has surfaced: asymmetry between the sides’ capabilities.

## **POWER ASYMMETRIES AND ASYMMETRIC ACTIONS**

Although Gerasimov was referring to a hybrid war when discussing new means and methods of warfare, this analysis uses the newly fashionable term to describe the current U.S.-Russia confrontation. Unlike its Cold War predecessor, this conflict is asymmetrical. At least since the 1970s, the Soviet Union was the United States’ equal in terms of both nuclear and conventional military power. Even beyond its own vast land mass and immediate sphere of influence in Eastern Europe, it wielded considerable ideological power in many Western countries and in the Third World and presided over a system of alliances in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East. The Russian Federation, by contrast, has few formal allies, no satellite states, and a handful of protectorates, if one includes the self-proclaimed states of Abkhazia, Donbas, South Ossetia, and Transnistria. It has no ideology to compare with the comprehensive dogma of Marxism-Leninism, and although it is still a nuclear superpower, it lags far behind the United States in non-nuclear military capabilities. Economically, Russia—with its estimated 1.5 percent of the global gross domestic product—is a dwarf.

Neither the balance nor the correlation of forces, however, will determine the outcome of this confrontation. Despite the glaring asymmetries in the national power of the two sides of the conflict, the course of events is not predetermined. As a nonlinear, highly asymmetrical conflict, the

outcome likely will result from domestic developments in Russia or the United States or both. Both countries are facing serious problems that could prove decisive in the final calculations of the Hybrid War.

The United States is going through a triple crisis of its political system, exemplified but not caused by the arrival of President Donald Trump and the virulent domestic opposition to him and his policies. A crisis of social values lies beneath this political crisis and points to a widening gap between the more liberal and the largely conservative parts of the country. At the same time, the United States faces a crisis within its own foreign policy as it struggles to reconcile the conflict between the more inward-looking U.S. national interest and the international liberal order of the U.S.-led global system.

Russia, though outwardly stable, is approaching its own major crisis as the political regime created by Putin faces an uncertain future after the eventual departure of its figurehead. Putin’s Kremlin is already working on a political transition that would rejuvenate the elite and improve its competence and performance, but, at the same time, Russian society is also changing and Putin’s heirs cannot take its support for granted. Gross inequality, sluggish economic growth, low vertical mobility, and high-level corruption will present a range of serious challenges to the future Russian leadership.

The eventual outcome of the Hybrid War could be reminiscent of the downfall of the Soviet Union, which was far less the result of the U.S.-Soviet Cold War than of a misguided effort to reform the Soviet Union itself. Russia might break down and break up again, or it might decide on a foreign policy more geared toward its economic needs than to a certain concept of world order. As for the United States, it might decide to limit its global commitments and redesign its international role as the world’s preeminent but no longer dominant state. Yet, in doing so, it will need to accept that its change in status will come with a certain price and that it will not be able to take advantage of the benefits of the position it once enjoyed.

Asymmetries in power lead to asymmetric actions, which as Gerasimov suggested are intended to “neutralize the enemy’s superiority in warfare” or “identify and exploit the enemy’s vulnerabilities.”<sup>7</sup> By an order of magnitude—or more—Russia is outgunned, outmanned, and outspent by the combined

forces of the United States and its allies. To stay in the fight, it must rely on its few comparative advantages and seek to use them to maximum effect. These advantages include the geographical proximity of some of the main theaters of operation, such as Crimea and eastern Ukraine, where Russia has escalation dominance; the Russian political system, which allows for secretive, swift, and decisive action; and Moscow's willingness to take much higher risks in view of the disproportionately higher stakes involved for the Russian leadership and a national culture that historically has tolerated higher losses in defense or protection of the Motherland. Through swift decisions and actions, made without prior warning, Russia is capable of surprising its adversaries and keeping them off-balance. This situation promises an uncertain, hard-to-predict, and risky environment, where miscalculation can lead to incidents or collisions that, in turn, lead to escalation. Granted, these incidents would be of a different kind than the tank standoff at Berlin's Checkpoint Charlie in late October 1961 or the Cuban Missile Crisis barely a year later. Escalation resulting from miscalculation would not be automatic, but the wider damage it could cause needs to be taken seriously.

