

U.S.-RUSSIA RELATIONS IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE GEORGIA CRISIS

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TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2008

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 1:35 p.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Howard L. Berman (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Chairman BERMAN. The committee will come to order. Today, we consider the future of United States relations with Russia in the aftermath of the crisis that erupted with sudden ferocity in the Republic of Georgia 5 weeks ago.

But before looking ahead, we also need to look back more than 5 weeks to understand what role United States policy toward Russia and Georgia played in setting the stage for these events.

Over the last few months, the international community watched with increasing concern as the Russian Government sought to provoke Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili through an escalating series of questionable legal and military actions. Russia established official ties with the separatist government in Abkhazia, issuing passports and citizenship to its residents. Then Moscow dispatched a military jet to down a Georgian reconnaissance craft, and it deployed railway troops to Abkhazia under dubious pretenses. When this failed to stimulate a reaction from the Georgians, the Russians sought to destabilize South Ossetia instead.

On August 8th, the world watched the sad climax of months of provocation. Television screens were filled with the sickening juxtaposition of Russian tanks rolling across Georgian soil while the world celebrated peace and harmony during the opening ceremonies of the Beijing Olympics.

President Saakashvili's decision to take Russia's bait and engage militarily was a terrible blunder. But before we render too harsh a judgment, consider the intensifying provocations that the Georgian Government faced, including reports of ethnic cleansing in South Ossetia.

Russia's use of disproportionate force and its failure to respond to two Georgian cease-fire offers made it painfully clear that its goal was not to protect its supposed citizens in South Ossetia, as it claimed, but, rather, to remove the democratically elected leader of a sovereign nation. As evidenced by Russian President Medvedev's recent comments, that effort continues.

Two weeks after the conflict started, our colleague, George Miller, and I went to Tbilisi at the request of Speaker Pelosi to dem-

onstrate solidarity with the Georgian people and to deliver humanitarian aid. We met the President and other top officials, and we affirmed that the sovereignty of Georgia should be respected, and the integrity of its borders should be restored.

Indeed, I am pleased to see in the audience today—I think the Ambassador of Georgia is here, and I know I saw David Bakradze, the chairman of the Georgian Parliament and several of his colleagues. We very much appreciate your diplomatic efforts on behalf of your country.

While it is important to acknowledge the agreement reached yesterday between French President Sarkozy and President Medvedev regarding the withdrawal of Russian troops from undisputed Georgian territory, the refusal of President Medvedev to reconsider his decision recognizing the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia is quite troubling. This action violates legal principles of territorial integrity.

While historians and military analysts will long debate who fired the first shot in the August skirmish, there are two key questions before the committee today. First, how can we rebuild Georgia most quickly and effectively? Second, how should we reassess United States-Russian relations in the aftermath of Russia's use of disproportionate force against its sovereign neighbor?

Last week President Bush presented his assistance package for Georgia. While a robust response to the economic and humanitarian crisis is welcome, and while there is strong bipartisan support for delivering urgently needed aid to an ally, there should be a serious discussion about the activities to be funded and the budget authorities to be used.

I note that the administration's package contains nothing to strengthen the accountability, inclusiveness, and transparency of Georgia's political institutions. Such omissions have previously been identified as a weakness of United States policy toward Georgia. Now would be an appropriate time to rectify this oversight.

There has also been resounding silence from the White House thus far on the issue of military assistance. While I understand that the Department of Defense currently has an assessment team in Georgia, it would be helpful to know whether the administration is planning to provide such aid. If so, will it be basic replenishment of armaments damaged in the recent conflict? Will it allow Georgia the ability to participate in foreign missions such as Iraq? Or will it provide the capacity for self-defense in case of future attacks? Given the asymmetrical nature of the Russian and Georgian forces, just what kinds of arms could possibly give Tbilisi the ability to defend itself from future incursions?

If Georgia is to remain a viable candidate for NATO membership, it will require significant assistance in rebuilding its military. To me, it seems that our approach to the Bucharest Summit in April produced the worst possible outcome. The administration pushed for Georgia to receive a Membership Action Plan, knowing full well that this step would be blocked by the Germans and the French. As a consolation prize, the final communiqué expressed NATO's intent to admit Georgia to the alliance eventually. Did this decision signal to the Russians that Georgia has no current security guarantees, but would eventually be covered by Article V protection, and

that therefore this was the time for Russia to set the trap to “justify” an immediate attack?

Here is the depressing truth: By all rights we should be doing everything possible to reassure our friends in Ukraine, Poland, the Baltic States, and elsewhere in the region that they will not fall victim to similar acts of Russian aggression. But at this particular moment in history, the ability to provide that protection is under serious question.

If the administration does not have a military strategy in place, then I hope they at least have a diplomatic one. It seems odd that no senior American official has bothered to visit Russia before, during, or after the conflict. We have been reassured by the White House that—in the administration’s own words—“the Russians know our position.” Well, clearly they either did not know or did not care.

Since then, the administration has issued strong condemnations but the actions have failed to live up to its rhetoric. Administration policy toward Russia seems to be: Speak loudly, carry a small stick.

The question we must urgently address is what our future relationship with Russia is going to look like. If the primary goal of Russian foreign policy is to thwart the American diplomatic agenda, then how can we expect Moscow to be a reliable partner in dealing with the many international challenges we face?

On the other hand, if Russian behavior is largely a response to our failure to prioritize this bilateral relationship and to seek cooperation on the key challenges—and here I speak most particularly of Iran’s nuclear weapons program—then don’t we need to review and recalibrate how we have been handling this relationship?

It is now my pleasure to turn to the distinguished ranking member, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, for any opening comments she may wish to make.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman.

Last week, I had the opportunity to meet with a delegation of parliamentarians and government officials from Georgia, and our conversation drove home for me how difficult the situation is now in that country, both for its people and its government.

Georgia’s future and the future of the entire region of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe depends, to a large degree, on how the United States and leading states of the European Union react, in the coming weeks and months ahead, to the Russian invasion of Georgia.

A few important facts must be highlighted. The recent invasion by Russian military forces had been planned for some time by the regime in Moscow. The Russian Government has aggressively and provocatively involved itself in the affairs of Georgia, not just in recent years but for the entire period since that small country gained its independence in 1991.

Russia has provided military support of all types to the separatist regions of Georgia for almost two decades. The Russian Government has orchestrated the grant of Russian citizenship to the residents of those separatist regions, providing an excuse with which to later intervene on their behalf in the military operation the world witnessed last month.

The so-called “Russian peacekeepers” in the separatist region of Georgia have never been impartial. They have served as simply another means by which Moscow has interfered in Georgia’s internal affairs. Instead, the Putin regime in Moscow would like nothing better than to see the disintegration of the current Georgian Government.

Mr. Putin’s style of government in Moscow is in stark contrast to the increasingly democratic governments in countries along Russia’s borders, and, more importantly, the Georgian Government has closed Russia’s military bases and has opened a pipeline route for regional gas and oil supplies that is not under Russia’s control.

The Putin government wants to ensure that Russia sits astride the routes that will move the huge reserves of gas and oil that lie in Central Asia and the Caucasus to markets in Europe and the rest of the world. Some commentators have warned that Russia’s invasion of Georgia is reminiscent of Germany’s invasion and later destruction of the independent state of Czechoslovakia in the late 1930s.

There is much for us to consider in that analogy, primarily the failures of the leading European states of the late 1930s to understand the nature of that aggression. That failure ultimately emboldened Germany to turn its eyes to yet more countries in its campaign to expand its feared power in Eastern Europe.

We must ask ourselves what further steps the Putin regime may take to wrap itself in the cloak of Russian nationalism in order to maintain its hold on power, to justify its aggression, to divert attention from its corruption and criminality.

Will there be claims that parts of Ukraine rightfully belong in Russia? Will there be pressure on the Baltic States, where so many ethnic Russians live? Will Northern Kazakhstan and its large population of ethnic Russians become an issue? Will Russian troops ever leave the independent country of Moldova, which has sought their withdrawal for many years?

I want to express support for the proposal to provide aid expeditiously to the Georgian people by relocating some of our existing foreign aid funds. Such a relocation allows us to be supportive of Georgia in this time of need while acknowledging that we have fiscal demands in other areas.

We also support current efforts involving our European allies and the multilateral development banks toward a truly international aid effort to support Georgia.

Mr. Chairman, unrelated to the situation in Georgia and Russia’s invasion of that country, I would like to raise an issue that is of great concern to us.

Late yesterday evening, we were provided notice, in our first glance ever at a stridently partisan, so-called “report” to be issued today under committee seal and under your name, Mr. Berman, and title as committee chairman. The original text claimed to have issues prepared by the staff of the Homeland Security and Foreign Affairs Committees presumed to describe various issues that the committees had found and claimed that the committees are alarmed by alleged shortcomings in the wake of 9/11.

In reality, this partisan document was prepared in secrecy, without any consultation, notice, input, or even review from minority

members or staff, and was released without consent from a majority of the members of this committee.

Mr. Chairman, as you and your staff are aware, committee rule 11(b) clearly states that no document which purports to express publicly the views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations of the committee may be released to the public until first approved by a majority of the members of the committee. Furthermore, any such document must be provided to members beforehand, who have the right to include views and disclaimers in the material that is to be released. None of these things have been done.

Mr. Chairman, as we all know, the rules exist to ensure that election year partisanship not be allowed to cloak itself in the mantle of our committee. This effort cheapens this committee's standing and reputation for truly being a cooperative, bipartisan committee.

I am saddened by the release of such a slanted document on the eve of the 9/11 commemoration. It is divisive and vitriolic at a time of a grave moment in our Nation's history, when we, as elected representatives of the people, should unite to honor and remember the victims of this most horrible attack and work to prevent the enemies of freedom from again striking our homeland.

As such, Mr. Chairman, I would like for you to publicly confirm, congruent with our committee rules, that this paper was solely the work product of Democratic staffers and that it does not constitute an official committee product, and it is not the result of any hearing, briefings, or official reviews conducted by this committee.

Thank you very much for the time, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. If the gentlelady would just yield on that issue—

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Absolutely.

Chairman BERMAN. I will give her unanimous consent for an additional minute, if she will yield to me. I would then respond.

I, actually, had much more notice about this than you did—I learned Friday morning—and I certainly confirm, this is not a Foreign Affairs Committee document. It was prepared by a group of people, including staff of the majority, but it, in no way, should be viewed as representing a Foreign Affairs Committee publication. I would contest the conclusion, having now read it, that it is slanted, but that, of course, is my slant.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Chairman, if you could yield for—of your time—

Chairman BERMAN. Sure.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN [continuing]. Because I have it here, and it is the official seal of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, and I beg to differ, Mr. Chairman, with your representation of what it purports to be. It looks pretty official, unless it is one of those—

Chairman BERMAN. That seal looks forged to me.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Well, it says "U.S. Committee," as you can read, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. It has one less wing. Look, I will try to understand what was distributed, but here is what I will say. It does refer to the majority staff, but, to the extent it has the imprimatur of the committee, we have committee rules to deal with committee publications, and those rules should be complied with, and, to the

extent it went out in the form you have showed me, that raises serious questions, and I will check into it.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much. If the gentleman would just further yield, it does say that it was prepared by the staff, but it does purport to be an official document coming from our committee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. Okay. Our first panel features Ambassador Fried, and then we have an excellent panel of two experts next. So, because of the importance of the subject, I am going to allow 1-minute opening statements for those members who feel compelled to do so.

Obviously, we will have questions after each of the panels. So, to the extent you can defer, that would be great so we can get to the panel, but, to the extent you want to make a 1-minute opening statement now—and I realize that is not much time—I am willing to recognize anybody.

Mr. Sherman of California is recognized for 1 minute.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Chairman, there is plenty of reason to be skeptical of Moscow, but our policy can best be regarded as unthinkingly and reflexively anti-Russian, particularly at a time when we need Russia's support on a number of issues, including the containment of Iran.

With regard to the self-determination of each republic of the Soviet Union, each republic of Yugoslavia, and with regard to the self-determination of Kosovo, we were for self-determination. But we oppose self-determination for South Ossetia and Abkhazian—Moldova.

Some say we would be inconsistent on the issue of self-determination; we are not. We are consistently anti-Russian again and again and again. We were not clear with Saakashvili that we would not support him if he launched major military actions. He launched those actions. He was successful for a day.

We have ignored the referendum in South Ossetia, which called overwhelmingly for a split from Georgia.

Finally, the administration tells us that we support democracy in Georgia while trampling on democracy here in the United States, particularly in the area of foreign affairs, where they ignore the statute known as the Iran Sanctions Act, ignore the provisions of the Hyde Bill regarding India, and now go and make a promise of \$1 billion of American aid without adequately telling the Georgians that this is dependent on decisions made in Congress and is not a unilateral decision to be made by the administration.

Finally, if we do provide aid, or whatever aid we do provide, we need to aid Armenia, which is an innocent victim of a war that it did not participate in. I yield back.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from California, Mr. Rohrabacher, is recognized.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask unanimous consent. I understand Mr. Flake is willing to yield me his 1 minute, and I would ask unanimous consent that that 1 minute be incorporated into the 1 minute that you were going to grant us.

Chairman BERMAN. Without objection, Mr. Flake's 1 minute is incorporated into your 1 minute, and you get 1½ minutes. Just kidding.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Okay. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Since the fall of Soviet communism, with Russia ready to be our friend at that point and pulling back its military and letting all of those people free, ending the Cold War, we have managed to make an enemy out of Russia. We have pushed them into the arms of China and Iran, which is contrary to the long-term interests of both of our countries. Whether it is an unwillingness to let them into the Western markets or demanding that the new Russian democratic government pay for the debts of the Communist dictatorship that preceded it or just the attitude of being clearly belligerent, we have pushed the Russians in the wrong direction.

In the case of Kosovo, we insisted on the rights of the Kosovars to be independent of Serbia. We bombed Serbia to ensure this independence. We did this knowing the special relationship between Belgrade and Moscow. I happen to have supported that operation. I support the Kosovars, and yet that does not mean that I can be dishonest and then not admit that the independence of Kosovo is clearly analogous to the desire of these breakaway regions in Georgia to be independent of Georgia.

For us to posture otherwise undermines our credibility, and repeating it over and over again that there is no correlation, undermines our credibility. It is an obvious reality.

Furthermore, all of the intelligence sources that I have talked to, and I talked to a lot of them over the break, verify that the recent fighting in Georgia and in its breakaway provinces was started by Georgia. The Georgians broke the truce, not the Russians, and none of the talk of provocation and all of this other stuff can alter that fact.

Yes, some would cling to the fig leaf that the South Ossetians may have provoked the attack by firing a rocket or an artillery shell. This is reminiscent of the Gulf of Tonkin provocation. Let me just say that—

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman from Arizona and the gentleman from California has expired.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. The Russians are right. We are wrong. The Georgians started it. The Russians ended it. Thank you.

Chairman BERMAN. Any further people? The gentlelady from California, Ms. Watson.

Ms. WATSON. Thank you very much. The recent conflict in Georgia, and its many repercussions, demonstrates that while the world has changed greatly since the collapse of the Soviet Union, we are now in danger of being pulled back into an antiquated and dangerous Cold War mind-set.

I strongly condemn the brutish actions of Russia, its disregard for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, but I also am perplexed by the recklessness of Georgia's President, who knew the Russians were itching for a fight and took the bait.

The United States is now left in the inevitable situation of attempting to mediate a situation in an area of the world where it has marginal influence, at a time that it is overextended militarily, diplomatically, and economically. On an ongoing basis, our bilateral relations with Russia should be based on realistic assessments of needs and threats, as well as costs and risks and manpower.

Finally, our policy with Russia must continue to be one of constructive engagement, not isolation, that ties Russia even closer to democratic systems of governance and free and open markets. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentlelady has expired.

The gentleman from California, Mr. Royce.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You know, in April, this House moved a resolution endorsing Georgia and Ukraine's path into NATO. I would ask my colleagues to think where we would be if Georgia were, as a NATO member, potentially at war with a nuclear power here on its border in its area of strength.

Some argue that NATO would have been a deterrent. Well, maybe it would have, but it is just as plausible that potential NATO membership inflamed the situation.

And what about our security? In this territorial dispute, one that CRS reports derives from age-old ethnic rivalries, is this dispute worth a 10-percent chance of war with Russia?

Events have a way of spiraling out of control. No one was thinking an ethnic rivalry in the Balkans would spark World War I. Russia's animosity to NATO's expansion into the near abroad may not make sense to us, but it is deadly serious to Russia, as much as we say it should not be.

Russia is wrong, no doubt. Its actions here were brutal and reckless, yet what is our interest? In an opening statement that former Chairman Henry Hyde delivered before this committee, entitled "Perils of the Golden Theory," he cautioned that "while we should believe in American exceptionalism, we also have a duty to ourselves and to our own interests, the protection and advancement of which may sometimes necessitate actions focused on more tangible returns than those of altruism. Every wrong, however brutal, does not warrant our military response, or our commitment for a military response, which, frankly, should be considered one and the same."

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Chairman?

Chairman BERMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. Mr. Faleomavaega, the gentleman from American Samoa, is recognized for 1 minute.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Chairman, I would like to defer my 1 minute to the gentlelady from Texas. She has a very important hearing pending that she has to chair. So I exchanged her time with mine.

Chairman BERMAN. All right. The gentlelady from Texas is recognized.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. He is not giving up his time, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank him for his wonderful kindness, the distinguished gentleman from American Samoa. It is that we are switching time.

But, in any event, let me thank the chairman and the ranking member for this crucial hearing. The mutuality of the world's existence is a difficult challenge. I welcome the fact that I live in a country that prides itself on promoting democracy, supporting those who are fighting for democracy, and, for that, I certainly salute the Georgians for the many, many leaps of success that they

have accomplished. But, at the same time, I want us to find a balanced policy. I want the United States to be an honest broker with integrity that forces democracy and recognizes its interests.

Therefore, as we have just seen, the announcement of the Secure America Report that came out today that says that the United States is subjected, or may be subjected, to a biological or nuclear terrorist attack, then we realize that our friends in Russia are as important as our friends in Georgia.

We must find a balance. We can sit here and accuse. Yes, I believe that Georgia was aggressive. At the same time, Russia is huge and growing. Let us find a way to create peace and opportunity.

I do believe that the administration's announcement of a \$1 billion repair is over the top, and I hope Congress will intervene and find a balance between Russia and Georgia. I yield back.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentlelady has expired.

The gentleman from Illinois, Mr. Crane. The gentleman from Texas, Mr. Paul. Fifteen years ago, I would have been right.

Mr. PAUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate you yielding and I appreciate you holding these hearings. So far, I have been impressed with the statements. I thought I would be here in a very, very lonely position of trying to get some balance on Russia bashing versus coming to some common sense. So I am very pleased that there is some deep thinking here on this issue.

My first question would be, why does the "American Empire" exist in Georgia? Fortunately, as Mr. Royce pointed out, what would it be like if they had been in NATO? We would have been committed. Besides that, it points out how weak we are. We did not have the troops to go into war there, if we would have been committed, which points out that the overall foreign policy of this country is deeply flawed, and we have to look at this because we are all over the place, and we cannot defend our interests.

I think we are in worse shape than we have ever been for a long time, and, therefore, we have to look at this very carefully. We do not need to be in Georgia protecting a pipeline. We are not there for democracy; we are there to protect an oil pipeline, and that, to me, is tragic.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from Massachusetts, Mr. Delahunt, is recognized.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have heard a lot of opinions and conclusions and rhetoric, most of which I agree with, by the way. I think we are taking a position without the facts.

It was Secretary Breeza that said that it is relatively unimportant who started it. Well, I disagree with that. I think it is absolutely essential that we determine the facts on the ground, and that has not been the case. There have been opinions expressed right out of the box that clearly have an anti-Russian tone, and I believe that that is unfortunate.

I would also suggest that reports today in the newspapers, there is speculation, for example, that Saakashvili made the decision to launch a military strike against Georgia because then it would become a fait accompli, and the Russians would not respond, and yet we are being asked to reward that, if that is accurate, with a \$1

billion appropriation. I have very serious and profound reservations. With that, I yield back.

Chairman BERMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. Does anyone else on the minority side seek recognition? The gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Smith, is recognized for 1 minute.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Mr. Chairman, Russia's retaliatory war, joined by a motley crew of so-called "irregulars against Georgia," is a war of intimidation meant to frighten the Georgian people into giving up the tremendous progress they have made in crafting a democratic state built on human rights and respect for the rule of law.

The Russian Government is also trying to frighten the Azeris, Ukrainians, Moldovans, Byelorussians, Lithuanians, Latvians, and Estonians into resubmitting to some form of Russian vassalage.

Two weeks ago, I spent the better part of 4 days on the ground in Georgia, in large part, to help secure the freedom of a number of American children, including two from my own district, who were behind Russian lines, to get to safety. Thankfully, that has been achieved.

But I also carried a very strong message of support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, for Georgia to be granted to NATO membership as soon as possible, and for an aid package that Congress and the administration, hopefully, will craft to help the Georgian people through this time of great suffering and deprivation.

I think many of the facts are on the ground. I do believe there was a provocation, but that has to be clear for all to see. But the retaliation, so unbelievably disproportionate, and I met a lot of the IDPs—they were like scarecrows.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Who else seeks recognition? The gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Scott, for 1 minute.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I think it is very important to say, at the outset, that the Russians' hands are definitely not clean in this matter.

This is an extraordinarily crucial and critical issue, probably at the top of the list, for world security, without any question. But I think that we need to look at what is permeating this throughout, and that is energy, and Russia is playing this energy.

For example, Russia recently announced that they would be closing a major gas pipeline to Europe for 24 hours in order to perform "maintenance." Now, it is very important to understand that the timing of this announcement was, of course, suspect, given that the European Union was shortly thereafter supposed to vote on possible sanctions on Russia for their actions in Georgia.

The question has to be: Was Russia's announcement actually just a show of force to remind Europe how dependent it is on Russia for energy? I think so. I believe so. I know so. And it certainly seems that the Europeans feel the same way because the European Union backed away from a stronger condemnation of Russia, and, of course, Mr. Chairman, we have seen Russia use its energy supplies as political leverage in the past—all we have to do is look at Lithuania—and they are likely to do so again in the future.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has more than expired.

Mr. SCOTT. There are some questions. Thank you, sir.

Chairman BERMAN. Good. You will have a chance to ask them. The gentleman from Florida, Mr. Klein, is recognized for 1 minute.

Mr. KLEIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing.

Americans watched with horror as Russian tanks rolled through Georgian towns and villages. A rise in Georgia, as we all see it, of power to flaunt international sentiment is certainly potentially dangerous for international and regional stability.

Our relationship, at the moment, is tense with Russia. Just this week, the administration withdrew the request for congressional consideration of the U.S.-Russia Nuclear Agreement, but yet, as I have heard from some of my colleagues, we must continue to consult with Russia on matters of international security.

For example, Russia-United States collaboration on the issue of the Iranian nuclear program is critical. President Bush must maintain diplomatic leverage with Russia in order to ensure that Iran does not become nuclear, which would threaten stability, not only in the Middle East but throughout the world. Iran must understand that the United States and Russia find that a nuclear Iran is absolutely unacceptable.

So there, obviously, needs to be a balance. What Russia did was unacceptable, but I think we also understand that there is a measured response here that we need to have because Russia will be important in our dealings with Iran.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from American Samoa is now recognized.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Chairman, thank you, and, very briefly, I want to recommend to my colleagues a speech that was given by President Medvedev when he was in Berlin some months ago, and I think it is most profound, in my humble opinion, something that we really need to examine very closely about the intent and the wishes of the leaders of Russia to reach out, not only to deal with the European Union but also with our own country.

I am also very curious how easily we can find \$1 billion to provide for the needs of Georgia. I would be very curious to see how we are going to come up with this \$1 billion that the administration is asking for. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 1 minute, Mr. Payne.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much. I appreciate you calling this very important hearing. I certainly agree that I think that there was a total overreaction on the part of Russia to Georgia. However, we also have to realize that people look for excuses, and if you give excuses, then the consequences come.

As we move forward in this world, there are a number of problems that we have to resolve: Problems with genocide in Darfur; problems with a growing People's Republic of China; a growing problem with Iran. We have a lot of problems to deal with, and I think diplomatic solutions are going to have to be the answer in the future as we start to deal with the problems coming. We cannot

send \$1 billion every time there is a problem. We cannot send a military force because we are already overstretched.

So we are going to have to really talk to our allies and ourselves about a way that we are going to deal with this dangerous world in the future.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Who else seeks recognition? The gentleman from Texas, Mr. Green, is recognized for 1 minute.

Mr. GREEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize for not being here sooner, but, like my colleague said earlier, we are still talking about energy here in our own Congress, much less around the world, and I share the concern of my colleagues, the concern about the pipeline that is through Georgia to Turkey. I appreciate being here, and I would like to have my full statement placed in the record, Mr. Chairman—

Chairman BERMAN. Without objection.

Mr. GREEN [continuing]. And also ask, where do we go from here? How are we working with our European allies to forward that effort to remove those troops from Georgia proper and, hopefully, even to move the Russian troops from the two disputed provinces?

Chairman BERMAN. The chair, seeing no other members seeking recognition, would like to introduce the witnesses. We have, as I said earlier, two excellent panels today.

Our first witness is a familiar face before this committee. We were fortunate to have Ambassador Daniel Fried testify on the Caucasus in June. We welcome him back today to revisit this important region, albeit under rather sad circumstances, given the recent conflict.

Ambassador Daniel Fried is the Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs of the Department of State. He previously served as Special Assistant to the President and senior director for European and Eurasian Affairs at the National Security Council.

During his distinguished career at the Department of State, Ambassador Fried has worked in the former Soviet Union and as a senior adviser on European policy for multiple administrations. He served as U.S. Ambassador to Poland from November 1997 through May 2000.

Welcome back, Ambassador Fried.

I will also just introduce our second panel now, hopefully to entice some of my colleagues on the committee to stay because we have two really good witnesses.

Our first witness is Michael McFaul, one of the foremost experts on modern Russia and its politics. Dr. McFaul is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, where he co-directs the Iran Democracy Project. He is also a professor of political science and the director of the Center on Democracy Development and Rule of Law at Stanford University. Dr. McFaul is the author and editor of numerous books and articles on Russian and Eastern European politics. He serves on the board of directors for multiple think tanks and international organizations.

Our second witness is Frederick Kagan, a prominent military historian with expertise on Russian and European military history.

Dr. Kagan is a resident scholar in defense and security policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute, where he specializes in defense transformation, strategy, and warfare. Previously an associate professor at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Dr. Kagan is the author of a number of books and articles and is a contributing editor at the Weekly Standard.

So we thank both of you for being here, and, Ambassador Fried, why don't you begin with your testimony? Your entire statement will be put into the record. We will hear from you and then have a round of questions.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE DANIEL FRIED, ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF EUROPEAN AND EURASIAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Mr. FRIED. Chairman Berman, Ranking Member Ros-Lehtinen, and members, thank you for the opportunity to discuss the policy implication of Russia's attack on Georgia.

The statement I submitted provides detail and background to the conflict. In my comments now, I want to focus on our strategic response.

While the causes of the conflict between Georgia and its disputed regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia are complex, essential elements are clear. After a long series of provocations, Georgian forces moved into South Ossetia on August 7th. Whatever questions we may have about this decision, and we do have some, this was no justification for Russia to cross an international boundary to attack Georgia.