## AVOIDING MISTAKES LEADING TO ESCALATION

The Hybrid War is highly dynamic and, so far, has no agreed-upon rules. In this sense, it resembles the Cold War of the early 1950s rather than that of the 1970s. However, it is possible, up to a point, to avoid military escalation during the Hybrid War. U.S.-Russian antagonism does not mean that the two countries' interests are in total opposition. Unlike in the second half of the twentieth century, neither party envisions a real shooting war against its adversary and neither wants to allow the situation to become uncontrollable. The most obvious ways to manage the confrontation are incident prevention, confidence building, and arms control.

**Incident prevention**, on the face of it, should be easy. Since the early 1970s, Moscow and Washington have had agreements in place to avoid incidents, which in the Cold War days carried the risk of escalation to nuclear levels. Effective prevention requires a degree of professionalism, adequate safety measures, and reliable channels of communications. However, during a Hybrid War, these preconditions cannot

be taken for granted. Acting from a position of relative weakness, Russia is likely to compensate for its inferior overall strength by raising the stakes of confrontation.

Russian pilots, operating close to the Russian territory, are evidently allowed to take higher risks to ward off U.S. and NATO warplanes: the closer those planes fly to Russian borders, the closer Russian planes come to Western aircraft. In response, in 2017, Western military aircraft approached a plane transporting Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu to the Russian province of Kaliningrad—an escort maneuver evidently intended to poke the Russians in the eye. No midair collisions have occurred so far, but encounters between Russian and Western aircraft have been uncomfortably close. The problem is simple but hard to solve: Russia wants to keep Western planes at a safe distance from its borders, whereas the United States and other NATO countries are adamant that they do not recognize any limitations on their activities in international airspace. Managing the problem requires both sides to introduce a set of technical preventative measures, such as activating transponders on military aircraft. But to safely eliminate the possibility of incidents altogether, both parties would have to exercise general restraint—which can only result from political decisions.

The issue is not that Russian daredevils are performing acts of hooliganism in the air or that NATO pilots in international airspace are unaware that they are coming too close to Russian borders or assets. Each side seeks to make a point to the other, and neither is willing to step back, thus continuing the dangerous game. The only way out of this situation lies in a mutual understanding to stop testing each other's nerves and aerobatic skills and instead to observe a protocol under which neither party provokes the other. This could be a first, relatively easy step toward military de-escalation.

A different kind of incident is likely to occur when the United States and Russia fight parallel campaigns in a third country: Syria. Deconfliction—that is, the limited sharing of information to prevent Russian and U.S. planes from flying in each other's way as they fulfill their missions in Syria—has been practiced successfully ever since Russia first began its operations in Syria. However, it is possible that Russian or U.S. bombs and missiles may inadvertently hit each other's



troops on the ground or unintentionally strike each other's allies. There are also concerns that the United States or Russia may pass information on each other's force locations to their respective allies, with no control over the consequences. In October 2017, the Russian Ministry of Defense accused the United States of complicity in creating the situations in which twenty-nine Russian military police members were ambushed and a general and another senior officer were killed. One can only imagine the reaction in the United States if a U.S. general had been killed and several officers wounded by Russia's allies on the ground in Syria.<sup>8</sup>

Preventing incidents is one thing; making sure that any actual incidents do not escalate is another. To avoid escalation, Russia and NATO military authorities need to have reliable channels of communications. The NATO-Russia Council, originally designed as a vehicle of cooperation, should be adapted for this new role. Russian and NATO theater commanders in the field, at sea, and in the air need to have emergency means of communication as well. At the highest military level, the Russian Chief of the General Staff should have a direct line to the U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Periodic face-to-face meetings of these top-ranking officers—which have been held three times already in 2017—are important to build a professional relationship.

**Confidence building** includes a host of measures agreed upon by NATO and the Warsaw Pact countries at the end of the Cold War and codified in the regularly revised Vienna Document.<sup>9</sup> These measures include notifications before countries conduct major military exercises, the invitation of observers to these activities, and consultation regarding aerial overflights of territories of participating parties. These measures are still in place, but they are being used reluctantly and with some exemptions. Russia, seeking to recover its capabilities, has been holding snap military drills or exercises whose parameters are just under the size and scope threshold that would require mandatory advance notification or the invitation of observers. In the new asymmetrical situation, Russia has reasons to believe that it can benefit from allowing some of its actions to be ambiguous or unpredictable.