The United States had urged Georgia and Russia numerous times, publicly and privately, to exercise restraint and to resolve their differences peacefully. After fighting broke out on August 7th, our efforts were focused on halting the violence and bringing about a cease-fire.

On August 14th, Secretary Rice flew to France to consult with President Sarkozy, who was representing the European Union in efforts to negotiate a cease-fire.

The next day, Secretary Rice took the cease-fire agreement to Georgia to clarify its terms and to obtain President Saakashvili's signature. She succeeded.

Unfortunately, Russia has yet to fully honor the terms of that cease-fire that President Medvedev has also signed. Its forces remain inside Georgia.

Worse, on August 26th, Russia escalated the conflict when it recognized the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, in defiance of numerous U.N. Security Council resolutions, which Russia itself had endorsed.

This irresponsible and destabilizing action has since been condemned by the European Union, NATO, key allies, and the Foreign Ministers of the G-7 countries. Only Nicaragua has so far followed Russia's lead and recognized these breakaway regimes.

Our response to Russia's use of force to attempt to change international borders centers on three key objectives.

First, we need to support Georgia. It is in our interest to help Georgia recover economically, stabilize and restore its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and address legitimate military needs. As

an urgent priority, we support President Sarkozy's ongoing efforts to convince Russia to honor the cease-fire it has signed. Russian troops must leave Georgia. Georgian IDPs, displaced persons, must be allowed to return home.

On September 3rd, Secretary Rice announced a major effort to help Georgia in its economic reconstruction. Five hundred and seventy million dollars, the first phase of a \$1 billion economic support package, will be made available by the end of this year, including emergency support to the Georgian Government. We will work closely with Congress on details of this assistance and hope there will be bipartisan backing for this and the second phase of support, an additional \$430 million to be provided in future budgets.

Mr. Chairman, our democracy funding for Georgia, which needs it, is not going to be reduced; it will continue. It is not being subsumed in this package.

Like any sovereign country, Georgia should have the ability to defend itself and deter aggression, so we are working with NATO to address some of Georgia's military needs. The Department of Defense has sent an assessment team to Tbilisi to help determine these needs and, with our allies, develop an appropriate response.

Secondly, we must prevent Russia from drawing a new line through Europe. Russia should not be allowed to declare that certain nations belong to Moscow's "sphere of influence" and, therefore, cannot join the institutions of Europe and the transatlantic region.

The United States believes neither in empire nor in spheres of influence. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, we have supported the right of every country emerging from communism to choose the path of its own development, including the international institutions with which it wants to associate. Russia should not be able to veto the right of sovereign countries to choose their future. This was one of Vice President Cheney's messages when he visited Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Ukraine last week.

It is that freedom of choice that "Europe, whole, free, and at peace," really means. "Europe, whole, free, and at peace" is in America's interest because the alternative is a divided, unstable continent.

This vision is not against Russia. On the contrary, we believe that this vision should include Russia, but Russia's own actions at home and abroad have been increasingly inconsistent with the common values that constitute the foundation of the Euro-Atlantic community.

Russia's current aggression against Georgia shows that Russia is making a different choice for itself. It is not anti-Russian to ask that Russia refrain from invading its neighbors in response to problems inside a country.

Finally, therefore, our strategic response must include longer-term consequences for our relationship with Russia. Since 1991, United States policy, under three Presidents, has been based on the assumption that Russia sought integration with the world and was, perhaps unevenly, moving toward greater democracy and the rule of law at home. Indeed, Russia expressed interest in, and made progress toward, becoming part of key institutions in the

world. But with its invasion of Georgia, Russia has put its own aspirations at risk.

Russia has a choice: It can seek to be a nation at peace with itself and its neighbors, a modern, 21st century neighbor that expresses its power and influence in constructive ways; or it can be mired in 19th century expansionist ambition, a nation whose standing in the world is not based on how much respect it can earn but on how much fear it can invoke in others.

Russia cannot have it both ways. It cannot benefit from the international institutions it says it wants to join and also invade its neighbor and use war to seek to change international borders.

We hope that Russia chooses the right path, but, for now, we must contend with the Russia that exists today. We are guided by some general principles as we go forward, thinking about Russia. Russia must understand that the course it has chosen leads to self-isolation. The United States and Europe must work together to respond to this challenge from Russia and to help nations on Russia's border resist pressure, even as they maintain reforms at home.

We must be steady, determined, and patient in our relations with Russia. Our response must keep open the possibility that Russia will reconsider its current course, and we should keep doors open for cooperation on issues of mutual concern, such as Iran, counter-terrorism, Afghanistan, nonproliferation, and other issues.

We must also be prepared if Russia continues its aggressive course, particularly against its neighbors who seek closer security relations with NATO and the United States.

We do not seek, Mr. Chairman, nor are we doomed to have, a bad relationship with Russia. But until Russia's leaders change their path, they and we may be in for a difficult period. As we consider the implications of Russia's attack on Georgia, realism requires us to face what Russia has done and what we must do. We will support our friends and our principles. Russia aggression cannot be allowed to succeed.

In time, Russia may realize that aggression against a small neighbor was a grave mistake. Until that time comes, we need to maintain a framework for United States-Russia relations, with the understanding that the perspective of today's Russian leaders may not last forever.

We will resist Russian aggression where we must, working with our friends and allies, but we will also keep open channels of communication and cooperation with Russia where we can.

History teaches that patience and determination, frustrating perhaps at first, tend to prevail in the end.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I look forward to taking all of the questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Fried follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE DANIEL FRIED, ASSISTANT SECRETARY,
BUREAU OF EUROPEAN AND EURASIAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Chairman Berman, Ranking Member Ros-Lehtinen, Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to discuss with you today the implications of Russia's attack on Georgia.

On June 18, in testimony before this Committee, I outlined a series of examples of increasing Russian pressure on Georgia and expressed concern that these activities risked igniting a wider conflict.

Today, with regret, I must report to you that these concerns have been realized. Russia's intensified pressure and provocations against Georgia—combined with a serious Georgian miscalculation—have resulted not only in armed conflict, but in an ongoing Russian attempt to dismember that country.

The causes of this conflict—particularly the dispute between Georgia and its breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia—are complex, and all sides made mistakes and miscalculations. But key facts are clear: Russia sent its army across an internationally recognized boundary, to attempt to change by force the borders of a country with a democratically-elected government and, if possible, overthrow that government—not to relieve humanitarian pressures on Russian citizens, as it claimed.

This is the first time since the breakup of the Soviet Union that Moscow has sent its military across an international frontier in such circumstances, and this is Moscow's first attempt to change the borders that emerged from the breakup of the Soviet Union. This is a troubling and dangerous act.

Today I will seek to explain how we got here, how we're responding, and the implications for our relationship with Russia.

BACKGROUND TO THE CONFLICT

First, some history.

The dissolution of empires is frequently violent, and the break up of the former Soviet Union was no exception. The collapse of the USSR was marked by ethnically-based violence, especially in the South Caucasus. This involved clashes between Azeris and Armenians, Ossetians and Ingush, Russians and Chechens, Abkhaz and Georgians, and others. These clashes deepened into a series of wars in the early 1990s that ended without lasting solutions. Uneasy truces followed, and the conflicts in areas outside Russia became known as “frozen conflicts.”

Two of the disputed regions lie within the internationally-recognized territorial borders of Georgia: Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

In 1992, following two years of armed conflict between Georgians and South Ossetians, an armistice was signed by Russian, Georgian, and South Ossetian leaders. The leaders also agreed on the creation of a tripartite peacekeeping force of 500 soldiers each from Russia, Georgia, and North Ossetia, a territory which lies within the borders of Russia. In practice, however, the North Ossetian peacekeeping contingent ended up being staffed by South Ossetians. Fighting in Abkhazia was brutal in those years and, as a result, large numbers of ethnic Georgians were expelled from their homes in Abkhazia; before the fighting, the ethnic Abkhaz had been a minority—under 20 percent—in Abkhazia.

The next year, 1993, South Ossetia drafted its own constitution, and three years after that, in 1996, South Ossetia elected its own “president” in an election in which mainly ethnic Ossetians—not ethnic Georgians—voted.

In 2001, South Ossetia held another election and elected Eduard Kokoity as president, again with most ethnic Georgians boycotting the election. The following year, in 2002, he asked Moscow to recognize South Ossetia's independence and absorb it into Russia.

Throughout this period, Russia acted to support the South Ossetian and Abkhaz leaderships, sowing the seeds of future conflict. That support was not only political, but concrete, and never more so than through the continued presence of Russian military forces, including those labeled as peacekeepers.

Georgia emerged from these post-Soviet wars in weak condition. While then-President Shevardnadze deserves credit for helping end the fighting, Georgia could not find its feet; its economy remained weak and its government relatively ineffective. By the early years of this century, Georgia was in danger of becoming a failed state, with a deteriorating economy and a political system near collapse. In the autumn of 2003, President Shevardnadze acquiesced in an attempt by a local Georgian strongman—Ajara leader Aslan Abashidze—to steal Georgia's parliamentary election. This triggered a popular uprising of hundreds of thousands of Georgians, leading to the so-called Rose Revolution and Mikheil Saakashvili's election as president.

It is important to note that Eduard Shevardnadze was a close friend and partner of the United States and our NATO Allies, enjoying near-heroic status. His ouster was not something the United States favored. Yet, when the Georgian people spoke and demonstrated their democratic right of peaceful protest, we did not stand in their way. We also did not encourage the protests. But Georgians' thirst for democracy ran its course, and we accepted and supported the outcome.

Following his 2004 election, Saakashvili and his government moved swiftly and effectively to improve governance in Georgia, reducing corruption, pushing through economic reforms, and welcoming foreign investment. The Georgian economy started

to grow rapidly. At the same time, Saakashvili made clear his intention that Georgia follow the path of other successful post-communist democracies and draw closer to, and eventually join, NATO and the European Union. Although they have developed significantly in the past few years, Georgian democratic institutions remain weak and much work needs to be done to deepen democratic practices and continue economic reforms; authoritarian practices still exist alongside more democratic ones. We have made known, and made clear in public, our concerns with some of these democratic deficits. Still, Georgia appeared to be following the general contours of successful post-communist transformation we have seen since 1989 in Central and Eastern Europe.

This progress, however, was paralleled by increasing tensions between Georgia and the Russian-supported breakaway territories.

After the Rose Revolution, more clashes occurred between Georgians and South Ossetians, and between Georgians and Abkhaz. Then in 2006, South Ossetians voted for a split from Georgia in a referendum that was, again, largely boycotted by ethnic Georgians in South Ossetia. Although there were efforts to resolve the differences through negotiations, by late 2007 talks had essentially broken down.

As Georgia's ambitions to draw close to Europe and the transatlantic community became clearer, its relations with Russia deteriorated. In the summer of 2006, tension increased between Tbilisi and Moscow, as Georgia arrested several Russian military intelligence officers it accused of conducting bombings in Gori. Moscow responded with a vengeance, closing Russia's only road crossing with Georgia, suspending air and mail links, imposing embargoes against exports of Georgian wine, mineral water, and agricultural goods, and even rounding up people living in Russia (including school children) with ethnic Georgian names and deporting them. At least two Georgians died during the deportation process.

Russia's provocations escalated in 2007. In March 2007, what we believe were Russian attack helicopters launched an aerial assault, combined with artillery fire, on the Georgian Government's administrative offices in Abkhazia's Upper Kodori Valley. In August, Russian fighter jets violated Georgian airspace, then unsuccessfully launched a missile toward a Georgian radar station.

This past year, although Moscow lifted some of the economic and transport embargoes, it further intensified the political pressure by taking a number of steps toward establishing an administrative relationship with both South Ossetia and Abkhazia. In March 2008, Russia announced its unilateral withdrawal from Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) sanctions on Abkhazia, thus removing the CIS prohibition on providing direct economic and military assistance. Then in April, following the NATO Summit in Bucharest where NATO leaders declared that Georgia would one day be a member of the alliance, then-President Putin issued instructions calling for closer official ties between Russian ministries and their counterparts in both of the disputed regions.

Russia also increased military pressure as Russian officials and military personnel were seconded to serve in both the governments and the armed forces of the separatist regions. South Ossetia's "prime minister," "defense minister," and "security minister," for example, are all seconded Russian officials. And while Russian peacekeepers in Abkhazia were specifically mandated to facilitate the return of internally displaced persons and refugees, we saw no net return of Georgians to Abkhazia in over a decade.

On April 20, the Russian pressure took a more ominous turn when a Russian fighter jet shot down an unarmed Georgian unmanned aerial vehicle over Georgian airspace in Abkhazia. Russia also increased its military presence in Abkhazia without the required consultation with the Government of Georgia. In late April, Russia sent highly-trained airborne combat troops with howitzers to Abkhazia, ostensibly as part of its peacekeeping force. Then in May, Russia dispatched construction troops to Abkhazia to repair a railroad link to Russia.

During this buildup of tension, the United States frequently called on Moscow to reverse Russian actions and to participate with us and key European allies in a diplomatic process to resolve these conflicts. In June and July, for example, the UN Friends of Georgia group, which included the United States, Germany, the UK, and France, urged fellow Friend Russia to engage in invigorated negotiations to advance Georgia's peace plan for Abkhazia. Yet Russia resisted, in one case even failing to show up for a meeting in mid-June that President Medvedev promised Russia would attend. In July, Georgia accepted the Western Friends' request that Russia and Georgia join the UN Friends and the Abkhaz for discussions to reduce tension and advance the peace process. But once again Russia's Foreign Ministry refused to send a representative, this time saying that "everyone was on vacation."

During this time, we urged Georgian officials both publicly and privately, on many occasions, to resist the temptation of any military reaction, even in the face

of repeated provocations, which they were clearly facing. President Saakashvili did, to his credit, offer extensive autonomy to Abkhazia, including a guarantee that a Vice President of Georgia would be from Abkhazia. In July, Secretary Rice traveled to Tbilisi to seek to intensify diplomatic efforts to reduce the growing tensions. Working closely with counterparts from Germany, France, and the UK, she called for intensified diplomatic efforts on an urgent basis. While expressing support for Georgia, she also cautioned President Saakashvili against any temptation to use force to resolve these conflicts, even in the face of continued provocations.

Unfortunately, Russia resisted these European-American efforts to intensify diplomatic efforts to stave off a wider conflict. After Russian military aircraft overflew Georgian airspace in July, in violation of Georgia's sovereignty, while Secretary Rice was visiting Tbilisi, President Saakashvili recalled Georgia's ambassador to Moscow.

August began with two bomb explosions in Georgian-controlled territory in South Ossetia, injuring five Georgian policemen. On August 2, a firefight broke out in South Ossetia that killed six South Ossetians and one Georgian policeman. On August 3, Russia declared that South Ossetia was close to a "large-scale" military conflict, and the next day, South Ossetia evacuated hundreds of women and children to Russia.

On August 5, Moscow issued a statement saying that it would defend Russian citizens in South Ossetia. It is important to note that these so-called Russian citizens were mainly South Ossetians—that is to say, Georgian citizens—to whom Russia had simply handed out Russian passports. Russia has carried out this potentially destabilizing practice of distributing Russian passports to citizens of other neighbors from the former Soviet Union for years.

On August 6, both Georgia and South Ossetia accused each other of opening fire on villages in the region.

THE ASSAULT ON GEORGIA

Throughout this period, the United States worked with both Georgia and South Ossetia, and with Russia, seeking to tamp down the growing conflict. On August 7 Georgia's minister for conflict resolution traveled to South Ossetia for negotiations, but his South Ossetian counterpart refused to meet with him and his Russian colleague failed to show up, claiming his car had broken down. On the night of August 7, those pressures rose to heights never before seen. Shooting broke out between Georgia and South Ossetian armed forces in South Ossetia. Georgia declared a ceasefire, but it did not hold. The Georgians told us that South Ossetians had fired on Georgian villages from behind the position of Russian peacekeepers. The Georgians also told us that Russian troops and heavy military equipment were entering the Roki Tunnel border crossing with Russia.

We had warned the Georgians many times in the previous days and weeks against using force, and on August 7, we warned them repeatedly not to take such a step. We pointed out that use of military force, even in the face of provocations, would lead to a disaster. We were blunt in conveying these points, not subtle. Our message was clear.

Georgia's move into the South Ossetian capital provided Russia a pretext for a response that quickly grew far out of proportion to the actions taken by Georgia. There will be a time for assessing blame for what happened in the early hours of the conflict, but one fact is clear—there was no justification for Russia's invasion of Georgia. There was no justification for Russia to seize Georgian territory, including territory well beyond South Ossetia and Abkhazia in violation of Georgia's sovereignty, or to attack and destroy infrastructure.

But that is what occurred. On August 8, the Russians poured across the international border, crossed the boundaries of South Ossetia past where the conflict was occurring, and pushed their way into much of the rest of Georgia. Several thousand Russian forces moved into the city of Gori and other areas far from the conflict zone, such as Georgia's main port of Poti, over 200 kilometers from South Ossetia. Russia also used the fighting as an excuse to seize the last Georgian-held portion of Abkhazia, where there had been no fighting.

The full story of that invasion and what occurred when the Russian forces dug in and allowed "irregular" South Ossetian militias to rampage through the lands Russian forces had seized, is still not fully known. We have received evidence of the burning of Georgian villages in South Ossetia. Russia's invasion resulted in a large number of internally displaced ethnic Georgians who fled South Ossetia to Tbilisi and other Georgian towns. Although Russian forces attempted to prevent access to the area by humanitarian aid workers, some Human Rights Watch researchers were able to reach the area and reported that the Russian military had used "indiscriminate force" and "seemingly targeted attacks on civilians," including civilian convoys.

They said Russian aircraft dropped cluster bombs in populated areas and allowed looting, arson attacks, and abductions in Georgian villages by militia groups. The researchers also reported that Georgian forces used “indiscriminate” and “disproportionate” force during their assault on South Ossetian forces in Tskhinvali and neighboring villages in South Ossetia. Senior Russian leaders have sought to support their claims of Georgian “genocide” against the South Ossetian people by claiming that 2,000 civilians were killed by Georgian forces in the initial assault. Human Rights Watch has called this figure of 2,000 dead “exaggerated” and “suspicious.” Other subsequent Russian government and South Ossetian investigations have suggested much lower numbers. We are continuing to look at these and other reports while we attempt to assemble reliable information about who did what in those days.

THE CEASEFIRE, RUSSIA’S FAILURE TO HONOR IT, AND RECOGNITION OF SOUTH OSSETIA
AND ABKHAZIA

In the days that followed the Russian invasion, our attention was focused on halting the violence and bringing about a ceasefire. President Bush spoke with a number of European leaders as well as with President Saakashvili, President Medvedev and Prime Minister Putin in an effort to halt the fighting. Secretary Rice dispatched Deputy Assistant Secretary Matthew Bryza to Tbilisi to maintain contact with the Georgian leaders, working with Ambassador John Tefft. She herself worked with the Georgians and Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov, and with key Europeans including the French as EU President, and Finnish Foreign Minister Stubb, in Finland’s role as Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, to seek to halt the fighting.

On August 14, Secretary Rice flew to France to consult with President Sarkozy, and then flew to Georgia to seek—and successfully obtain—President Saakashvili’s signature on a ceasefire agreement. President Sarkozy had negotiated a six-point agreement which included the following:

1. No resort to force.
2. A definitive halt to hostilities.
3. Provision of free access for humanitarian assistance.
4. Georgian military forces must withdraw to the places they are usually stationed.
5. Russian forces must withdraw to their positions prior to the outbreak of hostilities. While awaiting an international mechanism, Russian peacekeeping forces will implement additional security measures.
6. Opening of international discussions on security and stability modalities in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

The U.S. role in this process was central and timely. The Georgians had questions about the ceasefire agreement, so we worked with the French who issued a clarifying letter addressing some of Georgia’s concerns. Secretary Rice conveyed the draft Ceasefire Agreement and the letter to President Saakashvili the next day. Based on these assurances, some additional assurances from the French, and the assurances of our support, President Saakashvili signed the ceasefire agreement on August 15.

The Ceasefire Accord provides for the withdrawal of Russian forces from Georgia to their positions before the hostilities began, and allows for peacekeepers in South Ossetia, limited to the numbers allowed under previous agreements, to conduct patrols a few kilometers from the conflict zone in South Ossetia, not including any cities and not in ways that impede freedom of movement.

Here is what the Ceasefire Accord does not provide: it does not establish a buffer zone; it does not allow the Russians to set up checkpoints around Georgia’s ports or along Georgia’s main highways and other transportation links; and it does not allow the Russians to have any forces whatsoever in places such as Poti, 200 kilometers from South Ossetia.

This agreement was signed—and should have been honored immediately—by Russian President Medvedev, who had promised to French President Sarkozy Russia’s immediate withdrawal upon President Saakashvili’s signature of the Ceasefire. Yet Russia has still not lived up to the requirements of the Ceasefire Agreement requirements. In these circumstances, with Russia’s having failed to honor the terms of the Ceasefire Agreement and its promise to withdraw its forces, Secretary Rice flew to Brussels for an emergency NATO meeting on August 19 and, with our Allies, produced a statement in support of Georgia’s territorial integrity and sovereignty—a statement that was stronger than anyone thought possible.

Russia, still failing to honor the Ceasefire Agreement, again escalated the conflict on August 26 when it recognized the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

It did so in defiance of numerous United Nations Security Council resolutions that Russia approved and that explicitly affirmed Georgia's territorial integrity. And that the underlying separatist conflicts must be resolved peacefully, through international negotiations. This outrageous and irresponsible action was condemned by the European Union, NATO's Secretary General, key Allies, and—in an unprecedented move—the foreign ministers of the G7 countries. Other than Russia and the South Ossetia and Abkhazia separatist regimes themselves, Nicaragua is the only country that has recognized these territories as independent countries.

Following the European Union Summit on September 1, President Sarkozy traveled to Moscow on September 8 to again seek Russia's compliance with the Ceasefire.

This has been a fast-moving situation, but that is where we find ourselves today.

OUR STRATEGIC RESPONSE

In the face of this Russian assault on Georgia, the United States is pursuing three key objectives.

First, we must support Georgia. We seek to stabilize the situation on the ground; help the country recover and thrive economically; preserve Georgia's sovereignty; maintain our support for its territorial integrity, and democracy; in the early stages of the conflict, Foreign Minister Lavrov asserted that Russia sought the removal of President Saakashvili, a democratically-elected leader. Russia has not succeeded.

We are active, working with our European allies, in putting pressure on Russia to adhere to the Ceasefire. Russia must withdraw its military forces from Georgia, back to the lines of August 7; Russia is allowed limited patrolling rights by its recognized peacekeepers in the immediate vicinity of South Ossetia only until such time as an international mechanism is developed to take their place. So we are working fast with the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to put in place just such a mechanism. We are also preparing to launch international discussions on South Ossetia and Abkhazia, again working closely with our European partners.

We have already taken immediate steps to address Georgia's humanitarian needs. The United States has provided more than \$38 million worth of humanitarian aid and emergency relief, including food, shelter, and medical supplies, to assist the people of Georgia. U.S. aircraft made a total of 62 relief flights to Georgia from August 13 through September 4, and on August 24 and 27, 115 tons of emergency relief commodities arrived in Batumi on the *USS McFaul* and the *USCGC Dallas*. In addition, a third ship, the *USS Mount Whitney* anchored in Poti on September 5, delivering an additional 17 tons of emergency relief commodities that will be delivered by USAID non-governmental organization partners. On September 3, UNHCR reported that 90,500 individuals have returned to places of origin, following the August conflict. However, UNHCR staff note that the number of returnees may be significantly higher due to the passage of time, as well as the difficulty of accurate, in-field returnee counts. According to UNHCR, approximately 30,000 individuals may be displaced in the long term. We have been working with the Government of Georgia and seven relief organizations to ensure that our assistance gets to internally displaced people and other conflict-affected populations.

On September 3, Secretary Rice announced a major effort to help meet Georgia's pressing humanitarian needs, repair infrastructure damaged by Russia's invasion, sustain commercial confidence, and restore economic growth. \$570 million, the first phase of a \$1 billion United States economic support package, will be made available by the end of 2008 and will include emergency budget support to the Georgian Government. We will be working extensively with Congress in the days to come to fine tune how the assistance will be delivered. We are hopeful that there will be strong bipartisan backing for a second phase of support, an additional \$430 million to be provided in future budgets.

Georgia, like any sovereign country, should have the ability to defend itself and to deter renewed aggression. The Department of Defense has sent an assessment team to Tbilisi to help us begin to consider carefully Georgia's legitimate needs and, working with our Allies, develop our response. For several years, the United States has played a significant role in preparing Georgian forces to conduct counterterrorism missions, first as part of an effort to help Georgia rid its Pankisi Gorge of Chechen and other extremists and then as part of multinational coalition efforts. NATO's North Atlantic Council decided on August 19 to develop a NATO-Georgia Commission aimed at supporting Georgia's relations with NATO. NATO has also decided to help Georgia assess the damage caused by Russia's invasion, including to the Georgian Armed Forces, and to help restore critical services necessary for normal public life and economic activity. NATO has already sent an advisory sup-

port team to Georgia and its Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia. The North Atlantic Council Permanent Representatives plan to visit Georgia in the near future. Finland's Foreign Minister Alexander Stubb, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, showed strong and effective leadership in working with French Foreign Minister Kouchner to lay the diplomatic foundation for the ceasefire agreement and activate the OSCE's crisis response mechanisms.

Our second key objective is to prevent Russia from drawing a line down the center of Europe and declaring that nations on the wrong side of that line belong to Moscow's "sphere of influence" and therefore cannot join the great institutions of Europe and the transatlantic family. President Medvedev's recent statement of Russia's foreign policy principles implies such a claim.

The United States does not believe in or recognize "spheres of influence." Since 1989, the United States—under the leadership of Presidents George H. W. Bush, President Clinton, and President George W. Bush—has supported the right of every country emerging from communism to choose the path of its own development, and to choose the institutions—such as NATO and the European Union—that it wants to associate with and join. Each country must show itself ready to meet the standards of the institutions it seeks to join. That is its responsibility, and Georgia and Ukraine should be treated no differently than other European countries seeking to join European and transatlantic institutions.

NATO and EU enlargement has been the institutional embodiment of the slogan, "Europe whole, free, and at peace." A Europe whole, free, and at peace has been good for Europe, good for the countries on Europe's periphery, and, I would argue, good for Russia, which now faces the most benign set of countries to its west in all of its history.

Europe whole, free, and at peace should include Russia; and throughout this process the United States and Europe sought to deepen ties with Russia in parallel with the growth of Western institutions throughout all of Europe. But Europe whole, free, and at peace certainly does not mean that Russia gets to veto the right of independent countries to choose their future, and especially not through intimidation and threats. We want to respect Russia's legitimate interests. But we will not sacrifice small nations on the altar of great power expediency.

IMPLICATIONS FOR RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA.

Finally, our strategic response must include the longer-term consequences of the invasion of Georgia for our relationship with Russia. Since 1991, three U.S. administrations have based policy toward Russia on the assumption that Russia—perhaps in fits and starts, imperfectly and in its own way—sought to become a nation integrated with the world: a "normal nation," that is, part of the international system and its institutions. For its part, since 1991 Russia has asserted its own interest in becoming a part of the world and a part of international institutions. And Russia had made progress in this regard, with American and European support.