Both Russia and NATO have effective ways and means of monitoring military developments on the “other side.”

Moscow, in particular, has learned to rely on its own intelligence-gathering assets to keep an eye on the United States and its allies. Of course, lack of full transparency can lead to misperception and miscalculation. In principle, consultations between Russia and NATO countries have a strong part to play in bolstering confidence in each other's peaceful intentions. Yet the most important element of mutual confidence is that neither Russia nor NATO is able to launch a large-scale surprise attack anywhere in Europe—a major risk factor during the Cold War. The arms control treaties and massive troop reductions of the 1990s all but eliminated this historic threat, and, to date, this concern shows no real sign of resurfacing.

Still, no amount of military transparency can compensate for the absence of strategic predictability. On the Western side, the Baltic States and Poland struggle with their historically grounded fears—however irrational at present—that Moscow might wish to reconquer them and that NATO would not defend them against a nuclear superpower. On the Russian side, there are suspicions that NATO membership (which is still formally on offer to Ukraine and Georgia) would bring the Western military machine even more uncomfortably close to Moscow. Until those strategic concerns are put to rest—an unlikely prospect in the current tense environment—tactical confidence building will play only a limited role.

**Arms control**, which was one of the principal instruments of confrontation management during the Cold War, is less prominent today. This has much to do with the nature of the Hybrid War, with raw military power playing a far less important role than in the past; with a new geopolitical environment that eschews the static standoffs and numerical arms races that characterized the European landscape from the late 1940s through the late 1980s; and with the capabilities of new mobile long-range weapons systems whose vastly increased precision guidance makes quantitative and regional limitations meaningless. The capabilities of particular weapons systems have become far more important than their numbers, thus upending the traditional paradigm of arms control. Viewed from a different angle, intelligence assets and capabilities—known in arms control jargon as the national technical means—give military commanders and political leaders a rich picture of the arsenals of foreign powers.

Nevertheless, residual arms control still plays an important political and psychological role in the Hybrid War. Inspections, consultations, and information exchanges all help to enhance reassurance on both sides. These efforts pertain, above all, to nuclear weapons, which are by no means out of the equation. Even though fears of a nuclear war between the superpowers—so widespread during the Cold War—have all but evaporated, Russia is adamant that it still be treated as a nuclear superpower.

Should the 1987 U.S.-Soviet Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, which banned medium-range missiles, be abrogated over the U.S. allegations that Russia has developed a ground-launched cruise missile with a range that is covered by the treaty,<sup>10</sup> the security situation in Europe would become much more strained.<sup>11</sup> If the 2011 New START Treaty on strategic arms reductions is not extended and is allowed to expire in 2021, it would represent a final strategic decoupling between Moscow and Washington and would open up a new era of unregulated strategic nuclear relations between the two nuclear superpowers. To avoid a further serious deterioration of the relationship, the INF Treaty must be preserved (by removing each party's concerns about the other's activities) and the New START Treaty should be extended at the very least. In the current geopolitical climate, however, these agreements may prove to be too difficult to maintain. As for negotiating, concluding, and finally ratifying a new U.S.-Russia nuclear arms treaty, it will probably be politically impossible in the United States in the foreseeable future.

Even if existing treaties continue to operate, however, other issues of discord such as missile defense, strategic non-nuclear weapons, space-based weapons, and cyber operations would continue to erode the U.S.-Russia strategic relationship. The present political environment would make it challenging to place those new systems under any form of control—all the more so as much of the institutional memory of the arms control process has been lost. The continuing decline of this once key element of the U.S.-Russia relationship will add to the uncertainties of the twenty-first-century global environment.