But with its invasion of Georgia, its continuing refusal to implement the Ceasefire it has signed, and its apparent claim to a "sphere of influence," Russia has put these assumptions under question and these aspirations at risk.

Russia's behavior in Georgia recalls bad traditions of years we had believed behind us: 1979 and Afghanistan, 1968 and Czechoslovakia, 1956 and Hungary, 1921 and Georgia, and numerous Russian imperial interventions in the 19th century. Russia's assault on Georgia follows other troubling signs: threats against Poland, including the threat of nuclear attack; suspicious poisonings and killings of journalists and those deemed "undesirable" persons such as Aleksandr Litvinenko, Anna Politkovskaya, and even President Yushchenko of Ukraine; the apparent use of energy for the purposes of political pressure against Ukraine, Lithuania and the Czech Republic; the concentration of political power in one party and focused in the Kremlin; and the creation in the state-controlled Russian media of an "enemy image" of the United States. Many believe that there is a relationship between these troubling events and increasing government control of and pressure on what should be independent institutions in Russia, including the parliament, political parties, non-governmental organizations, the media, and the courts.

We can speculate on the sources of such Russian behavior. We in the United States looked on the period of the 1990s as one of hope for Russian democratic reform and international integration in the immediate post-Soviet period. But Russians do not look back on the 1990s with nostalgia, and certainly not with regret. They look on this decade as a period of chaos and impoverishment at home, and humiliation and decline of influence abroad. Most Russians welcomed what they believed was stability and greater international respect that then-President Putin gained for Russia in the world. They welcome Russia's steady economic growth, even

if many realize this is to a great extent no more than a function of high oil and gas prices; and they welcome what they see as Russia's return to a period of greater order at home and more respect abroad. They believe that it is only right that Russia should assert its interests in its immediate neighborhood.

We should understand the sources of such views. But to understand them is not to accept or excuse them. It is not a mark of return to national greatness to have launched an invasion of a smaller, weaker neighbor, or to use language of threats and intimidation against other neighbors. Worse, in an echo of the Brezhnev Doctrine's right of intervention, some Russian officials have suggested a right to intervene on behalf of Russian citizens anywhere in the former Soviet Union and beyond. If Russia is simply creating these "citizens" by handing out Russian passports to non-Russians in neighboring countries, as it did in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, then this is a formula that can be abused, and is perhaps designed to be abused, to justify aggressive purposes.

There is another and more constructive side to Russian official thinking. Earlier this year, Dmitriy Medvedev made an eloquent speech in which he presented his vision of a Russia governed on the basis of the rule of law, and fully integrated in the 21st century global economy. He spoke persuasively of a modern Russia, rooted in the rule of law—strong, to be sure, but strong in the measure of power for the 21st century, not the 19th century. We in the West, and many Russians, took encouragement from his words—words that now ring hollow.

Russia has a choice to make. It can seek to be a nation at peace with itself and its neighbors, a modern nation establishing its power and influence in modern and constructive ways, as President Medvedev's post-election vision suggested.

Or Russia can choose to be a nation whose standing in the world is based not on how much respect it can earn, but on how much fear it can evoke in others. Russia cannot have it both ways. Russia, sadly, seems to be seeking to build national power based on attempts to dominate and the threat or use of force or pressure against its neighbors. By its actions in recent weeks, Russia has put itself in opposition to Europe and the transatlantic community with which it claimed partnership.

We hope Russia, even now, can choose a better path. But we must also contend with the Russia that lies before us, and the signs are not good.

How shall the West respond?

I have already spoken of our support for Georgia and our efforts to blunt Russian attempts to draw a new line, or curtain, through Eastern Europe. But we must also respond to Russia itself.

First, we must help Russians understand that the course they are now on is already leading to self-isolation in the world. Russia has been condemned by the European Union, the Chair of the OSCE, and for the first time ever by its G8 partners, by the foreign ministers of G7 countries. If Russia continues its current course of defiance and failure to honor its agreements, this self-isolation will deepen, with profound implications for Russia's relations with key international institutions.

Second, the West must work and act together. The United States and its European allies have responded in coordinated fashion to the Georgia crisis, and must continue to do so. The United States and Europe working together will have far more impact on Russia than we will have by working alone. Europe and the United States also need to show solidarity and determination to resist Russian pressure on other, smaller European nations on its border, whether this takes the form of military threats, cyber attacks, or economic intimidation using energy as a weapon. We shall consider specific steps thoughtfully and in light of Russia's behavior in the coming weeks, including whether it adheres to the Ceasefire Accord or if it continues to fail to comply with its terms, as Russia is now doing.

Third, as we look ahead at our relations with Russia, we must be steady, determined, and patient. It will take time for the Russian people and their leaders to comprehend the cost of Russia's growing isolation. The recent flight of billions of dollars from Russian equity markets is only an initial sign of the costs to Russia over time of its behavior.

Fourth, our response must keep open the possibility of Russian reconsideration of its current course, and keep doors open for cooperation. There are areas where we and Russia have overlapping interests—this was true before Russia invaded Georgia and it is still true now, whether it is in Iran, counterterrorism, Afghanistan, or other issues.

Fifth, we must also remember that Russia may choose to continue its aggressive course, particularly against neighbors who have aspirations for closer security relations with us and NATO. Prime Minister Putin has questioned Ukraine's territorial integrity as well as Georgia's, and President Medvedev has threatened to use "military means" to stop Poland's plans to host missile defense components. Russia will be ill-advised to pursue a course of continued threats against its neighbors. As Brit-

ish Foreign Secretary David Miliband put it, we do not want a new Cold War; Russia has a responsibility not to start one.

We do not seek, and are not doomed to have, a bad relationship with Russia. Russia's development in the 21st century will require it to have a cooperative, not antagonistic, relationship with Europe, the United States, and the developed world. For better or worse, Russians value their place in the community of European nations. Moreover, Russia must contend with its serious problems at home: a shrinking and aging population, a lopsided economy, and now international isolation. Russia is poorly positioned to sustain a bad relationship with Europe and the United States.

Wiser heads in Russia understand this, and may themselves realize that long-term self-isolation will not prove to be a successful strategy for Russia. The Russian economy will require investment, access to capital and technology, and, over time, greater adherence to the rule of law than is the case today. Investors will make their own decisions. But they generally seek a stable relationship with their economic partners and a predictable climate for their investments. And the message Russia has sent by its recent actions is that this kind of stability and predictability can no longer be assumed.

Russia is not doomed to authoritarianism at home and aggression against its neighbors. Those are the choices that Russia's leaders are currently making. Unless they change their path, we are in for a difficult period ahead.

But even in the Soviet period, we maintained both channels of communications with the Russians and a relationship in hope of better times. And in time, our relations did improve as the internal weakness of the Soviet system became more obvious and the West stood firm against Soviet expansionism.

As we consider the implications of Russia's attack on Georgia, realism requires us to face clearly what Russia has done and what we must do. We must support our friends and our principles. Russian aggression cannot be allowed to succeed; in time, if we are successful, the Russians may come to realize that a one-sided victory over a small neighbor's military was a grave mistake. In the meantime, our responsibility for the future requires us to maintain the basis of a framework for U.S.-Russian relations, given the knowledge that the perspective of today's Russian leaders will not last forever. So let us prepare to resist Russian aggression where we must, working with our friends and allies; and let us be mindful of—and keep open—channels of communication where we can, for history teaches that the aggressor may strike and win a first round, but seldom wins the last.

Thank you. I look forward to taking your questions.

Chairman BERMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Ambassador. I will recognize myself for 5 minutes.

Just real quickly, I am a little unclear. The aid you have announced—you are providing some humanitarian assistance now—but the aid you have announced, as a result of reprogramming already appropriated funds, is about \$550 million, all of it economic assistance, none of it military assistance. Am I right about that?

Mr. FRIED. Yes, sir. There is no military assistance in this package.

Chairman BERMAN. And then you want an authorization for a total of \$1 billion, to include a second tranche of economic assistance at some point next year. Is that correct?

Mr. FRIED. I am not the best person to talk about the legislative vehicles for this assistance. I have a pretty good idea of where we want it to go, but I do not want to get ahead of our legislative experts. We do want to work with this committee and others on the details.

Chairman BERMAN. Just to clarify, what is the administration's position on military assistance at this point?

Mr. FRIED. Our current package does not include military assistance. We are going to make a careful assessment of Georgia's needs. We are going to think about what the appropriate response is to those needs, and we will be discussing that on a separate track.

Chairman BERMAN. Okay.

Mr. FRIED. So that is in an assessment phase.

Chairman BERMAN. All right. I am told that there is some intelligence that Russian tanks were in the Roki Tunnel—

Mr. FRIED. The Roki Tunnel, yes.

Chairman BERMAN [continuing]. The Roki Tunnel at the time of the Georgian military attack on Tskhinvali. Is that right?

Mr. FRIED. It is certainly the case that the Georgians, on August 7th, told us that Russian armored vehicles had gone into the Roki Tunnel, which is on the border between Russia and Georgia, and the Georgians told us they feared the Russians were moving in and were going to assault Georgia.

Chairman BERMAN. And this is before the attack on Tskhinvali.

Mr. FRIED. This is what the Georgians told us. Now, I have to be very careful because these things do matter. We are still looking at the precise timeline of when the Russian forces were in the Roki Tunnel. It is true that the Georgians believe that they were in the Roki Tunnel when they made their decision to move against Tskhinvali, and, from what I understand, I think the Georgians believed they were telling us the truth, but I cannot sit here and tell you that I know this independently to be true.

Chairman BERMAN. All right. In other words, you do not have independent verification of that fact at this time.

Mr. FRIED. Not yet.

Chairman BERMAN. Okay. There are reports that U.N. agencies—UNICEF, UNDP, WFP—were denied access by Russian troops at the Karaleti checkpoint between Gori and the administrative border of South Ossetia for at least 10 days now and that OSCE was denied access to all areas around South Ossetia, including an area they had not had problems patrolling before. Is this accurate, that, for purposes of dealing with humanitarian issues in South Ossetia and in some of these buffer areas, that U.N. agencies have been denied access by Russian troops. Is that correct?

Mr. FRIED. Yes, sir, it is. There have been problems with access into South Ossetia and Tskhinvali. There have been intermittent problems with access to some of the Georgian villages in the outer regions of South Ossetia that were out of the fighting and always under Georgian administration, but the problem in Tskhinvali and in Abkhazia has been that the OSCE monitors and U.N. monitors have been effectively kept out, but we hope the situation will change soon.

Chairman BERMAN. And my last question is, can you give me a date when the U.N. Security Council is convening on a fourth round of enhanced sanctions against Iran, based on its refusal to go along with the most recent P5-plus-1 proposal?

Mr. FRIED. I am sorry. I cannot do that. I will refer the question to my colleague, Bill Burns.

Chairman BERMAN. Is it appropriate to conclude that our efforts to work with Russia to strengthen a multilateral level of sanctions to try and persuade Iran to change its behavior are a casualty of this conflict?

Mr. FRIED. Not necessarily.

Chairman BERMAN. Well, at some point, at some time, but not now, I would love to know your hopes in that regard.

Mr. FRIED. Very good, sir.

Chairman BERMAN. Thank you. The ranking member of the committee, the gentlelady from Florida, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Ambassador Fried, for joining us today.

The Russian Foreign Minister recently said, and I quote, "The United States will have to choose between a virtual project or a real partnership." This was interpreted by many to mean that if the United States abandoned its support for Georgia, it might expect cooperation from Georgia, from Russia, on our united front, the United States and our European allies, to prevent Iran from gaining nuclear weapons.

I wanted to ask you a series of questions, first, if you agree with that interpretation of what the Foreign Minister said, and, in addressing some of the statements made today about our bilateral relationship with Russia and issues of mutual concern, such as Iran, has Russia not been providing nuclear technology and assistance to Iran for decades? Has Russia not provided missile assistance to Iran for decades?

And long before Russia's invasion of Georgia, was Russia not one of two countries blocking substantive, strong sanctions against Iran? Has Russia's gas monopoly, GAZPROM, not been investing in Iran's energy sector, in violation of United States sanctions, laws, in fact, since 1996? Has Russia not said that it is increasing its assistance to Iran and its nuclear project, and, as such, would you not agree that Russian aggression in Georgia is separate from its complicity in enhancing Iran's nuclear and missile program?

In fact, Mr. Chairman, before the break, this committee adopted legislation that prohibited a nuclear cooperation agreement with Russia unless the President certified that Russia had stopped helping Iran's nuclear, biological, chemical, and missile programs.

So if you could put the situation regarding Russia and Georgia in context with other threats that we face and Russia's noncooperation in helping us deal with those threats, specifically, Iran.

Mr. FRIED. I believe your interpretation of Foreign Minister Lavrov's remarks is essentially correct; that is, he was saying that you can choose between cooperation with Russia and support for Georgia.

While there are some who may argue that Georgia, as a small country, is not worth American support, in fact, I disagree, and the administration disagrees strongly, on two levels.

First of all, Georgia is a country which has generated pressure from Russia because it wishes to draw closer to Europe and the United States. Other countries in the region of the former Soviet Union are watching carefully to see whether the United States will support Georgia, whether Georgia's option of closer relations with the West is viable, and whether Europe and the United States will stand by the right of a small country to exercise its freedom of choice.

I do not believe that it is in America's interest, the administration does not believe it is in America's interest, to consign small countries to a Russian "sphere of influence" and to signal that force—

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Ambassador Fried, I am sorry to cut you off, but I only have 1 minute. I just want to point out, with that time, that the Georgian Government has been very helpful to the United States, and that has not been brought out, deploying 2,000 troops to intercept weapons coming into Iraq from Iran as part of a United States-led force in Iraq, and it is trying to intercept weapons and related technologies that might reach Iran across Georgia territory.

So I thank you, Mr. Ambassador, and I am so sorry for no time. I talked too long. Thirty seconds.

Mr. FRIED. I do owe you an answer on the Iran question, however, and Russia.

The Russian cooperation on our efforts to deal with Iran's nuclear weapons program have been mixed, but Russia has been more of a partner than not. We had had some concerns initially about Russia's support for the Bashkir reactor, but, in time, we have generally worked these out. We wish to continue cooperation with Russia as best we can on this issue.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentlelady has expired.

This is under the procedures that the committee has been operating under. The members who were here at the time of the gavel get the first crack, and the gentleman from California, Mr. Sherman, is recognized for 5 minutes. Well, that is the other part of the procedure, if you are not here.

The gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Scott, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask a series of questions.

Let me go back to what I was talking about earlier, given the energy situation, which I think really is lying at the heart of this matter, energy. This is the elephant in the room. Russia controls so much of it. It has a history of using its energy as political leverage against European countries. Lithuania and the other satellites come to mind.

So the question comes on how reliable, how effective, will our European and NATO parties be to assisting us in dealing strongly with Russia, if, in effect, they are so dependent on Russia for their oil and their energy? Where does that place us in the scheme of things?

Mr. FRIED. You are right, sir, that Russia's control over Europe's gas and oil, much of Europe's oil and gas needs, may give Russia a certain leverage, and we have seen Russia try to exercise this leverage with Ukraine, with other countries in the region.

The United States has, for several years, made this point to the Europeans and urged them to take seriously the strategic imperative, as well as the economic benefit, of diversifying pipelines so that Central Asian and Caspian gas and oil can flow to Europe without either Russian or Iranian control.

Of course, all of that gas that flows to Europe, other than through Russia or Iran, must flow through Azerbaijan and Georgia and, perhaps someday, Armenia.

Therefore, Georgia's sovereignty and independence serves our values, but it also serves our energy policy. So, for both of those reasons, Georgia is an important country.

Mr. SCOTT. Let me ask you this, one of my questions. We have got a big issue coming up. I am a member of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. We have a NATO meeting in 2 months, and, certainly, the pertinent issue that is going to come up is Georgia's desire to become a part of NATO. Give me your thoughts on what that means.

Where should our position be? What is the United States' position, the administration's position, on the pace of Georgia becoming a member of NATO, and especially in view of the great disapproval that has with Russia?

Mr. FRIED. Congressman, many of the speakers here today spoke about the importance of an Article V commitment and the seriousness of a NATO security commitment to a member state.

NATO membership is not to be given out lightly. Article V is a critical commitment. It is a commitment to defend a country.

Right now, the United States believes that Georgia and Ukraine ought to be given access to NATO's Membership Action Plan. The Membership Action Plan is not an invitation to join NATO. It is not a promise of an invitation. It is, however, an opportunity for these countries to get themselves ready to meet NATO standards.

Mr. SCOTT. So are you saying that the administration believes we should move to make Georgia a part of NATO?

Mr. FRIED. The administration believes that we ought to move to give Georgia the opportunity to get itself ready, which is a somewhat different thing.

Mr. SCOTT. Okay.

Mr. FRIED. Their road to NATO needs to be open, not blocked by someone else's veto.

Mr. SCOTT. Okay. I have a number of questions. I want to get your reaction to something here.

A few weeks ago, there was the stationing of the interceptor missiles in Poland and the deputy chief of the Russian general staff warned, and he said this: "This will not go unpunished." He went on to say, "Poland, by deploying the system, is exposing itself to a strike, 100 percent, noting that Russia's military doctrine allows for the use of nuclear weapons against the allies of countries having nuclear weapons, if they, in some way, help them." That appeared on ABC television news on August 14th.

How serious is this? Is it as serious as this deputy chief of the Russian general staff is stating, or are they just bluffing?

Mr. FRIED. The threat of an attack on Poland, which is a NATO member, is shocking, and it is deeply irresponsible, especially when the Russians are perfectly well aware that our missile defense plans are no threat to Russia whatsoever.

We have to take seriously all of these threats, but we cannot be paralyzed by fear. Certainly, the Poles have not been paralyzed by fear, though they were properly outraged by this Russian threat.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired. The bells for three votes have gone off. I am going to recognize a member of the minority, Mr. Rohrabacher, for 5 minutes, and then we

will recess for probably about 30 minutes. It will be a recess, but we will be back and ready to see it through.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, you have mentioned this long series of provocations, and, again, this, to me, is reminiscent of the Gulf of Tonkin provocations, which did not, in any way, justify what action took place after that.

Are you saying, however, then, that this long list of provocations justified the Georgian attack? Everyone agrees that Georgia attacked and launched their military operations first against Ossetia. You are saying that the provocations justified that Georgian attack?

Mr. FRIED. No.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Okay. That is fine. It did not. I agree with that. Then they attacked in great numbers. How many Ossetians were killed by the Georgians when they came into Ossetia?

Mr. FRIED. I do not know.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. It was 150. How many Georgians were killed after the Georgians came in and killed these Ossetians to try to terrorize them back, under their submission, into Tbilisi, and then the Russians intervened? How many Georgians were killed?

Mr. FRIED. I am not confident in very many of the statistics.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Okay, 150, less than 150 in each case, but near 150.

How many Serbs were killed by American military operations to make sure that the Kosovars had their right of self-determination? About 500 is the answer, Mr. Secretary.

Now, we can talk until we are blue in the face, trying to say there is no analogy here, but it does not cover up the obvious analogy between Kosovo and what is going on in Georgia, where you have breakaway republics similar to what the Serbs faced. Now, the only difference is, of course, we are Americans, and they are Russians, and the people trying to break away there were pro-Russian.

Let me ask you, is it NATO's job now to make sure that any group of people that want to be independent, like the Kosovars or, let us say, the Ossetians, is it NATO's job now to force all of those people, utilize force, and protect any nation that is using force against people who want their own self-determination, to protect those governments who are using force to keep people from breaking away and becoming independent and creating democratic self-government?

Mr. FRIED. That is not NATO's job, although I disagree with you about the relationship between Kosovo and South Ossetia.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. I respect all of the work that you did in Kosovo, and I just returned from Kosovo, over the break, and I will tell you, it is so evident that there is great damage to our credibility by repeating what is so obviously untrue.

I would suggest that, as I did in my opening statement, we have just been pushing the Russians and pushing the Russians, making them into an enemy when they, at first, wanted to be friends.

I remember when terrorists blew up hundreds of their children, and our President of the United States did not even bother to go

over there and to express our sympathy and unity with those people.

Finally, let me just note, with all of this talk, this ominous threat about Russia, here we end up seeing just the opposite reaction about what is going on in China. When you compare what the Russians have done to democratize and no democracy at all in China, and the fact that we have caught 50 spies in the last 6 years from China stealing military secrets from us; Mr. Secretary, how many Russians have we caught stealing military secrets from us in the last 5 years? The answer is zero, and that is not saying that they do not have intelligence services.

The Russians are being portrayed as our enemy, the Chinese as our friend, yet the Chinese are the ones with the totalitarian state. This double-standard is not being missed in Moscow. Either we are for democracy, either we are for those people in Kosovo and in Ossetia and elsewhere and, I might say, in Georgia for their right to be separate from Russia, to begin with, and if we lose that, we have lost the high ground.

We are already losing our credibility right now. Let us not lose the high ground. Let us be for self-determination and a democratic process and not think that, because we are part of NATO, that gives us the right to go in and back up these governments that are using force on ethnic groups that want to be free and independent.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired. I do not believe that was a question, and the committee is in recess for approximately 30 minutes.

[Whereupon, at 2:46 p.m., a recess was taken.]

Chairman BERMAN. The committee will come to order. Since the only people here are—Mr. Royce is here. I was hoping to get the last two questions I had in.

Secretary Fried, I am curious about something. Was the Patriot missile battery part of the missile defense that we were talking about deploying in Poland to deal with Iranian nuclear-tipped missiles?

Mr. FRIED. Our discussions with the Poles about—

Chairman BERMAN. No, no. I mean, in the original announcement of our intention to deploy a missile defense system to deal with Iranian nuclear-tipped missiles—remember all of that?

Mr. FRIED. Yes, of course.

Chairman BERMAN. This is not focused on Russia; this is focused on Iran.

Mr. FRIED. Right.

Chairman BERMAN. Did that include a Patriot battery?

Mr. FRIED. The original concept? No, it did not.

Chairman BERMAN. Okay. That answers one of my two questions. I think we now have enough people who have not asked any questions, and I ought to stop.

The last person to question was Mr. Rohrabacher, and so Mr. Sherman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHERMAN. I thank the chairman.

In addition to the combatants, Armenia has suffered tremendously as a result of this war in Armenia—totally blameless—does the administration plan on providing economic aid to Armenia as part of this package, and, if so, how much?

Mr. FRIED. Armenia has suffered as a result of this. Our additional assistance package does not include Armenia, but, of course, Armenia is a significant recipient of American assistance. I think it is the second-largest, or perhaps the largest, per-capita recipient of American assistance in the world, and we intend to continue strong assistance to Armenia.

In addition, though, we have encouraged, as you know, both Armenia and its neighbors, Turkey and Azerbaijan, to work toward settling their differences. We were delighted that the President of Armenia reached out to President Gul and invited him to Yerevan and delighted also that President Gul accepted the invitation.

Mr. SHERMAN. I thank you for your soccer commentary, but I do want to interrupt.

The estimate of the Armenian Government is that this conflict has already damaged its economy to the tune of \$680 million. How does \$680 million compare to the administration's Armenia aid package request for Fiscal Year 2009?

Mr. FRIED. It is, obviously, more than that.

Mr. SHERMAN. By a factor of 10 or a factor of 15 or a factor—

Mr. FRIED. A factor of 10 sounds about right, but I do not want to be too precise. Of course, I would have to look at what lies behind those large estimates of damage. That seems pretty high, but I would want to take a look at this. Certainly, we are working with the Government of Armenia. I am glad that we have an ambassador going out there soon, and we certainly hope to see Armenia's relative isolation end. We want its borders open and its relations improved, and we are going to work to that end.

Mr. SHERMAN. How did Georgia believe that military action, including taking, I believe, for about 1 day, the capital of South Ossetia, would lead to a positive result? Did they believe that the United States would provide military assistance or dissuade Russia from taking military action? And why was communication between Washington and Tbilisi so poor, and/or why is the President of Georgia so incredibly deaf that he did not hear us?

Mr. FRIED. Ultimately, that is a question you should put to the Georgians, but I will say this—

Mr. SHERMAN. How loudly did we yell in the direction of Tbilisi: Do not take aggressive military action, and if there is a conflict, you are on your own. You may get your own soldiers back from Iraq, but you are not going to get any military help from the United States. We are not going to be able to dissuade Moscow, and your own capital city may be under Russian guns? How strongly did we make that argument?

Mr. FRIED. Loudly, unequivocally, and repeatedly.

Mr. SHERMAN. Then why is a friendly, smaller country, like Georgia, going to get a huge amount from the United States for damage it suffered by ignoring the loudest and most specific warnings from the United States?

Mr. FRIED. Georgia did not deserve to be invaded by a larger country, and whatever Georgia's decision to act within its own borders, that did not justify a Russian invasion, first.

Secondly, it is not in our interests that a country, even if it has done something we consider foolish in this case, should be crushed. It would not be in our interests nor would it serve our common val-

ues. We want to see Georgia survive in the face of this pressure. We think that that is a good investment.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Secretary, my time is expiring. I will simply say that, yes, it is not in our interests to see Georgia crushed. It is also not in our interests to tell every ally we have out there in the world that we will hold them harmless and provide them with massive aid to repair the damage for whatever foolishness they engage in, no matter how clearly we tell them that their proposed action is foolish. I yield back.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from California, Mr. Royce, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROYCE. Yes, Mr. Fried. Your comment that some did not believe that Georgia did not deserve support, I think, is a misunderstanding of the situation because I think many of us believe that the achievement by the people of Georgia of democracy was a wonderful achievement. Many of us are elated by what has happened over time in Georgia, in terms of the evolution of that system, and many of us feel the Russian invasion was, in no way, justified, not even by the bad judgment of the President of Georgia in launching a barrage on South Ossetia. But the question at hand here goes to a deeper issue.

Now, in terms of support for Georgia, I, and others here, supported military training and equipment—not arms but military training and equipment—to Georgia when it was aimed at routing al-Qaeda terrorists and Chechens from the Pankisi Gorge there, and the terrorists had been seeking a safe haven. But now we have moved on to a different topic, and that came up with this issue of moving Georgia into NATO, along with Ukraine.

This is a blunt question, but I think the stakes, war and peace here, demand clarity. Is the defense of Georgia worth war with Russia? And, if not, is it responsible to add Georgia to NATO?

Mr. FRIED. At the moment, we are not considering an invitation to Georgia to join the alliance. That is not on the agenda.

Mr. ROYCE. All right. I understand your argument there, but it is a pathway.

I would also ask you, do other NATO countries, those with significant militaries, feel that the defense of Georgia is worth war with Russia? Would we have anyone with us, say, for a minute, for sake of argument, that we go down this road? Are you not concerned with committing to defend a country with an active border dispute with Russia, and is this a vital national security interest? I think that is the question in that vote over eventual NATO membership or a pathway into NATO.

Mr. FRIED. All NATO countries, including the ones that did not support an immediate Membership Action Plan for Georgia, did agree that Georgia's pathway to NATO should be unencumbered. That is what the NATO Summit decided in Bucharest. All countries felt that way.

The question before us, and before NATO, is whether Georgia should be allowed to make itself ready for NATO membership, whether we should put Georgia through a program to make it do the work that it must do to become ready for NATO membership.

NATO enlargement has benefited the United States because it has helped create a Europe, whole, free, and at peace.