Conventional arms control in Europe will hardly fare better. The asymmetries between NATO and Russia and unresolved territorial issues from Abkhazia to Crimea make it virtually

impossible for both parties to negotiate a new treaty to replace the now-defunct 1990 Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. Subregional arrangements, for instance in the Baltic Sea area, would likely put Russia at a disadvantage while giving it no real security guarantees. NATO has only token forces in the region; Russia, by contrast, has begun to bolster the previously reduced force levels in its Western Military District. This area lies in the historical route of Western invasions of Russia and includes both the capital city of Moscow and the former imperial capital, St. Petersburg. The Western Military District also includes Kaliningrad, which is completely surrounded on land by NATO territory (namely, Poland and Lithuania). Moreover, Moscow made it clear a decade ago that it would not accept limitations on its forces deployed on the national territory. Under the current circumstances, the most realistic option would be for Russia and NATO to exercise reciprocal restraint, avoiding overmilitarization of their border zones. For NATO, this would mean striking a balance between the minimum force levels necessary to reassure the Baltics and Poles and the levels that would provoke a strong and unwelcome Russian reaction. As of now, the Kremlin still regards NATO deployments close to the Russian border as nonthreatening.<sup>12</sup>

A major problem in conventional arms control in Europe is that without a general resolution of the conflict in Donbas and the recognition of the status of Crimea, any agreements are unlikely to include Ukraine—the area where a large-scale military conflict involving Russia is most plausible. The likelihood of freezing the conflict in Donbas by means of deploying a UN interposition force, as suggested by Putin in September 2017, is slim because Ukraine will not accept a cessation of violence without a simultaneous restoration of Ukrainian sovereignty in Donbas, including the areas along the Russian-Ukrainian border. Donbas, along with Crimea, will remain a dual *casus belli* in Europe's east. Rebuilding Russian-Ukrainian relations on an entirely new and healthier basis will take a long time. If and when such a reconciliation happens, it will be the result of efforts by new generations of leaders on both sides. For now, it will be up to the United States to make sure that the Ukrainian leadership does not overplay its hand and then desperately turn to Washington for protection, as former Georgian president Mikheil Saakashvili

did after his ill-fated assault on South Ossetia in August 2008. The Russians, for their part, will have to continue to exercise restraining influence on the forces of the pro-Russian Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics in Donbas.

## CONCLUSION

The Hybrid War is still at an early stage. Now that the immediate crisis of 2014–2015 has ended, the current state of affairs demands that a new provisional security modus vivendi be established in Europe, however unsatisfactory it may appear to both sides. Such a modus vivendi cannot result from technical decisions and will require some kind of a political understanding. Even though a new security architecture for the continent is still a long way off, there are realistic ways and means to reduce the risks and to avoid escalation, and these arrangements need to be agreed upon at the political level. Geopolitical realities must be accepted in order to be managed, let alone improved. Russia, the United States, NATO countries, and others in Europe need to keep their channels of communication open, avoid serious military buildups, and act promptly to deal with incidents and avoid escalation. With no new arms control treaties in the offing, existing ones need to be preserved. Reciprocal allegations of treaty violations should be discussed, and steps should be taken to resolve them diplomatically.

Although trust between Russia and the United States and Russia and Europe cannot be restored for many years, the degree of mistrust could be marginally reduced by a frank dialogue in which both parties outline their goals and concerns. The first objective should not be to find mutual agreement but rather to agree to disagree. Such frankness—which would not attempt to fall back on norms and principles that are not universal and cannot be imposed unilaterally and would avoid mutual recriminations and polemics—would be refreshing and could help establish a basis for communication. A follow-on objective could be to establish interactions between Russia and Western countries where such connections make sense for both sides—in areas such as U.S.-Russia deconfliction and possible postconflict collaboration in Syria. The nuclear issues posed by Iran and North Korea, the conflict in Afghanistan, and terrorism are other obvious areas for collaboration.

It must be remembered, however, that no amount of interaction and collaboration will change the current adversarial nature of U.S.-Russia relations or restore the previous partnership between Russia and the European Union. Even though the Hybrid War heavily affects economic relations between the belligerents and poisons the general political atmosphere in which they interact, it does not suppress contact and communication altogether. Cultural and other societal contacts may be curtailed but not severed. Information space is both a battlefield and a global commons; even economic relations, particularly between Russia and Europe, can continue despite the restrictions of sanctions. The world system remains one even if its structure is undergoing major changes.

The Cold War lasted for four decades; the Hybrid War is just completing its fourth year, but it, too, will not last forever. The Cold War's chief accomplishment is that it was kept cold. Avoiding hot war by accident or through miscalculation is the most important demand on the present hybrid warriors.

## NOTES

1. See, for example, Robert Legvold, *Return to Cold War* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2016). I admit being among the first, in late February 2014, to label the new situation in Russian-Western relations a “new cold war.” Soon, however, I rejected the analogy as misleading, in view of numerous dissimilarities between the two versions of confrontation.
2. For an analysis of the road to this confrontation, see Dmitri Trenin, “Russia's Breakout From the Post-Cold War Order: The Sources of Putin's Course,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, December 22, 2014, <http://carnegie.ru/2014/12/22/russia-s-breakout-from-post-cold-war-system-drivers-of-putin-s-course-pub-57589>.
3. While China was growing fast—exporting to the United States and the rest of the world and attracting massive investments from developed countries—Russia lost its Soviet-era industrial power and became a raw materials supplier for the economies of Europe and Asia. It also lost much of its political influence outside of the former Soviet Union, and its influence over the post-Soviet sphere substantially shrank. For these and other reasons, it is not surprising that Chinese and Russian views on the U.S.-led globalization process differed as much as their individual experiences with it.
4. The sanctions legislation enacted in the United States in August 2017 is capable of effectively paralyzing the entire Russian financial system.

5. To respond to long-standing Western support for liberal opposition in Russia, the Kremlin dropped its post-Soviet practice of dealing exclusively with the sitting governments and “systemic” opposition in Western countries and began to publicly contact leaders and parties outside the Western political mainstream, such as France’s National Front and Austria’s Freedom Party. The Russian state-run media gave ostensibly neutral or sympathetic coverage, among others, to Germany’s Alternative fuer Deutschland and Catalan separatists.
6. Valery Gerasimov, “Ценность науки в предвидении” [The value of science is in anticipation], *VPK News*, February 26, 2013, <http://vpk-news.ru/articles/14632>.
7. Ibid.
8. Barbara Starr and Ryan Browne, “Russia Bombed Location in Syria Near Where U.S. Troops Were Present,” CNN, September 18, 2017, <http://www.cnn.com/2017/09/18/politics/russia-us-syria-bomb-deir-ezzor/index.html>.
9. The 2011 Vienna Document published by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe builds upon the Stockholm Document of 1986 and the Vienna Documents agreed upon in 1990, 1992, 1994, and 1999.
10. Russia has made counteraccusations that the United States has deployed missile launchers on the ground in Europe that could be used for sea-based cruise missiles, which also are allowed under the treaty.
11. Putin was specific on that score in his remarks at the Meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Club on October 19, 2017, available at <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/55882>.
12. Ibid.

---

## U.S.-RUSSIA POLICY OPTIONS FOR THE LONG HAUL

*With the U.S.-Russian relationship badly frayed, what are the biggest risks for escalation, deterioration, and miscalculation? What, if any, opportunities exist for halting a continued downward slide?*

*With an eye toward informing the conversation about key issues in U.S.-Russian relations, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace has commissioned a series of analytical papers by leading U.S., Russian, and European experts and practitioners to take a cold-eyed look at these challenges.*

*Building on the work of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace—Chicago Council on Global Affairs Task Force on U.S. Policy Toward Russian, Ukraine, and Eurasia, these papers seek to better inform the conversation about U.S.-Russian relations and to expand the range of*

*perspectives beyond the relatively narrow confines of the current discussion in Washington and other capitals. The papers highlight the glaring differences between Russian and Western approaches to and perspectives on transatlantic, European, and Eurasian security.*

*The search for mutual understanding and dialogue is all the more challenging at a time when many of the long-established communication channels between Moscow and the West have been suspended as a result of what is increasingly described as a new cold war. Many of the perspectives in this collection differ, at times fundamentally, from the consensus view held by Western policymakers and analysts. Nevertheless, it is all the more vital for policymakers, analysts, and opinion-makers in the West to be informed about views held by their Russian counterparts, as these views oftentimes reflect and inform official Russian policy.*




---

## CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE

*The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace is a unique global network of policy research centers in Russia, China, Europe, the Middle East, India, and the United States. Our mission, dating back more than a century, is to advance peace through analysis and development of fresh policy ideas and direct engagement and collaboration with decisionmakers in government, business, and civil society. Working together, our centers bring the inestimable benefit of multiple national viewpoints to bilateral, regional, and global issues.*

© 2018 Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. All rights reserved.

Carnegie does not take institutional positions on public policy issues; the views represented herein are the author’s own and do not necessarily reflect the views of Carnegie, its staff, or its trustees.