Mr. ROYCE. Well, now listen. Newsweek ran a report that NATO did not formally assess any of the 10 new NATO states' defense capabilities when we enlarged, and I think we should have. Old Europe should have been brought into NATO. We brought old Europe into NATO. But, according to Admiral Wald, the former number-two at European Command, the attitude was, the more, the merrier. "The more, the merrier," he said.

NATO did not really look at the Article V part of it; in other words, the collective defense portion of this. And I would ask what you think General Wald meant with his statement because it looks like what he means is that NATO was not focused on what it would mean to have to defend other countries coming into NATO. Whereas bringing old Europe into NATO is one thing, bringing in part of the near abroad, bringing in Ukraine or Georgia, brings in a whole different set of questions.

There are ways to punish Russia. The markets are punishing Russia right now. Foreign investment is leaving. Twenty-one billion of rubles have left the country. There is a run on, basically, the ruble right now.

The international community does need to condemn Russia for its actions, but this issue of creeping toward bringing these two countries in the near abroad, with border disputes with Russia, into NATO; I would argue that General Wald has a point here when he says, you know, the attitude was not really looking at the Article V part of this, in terms of collective defense. That is what I want to ask you about.

Mr. FRIED. I do not know what General Wald meant. Article V, though, to get to what I think your point is, must be taken very seriously and not lightly. We have to take this seriously over time. We do have the time to think about this, and we want to see these countries prepare themselves. It will be years before we have this question before us.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Sires.

Mr. SIRES. Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for being here again and for answering the questions as honestly as you do.

I have an observation, and it may not be correct, but I just really think that the purpose of such a strong response by Russia was part of their plan to destabilize a democracy in this area so they could put their own government somewhat friendlier to them.

My real question is, what would the consequences be if we do not help Georgia get back on their feet?

Mr. FRIED. It is true that the Russians said that they wanted to overthrow the Government of Georgia and replace President Saakashvili. They said this, so I think your analysis is correct.

If we were to fail to help Georgia, it would signal, not only to the Georgians but to all of the countries of the South Caucasus and Ukraine and Central Asia and even some NATO members, such as the Baltics, that we would not, in fact, stand by small countries under threat of Russia.

It would damage our credibility and the standing of NATO, as a whole, not because we have an Article V commitment to Georgia—we do not—but because small countries that are being threatened because they want to be close to the United States need to be protected. That is something that is in our interests, quite apart from Georgia's role as an energy corridor, which is an important and perfectly legitimate national interest.

Mr. SIRES. How seriously should we take Russia's efforts now to extend itself into Cuba? I know that they are doing some maneuvers with Venezuela, naval maneuvers. So is that just a bluff, or is that going back to the Cold War days when they were trying to put weapons in Cuba?

Mr. FRIED. We do not know yet. We are going to watch this very closely. Right now, I would put it in the category of symbols and gestures, but to be watched, not ignored.

The Russians seem to be taking some delight in their own sense that they are somehow back. Why they are proud of having attacked a small, weaker nation is another matter. They should not be, in my view. But this is part of a larger issue of Russia's sense of itself and where it is going in the world, and the signs are not good.

Mr. SIRES. I know what the Russians said about Poland, after what we did in Poland, but I think it was more intended for countries like Hungary that are teetering on how close they want to get to Russia. Is that a fair assessment?

Mr. FRIED. I think the Russians want to be assertive across the board and everywhere they can. When President Medvedev said that its actions in Georgia show that Russia is a force to be reckoned with, it was not a sign of self-confidence, but it seemed a kind of overcompensation rather than genuine confidence.

NATO needs to consider carefully the consequences of what Russia has done. We take Article V seriously, and we need, methodically, to do NATO's standard work, which is to prepare for all contingencies.

Mr. SIRES. And, finally, I just want to add, I agree with Congressman Scott, that this is all about energy. I do not know whether anybody has put it to the Europeans, but I think that they should have some sort of summit on trying to get away from the dependency on Russia in the near future because this game is just going to go on and on.

I do not think that the Russians are finished with Georgia yet. I think they are going to try everything that they can to destabilize, and until they succeed in changing the government, they are not going to stop.

Mr. FRIED. You may be right, which is one of the reasons we want to help Georgia. It is also true that Europeans themselves are even more cognizant of the fact that giving Russia energy leverage over them may not be in their interests, and they are thinking about energizing, so to speak, their efforts to develop alternative pipelines that are not under Russia or Iran's control, and this is something we very much support. I suspect it will come up in the NATO parliamentary meeting that Mr. Scott talked about.

Mr. SIRES. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
Chairman BERMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

The gentleman from Texas, Mr. Paul, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Chairman, I understand we are sending aid to Georgia right now, humanitarian aid, in a military vessel, a military ship. If we are not the provocateurs, why would we use a military ship instead of a nonmilitary ship? What is the purpose of that if it is not to provoke?

Mr. FRIED. We have used military ships to provide assistance after the tsunami in Asia. We have used military planes to provide humanitarian assistance, so it is actually fairly standard procedure, not any kind of provocative act at all, and we did not regard it as a provocation. Certainly, it is perfectly normal to have relations with Georgia to deliver humanitarian assistance in a standard way. It is, after all, the Russians who have crossed an international border to attack Georgia, not the other way around.

Mr. PAUL. Let me have you pause for a minute because, obviously, there is a disagreement on that. Certainly, in the world press, there is a lot of disagreement on who did the invading first, but we will not settle that here. But I think we should all agree that when you give humanitarian aid, it is essentially military aid because all funds are fungible, and it just happens that the Georgians, in their budget last year, spent 70 percent of their money on the military, and they got a lot of assistance from us.

So this idea that it is humanitarian aid and not military aid, I think, distracts from what is really going on there. I was just wondering whether it ever bothers you or concerns you or the question ever crosses your mind about humanitarian aid to a country like this. What about the people in this country? We have a lot of poor people not getting medical care and not getting food, and \$1 billion, what the heck? We will send them another billion.

Does it ever cross your mind that maybe that should be helping our people here? This is getting us into trouble. This is not helping us. This is making us less safe. This is part of this empire. You might refer to it as our "sphere of influence," but everybody knows it is our empire.

Does it ever cross your mind that everything that we do over there, and ever nickel you take, you are taking it away from some poor people in this country that could have been helped?

Mr. FRIED. I do not think of it that way, no, sir. Secondly, as a matter of fact, Georgia did not attack Russia. There is no question about that. Russia attacked Georgia. Georgia sent its forces into a part of Georgia, the breakaway province of South Ossetia. Those are the basic facts.

I do not know about Georgia spending 70 percent of its budget on the military. That does not sound quite right to me.

And with respect to assistance priorities at home and abroad, sir, the same could be said for any form of foreign assistance anywhere. The question is, is it in the American interest to support a small country, a struggling democracy, that wants to be our friend, that has helped us out in Iraq, that has been attacked by a much larger country?

The strategic stakes here are fairly high. The administration believes it is in our interest to support Georgia, to help it get on its feet, to prevent Russia from drawing a new line in Europe and

claiming a sphere of influence, and, in the long run, we want to consider our relations with Russia, not in a harsh or knee-jerk way, but carefully and thoughtfully.

Mr. PAUL. If I may, I am sorry, but I only have a minute. I understand your point, but let me tell you, there are a lot of people in America that do not see this in our interest. They see it in the interest of some very powerful, special-interest groups that have an oil pipeline going through there.

As a matter of fact, most Americans could not even find Georgia on a map, and to convince them that this is crucial, to spend all of this money, provoking the Russians, leading us into another conflict that we are not even capable of handling militarily now unless we use some very big bombs. Our troops are spread around the world, and this has been exactly the plan of some of our enemies, to do exactly this and bring us to our knees.

All we do is proceed to continue to spend and spread our troops around, diminishing our ability to take care of our people here at home, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman BERMAN. The time is yielded back. The gentleman from Massachusetts, Mr. Delahunt, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Welcome, Mr. Secretary. You spoke about a struggling democracy. I think it is important. I reviewed the Country Report on Human Rights for Georgia, and, obviously, you are familiar with that report. It is certainly struggling when it comes to human rights, particularly under the Saakashvili Government, and I am just going to read one excerpt here:

“While the government human rights record improved in some areas during the year, the record worsened in other areas, especially during the fall of 2007, and serious problems remain.”

Freedom of speech, the press, assembly, and political participation has worsened. There clearly was a response to the protests that was suppressed, rather violently, and a snap election was called. OSCE, in a report issued back in December, reported allegations of political intimidation, personal, and violence against opposition activists, including the New Rights Party. Operations were suspended at three TV stations—on and on and on and on.

I mean, I think that we have got to get an understanding of the current conditions and status, in terms of democracy. We are not there, as others have suggested, to defend a democracy. Democracy is very nascent in Georgia, and, clearly, over the course of the past several years, democratic institutions and practices by the existing government have eroded.

Are you aware that there is a petition being circulated requesting an independent inquiry into the facts surrounding the Georgian foray into Ossetia by members of the opposition and individuals? You are familiar with that.

Mr. FRIED. Yes, I am.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I mean, I just want to give that certain clarity. Let me proceed with a question.

You referred to “spheres of influence,” but that is no longer part of our foreign policy. That is a concept that is no longer viable, yet I think it was Mr. Sires that asked you about these reports coming that there could be an enhanced relationship, if you will, bilateral

relationship, between Cuba and Russia. And there have been suggestions made that that could involve a different, in terms of qualitative, relationship militarily between Russia and Cuba, such as refueling stops, et cetera.

I do not want to suggest that the Russians would be foolhardy enough to place nuclear devices or weapons in Cuba. But you are telling me that we would respect that. We would not have any issue because no longer is Cuba within our sphere of influence.

Mr. FRIED. We do not believe that large countries should push around small ones.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I understand, but that is not my question.

Mr. FRIED. Even when we have such severe differences with the Cuban regime, as we do, our differences with the Cuban regime are not rooted in its foreign policy alignment with Russia but fundamentally rooted in its basic lack of democracy at home. That is our problem with Cuba.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Okay, but my question is, would we not have an issue with a different qualitative, bilateral relationship enhancing the military aspect of that relationship between Cuba and the United States?

Mr. FRIED. If Cuba were a democracy, and its people were free to choose their way forward, then we would have to respect that choice. The people of Cuba are not, at the moment, free.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Let me just ask one final question, if I can. It was reported in the New York Times, I think, yesterday or today, that you, Secretary Fried, had a conversation with the Georgians asking them not to commit forces into South Ossetia. Is that accurate?

Mr. FRIED. Yes, it is.

Mr. DELAHUNT. And they ignored you.

Mr. FRIED. They sent the forces in.

Mr. DELAHUNT. They ignored you. Thank you. I yield back.

Mr. FRIED. That is an accurate report, sir.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Smith, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, let me just say, Ambassador Fried, in answer to Mr. Paul, you know, the fact that the military is bringing in humanitarian aid, I think, is a great credit to our country and to our men and women in uniform. I remember I was on the *USS Abraham Lincoln* during the tsunami, and the men and women on that ship all wanted to be in Ochey delivering those humanitarian supplies. It was all about helping the people.

Helicopters were called the "Gray Angels" because they were saving so many lives, and, as the NGOs gear up, as the U.N. humanitarian efforts gear up, the ICRC and all of the others, and they have put out several appeals, it is only the military that has the capability, logistically, organizationally, to step in that breach and provide life-saving humanitarian aid.

I actually went to one of the IDP camps, and those people looked like scarecrows. They had not eaten in days. They were being brought food, meals ready to eat, and while it was only a very brief stop, it was very clear that without General Miller, who is heading

up that extraordinary effort, and his men and women in uniform, many people would be sick, perhaps even dying. So I commend the administration for deploying those ships and that humanitarian effort.

Let me just ask you, the fighting in South Ossetia that, obviously, was the pretext for the August 8th Russian invasion; what are we to make of the fact that some 9,000 troops, 350 armored vehicles, pushed into Abkhazia where fighting had not occurred?

I mean, you can understand that they had enough pretext, for want of a better word, to go into South Ossetia, but what about Abkhazia? There, they destroyed NATO-compatible bases that were made to specs that NATO has prescribed. What do we make about that? That seems to rip off the facade that somehow this was an intervention based on a conflict.

Mr. FRIED. [Off mike.]

Chairman BERMAN. Your microphone.

Mr. FRIED. Excuse me. You are quite right. There had been no fighting in Abkhazia, and the Russians simply instigated a conflict there. They pushed out of Abkhazia to the Port of Poti, which is over 200 kilometers away from South Ossetia and, obviously, had nothing to do with the fighting there. The fact is, the Russians were not really coming to the aid of the South Ossetians. They were punishing Georgia, and they were punishing Georgia for what they considered to be its impertinence in seeking closer relations with the United States.

Congressman, I appreciate very much your words about the American military's relief efforts, and I will pass that along to our commanders, with your permission, sir.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. I do. Let me ask you, with regard to Medvedev's assertions that Russia has "privileged interests in Soviet successor states. Putin has warned of dire consequences for Ukraine, including dismemberment. Ukrainian President Yushchenko has said that he seeks European integration and NATO membership." Is this the beginning of some ominous moves by the Russians?

I would just say, parenthetically, I remember very well when Lithuania was invaded by the Black Berets. I was actually in Vilnius with some members of the Helsinki Commission, and Lance Burgess, literally, was under siege, as you remember it so well, and parliamentarians from around the world, including Poland but mostly Europe and the United States, were actually going to his Parliament to be there, physically there, to try to chill any further aggression by the Russians.

The same pretext about protecting Russian citizens, and Foreign Minister Lavrov has said, "Russia can stand up for its citizens abroad." That is a very broad statement, it seems to me, when you realize that the past sometimes is prologue. I am very concerned about that. How about you?

Mr. FRIED. The administration is troubled by the implications of what the Russians have laid out as an apparent doctrine. They demand "privileged" relations with some countries. They also claim a right of special prerogatives with respect to Russian citizens, but they can create Russian citizens by handing our Russian passports to non-Russian, former Soviet citizens.

So they handed out passports to the South Ossetians. Then they said they had to defend them. This is a formula for instability and conflict, and it is very troubling. You will hear that from many countries in the region, as you have, sir.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Finally, just let me say to my good friend and colleague, Mr. Delahunt, that I have worked with Nino Burjanadze for years, the former Speaker of the Parliament in Tbilisi. We have argued, she and I and others, at OSCE parliamentary assemblies for years about Abkhazia and South Ossetia, especially with the Russia members of the Duma. It has always been very intense, but, obviously, it did not lead to violence of any kind until recently.

While it is nascent, this democracy is real. I believe it is durable, and the fact that opposition members are asking for an investigation, I think, is a healthy sign that the democracy has people who are not just monolithically supporting whatever Saakashvili suggests. So I think it is a sign of—

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Perhaps Mr. Faleomavaega, who is going to be recognized for 5 minutes, would want to yield you 10 or so seconds.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Did the gentleman want 10 seconds to finish?

Chairman BERMAN. I think the gentleman from Massachusetts wanted to have the last word.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I would be more than happy to yield 30 seconds of my time.

Mr. DELAHUNT. If you would yield maybe 20 seconds, I do not disagree with my friend, the chairman, but what we heard here today, or what we read in the newspaper, is that there is a thriving democracy in Georgia, and yet we read our own human rights report on Georgia, and the record of the Saakashvili regime is not particularly a positive one, and there has been a suppression of the opposition, there has been closing down of media outlets, and let us not think that we are here just simply because it is a small country that has democratic impulses.

Chairman BERMAN. The gentleman from American Samoa is recognized for 4 minutes and 30 seconds.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know the Secretary wanted to respond to my good friend's statement, but, as has been said earlier, this is a very complex situation, and, claiming ignorance myself, I just wanted to know, Mr. Secretary, I looked through all of the briefing materials and I do not seem to have even the population of Georgia on the briefing statements. What is the total population? I understand there are at least about seven or eight ethnic groups that make up the country of Georgia. Am I correct?

Mr. FRIED. There are a number of ethnic groups. The population is about 5 million, but I will get you an exact number.

It is majority ethnic Georgian. There are Armenians, Abkhaz, South Ossetians, and other groups.

[The information referred to follows:]

WRITTEN RESPONSE RECEIVED FROM THE HONORABLE DANIEL FRIED TO QUESTION
ASKED DURING THE HEARING BY THE HONORABLE ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA

According to the 2002 census, the total population of Georgia outside the separatist-controlled areas was 4,371,535. The major ethnic groups were Georgians (3,661,173; 83.7 percent), Azeris (284,761; 6.5 percent), Armenians (248,929; 5.7 percent), Russians (67,671; 1.5 percent), and Ossetians (38,028; 0.9 percent).

There are no reliable recent statistics on the population of the separatist-controlled areas. The population of Abkhazia was about 525,000 before the break-up of the Soviet Union. Georgians numbered nearly 240,000, or 45.7 percent of the population, but most were driven out in the early 1990s by the Abkhaz. Our best estimate for the current population of Abkhazia is about 160,000, including about 50,000 Abkhaz, 50,000 Armenians, 40,000 Georgians (who eke out a marginal, insecure existence in the southernmost Gali district), and perhaps 20,000 Russians. Our best estimate for the population of South Ossetia is about 60,000 (down from 100,000 before the war), with about 40,000 Ossetians and 20,000 Georgians.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Am I also correct to say that, among those, there are Russian citizens living in Georgia?

Mr. FRIED. There are very few ethnic Russians. There are a number of Russian citizens, but there is a small ethnic-Russian community in Tbilisi. They have been there for quite a long time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Delahunt had stated earlier that you did advocate strongly to our Georgian leaders not to take up military action, but they went ahead and disregarded your admonition, advice. Can you explain why they went ahead and took up military action?

Mr. FRIED. They had been provoked for a long period of time by a series of political and military steps by the Russians, the Abkhaz, and the South Ossetians. They believed that the South Ossetians were attacking Georgian villages. They believed that Russian forces were amassing on the border.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Okay. Mr. Secretary, I have to cut you off because I have got a limited time.

Mr. FRIED. Quite all right.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Would you say it would be accurate to say that our basic foreign policy toward Eastern Europe is to bring these former Soviet satellite countries under the umbrella of the United States-European Union sphere of influence?

Mr. FRIED. I would not put it in terms of "sphere of influence," but I would say that our policy since 1989 has been to welcome the new democracies emerging from communism into the institutions of Europe, as they qualify, yes, sir.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. As they qualify.

Mr. FRIED. As they qualify.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I had indicated earlier about the speech that President Medvedev gave, which I thought was a very historical event, that was hardly covered here in the United States, but all of the foreign media covered it quite well, and I thought—

Mr. FRIED. It was a good speech.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Yes, and I thought the President's speech there in Berlin was very historical, to the extent that he raised one fundamental question: What is really the purpose of having NATO to continue its existence since the Cold War is over? Can you respond to that?

Mr. FRIED. Certainly. NATO is the principal security instrument of the transatlantic community of democracies. If we did not have NATO now, we would have to invent it. It is the instrument

through which the democracies pool their military resources, pledge mutual defense to one another, and deal with current and emerging threats in the 21st century.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Has Russia been invited to join NATO?

Mr. FRIED. No, but Russia has been invited to work in partnership with NATO, and, from the beginning of NATO enlargement, we always thought that it would be good to deepen that partnership with Russia without limits.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Has Turkey been invited to join NATO?

Mr. FRIED. Turkey has been a member of NATO for 56 years.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Well, during the Cold War, but I understand—are they still having problems in being totally, fully admitted?

Mr. FRIED. No. They have been a full member of NATO.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. The European Union. I am sorry.

Mr. FRIED. The European Union.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. You had indicated—I have got 40 seconds left—that the \$1 billion that the administration is requesting is just strictly for humanitarian purposes and not to provide military arms to Georgia.

Mr. FRIED. There is no military component. It is for economic support only.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. We have decided to build a defense missile system right in the middle of nearby Russia. Can you tell me exactly how we should justify having a missile base supposedly to look at Iran? If I were a Russian, I would feel very uncomfortable, knowing that these missiles could be pointed at us rather than the Iranians.

Mr. FRIED. The missiles there have no warhead. They are purely defensive in nature. They have no explosive warhead. The Russians understand this perfectly well. They are of no threat to Russia whatsoever. We have offered the Russians confidence-building measures so they can verify that fact.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The gentleman from Nebraska, Mr. Fortenberry, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for joining us today.

There is a dualistic view toward the United States, so often, in many cases, we are seen as imperialistic or through the lens of being a neocolonial power, yet, at the same time, an entanglement such as this, with Georgia and Russia, is received with calls from the international community that the United States take a leadership role.

That is a bit ironic, and I want to, in light of that, ask you about the Europeans' response. How robust has that been? I would like you to unpack that for me. Clearly, the President of France has played a critical role here, but the European response, and I will follow up afterward with you.

Mr. FRIED. We decided, from the earliest days of this crisis, that we would be ill advised to try to turn this into some United States-Russia confrontation, so we chose to work very closely with Europe

and with President Sarkozy, in particular, as the President of the European Union for this half year.

So we have backed their efforts, coordinated very closely with Europe at every step, and we think the results have justified that early decision. We do not want to make this a U.S. thing, much less a U.S. unilateral thing. This is a problem that Russia has with the world.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. In your statement, you say, "We must show solidarity and determination with our European allies and that, depending upon how Russia responds in the next few weeks, we will consider specific steps thoughtfully." What does that mean?

Mr. FRIED. That means we will not, for example, do this hasty bureaucratic exercise of throwing together every sanction anybody has ever thought of, stapling it together, and calling it a policy. That would be a mistake.

We want to be thoughtful. We want to consider whether Russia adheres to the cease-fire it has signed, and then we want to consider, with our European allies, the consequences of Russia's actions for our relations and do so in a thoughtful, methodical way.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Do you have some specifics in that regard?

Mr. FRIED. There are a lot of specifics that we have considered. President Bush outlined our general approach when he said that Russia's efforts to integrate with the world and join key organizations were now at risk because of what Russia has done. But we have not been dispositive. We have not rushed out with specific options. We wanted to see whether we could get Russia to adhere to the cease-fire and then work with the Europeans on where we are. We also want to help Georgia stabilize and get back on its feet.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Now, we have canceled the Civil Nuclear Cooperative Agreement, for the time being. In the near term, are there any plans to resubmit that or reconsider that?

Mr. FRIED. The time is not right, right now, and I think that it will be some period of time before it comes back. I could not say what that is.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. This was discussed a bit before, but how serious of a setback is this to what is already a very mild United States-Russian cooperation on nuclear nonproliferation issues in Iran? Is there a linkage there?

Mr. FRIED. Not a linkage, in our mind. There are areas of our relations with Russia that, clearly, we do want to pursue—this is one of them—and we hope that we are able to. It certainly is in our interests to do so.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Chairman BERMAN. The gentleman yields back, and the gentlelady from California, Ambassador Watson, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WATSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, thank you for coming. I would like to know how many United States military advisers were stationed in Georgia and what was their mission, where are they now, and did they play any role between Georgia and Russia in this latest incident?

Mr. FRIED. They were not involved in the conflict whatsoever.

Ms. WATSON. Were there military stationed there in Georgia?

Mr. FRIED. I believe that we had, other than the military attachés that are a part of our normal Embassy complement, I believe that there were some trainers in Tbilisi as part of our ongoing military-to-military cooperation with the Georgians, but they were, in no way, involved in the fighting. They were not close to it. As far as I know, they were all in their hotel in Tbilisi.

Ms. WATSON. I understand the contingents that are attached to an Embassy. I have been there. But how many military advisers were in Georgia?

Mr. FRIED. I do not have the exact number. I can get that for you.

Ms. WATSON. Would you send that to me, please?

Mr. FRIED. I certainly will.

[The information referred to follows:]

WRITTEN RESPONSE RECEIVED FROM THE HONORABLE DANIEL FRIED TO QUESTION
ASKED DURING THE HEARING BY THE HONORABLE DIANE E. WATSON

Aside from the seven U.S. military personnel assigned to the Embassy, there were 65 U.S. temporary duty military trainers in Georgia when the conflict began. Those personnel were from the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, Marine Corps Forces, Europe, and other commands. These personnel were conducting a sustainment and stability operations training plan to prepare the 4th Brigade for coalition operations in Iraq starting in January 2009. Four of the military personnel were preparing to redeploy having just completed a joint training exercise.

Ms. WATSON. And where are these advisers now? Are they still there? Have they left the country?

Mr. FRIED. I think most of them left. On the other hand, the Department of Defense is sending an assessment team to Georgia to consider their military needs, and we are going to do this in a methodical way. There is no secret about that assessment team.

Ms. WATSON. We do not really know the foreign policy of this administration. It changes. No, we do not know it, and it does not share with us, so that is why I asked these questions.

The United States military has taken the lead in providing relief to Georgia. To what extent were the NGOs involved in providing assistance to Georgia?

Mr. FRIED. There are a number of NGOs very active in Georgia. Some of them support democratic institutions; others are relief. The assistance that was provided by the *Mount Whitney* and other U.S. vessels was often in U.S. stocks. We have emergency and disaster relief stocks.

As for U.S. foreign policy, ma'am, I am at your service to explain whatever I can in my area of responsibility at any time.

Ms. WATSON. Okay. Then maybe you can comment on this: There have been allegations that the United States is secretly re-arming the Georgian military; allegations that have been consistently denied by the administration. Can you comment?

Mr. FRIED. Yes. I am aware that Russia has made all kinds of allegations. In my experience, Russian allegations with respect to Georgia tended not to be—

Ms. WATSON. What are we doing? What are we doing?

Mr. FRIED. At the moment, as I said, we are going to send an assessment team to Georgia to evaluate their military requirements, and we are going to think about what response we should have. We have not sent military equipment to Georgia recently as

a result of the conflict. We have had a military relationship with Georgia, which is no secret whatsoever.

Ms. WATSON. Have you been re-arming Georgia?

Mr. FRIED. Re-arming? Do you mean since the conflict?

Ms. WATSON. No. Have you been re-arming Georgia?

Mr. FRIED. Do you mean did we have a military program before the conflict?

Ms. WATSON. Have we been, prior; have we been, since the conflict, re-arming Georgia?

Mr. FRIED. We have not, since the conflict, sent munitions, weapons to Georgia.

Ms. WATSON. But before?

Mr. FRIED. Before the conflict, we had a number of military programs, including a train-and-equip program, a counterterrorist program. The Georgians had sent a rather large contingent to Iraq to serve alongside United States forces, and we did help them, yes.

Ms. WATSON. Okay.

Mr. FRIED. None of this is a secret. All of this is perfectly—is public knowledge, and details are certainly available to you, if you wish, ma'am.

Ms. WATSON. Well, I would like you to give me some of those details because we do not really know what is being planned. So much is done in secret in this administration, that is why we hold these hearings, to hear directly from the Secretary of State's Office to get the truth to the matter. We are seekers of truth.

Now, Russia has viewed NATO expansion as a broken promise and the transformation of an anti-Soviet alliance into an anti-Russian alliance right up to its borders. Does the United States still plan to support NATO membership and the action plan to Georgia and Ukraine, even though Russia is strongly opposed?

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentlelady has expired.

Would it be correct to say that you do continue to support Georgia and Ukraine's request for the Membership Action Plan?

Mr. FRIED. Yes, sir. It would be correct. Yes, ma'am.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentlelady has expired.

The gentleman from Texas, Mr. Poe, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Fried, for being here again, and I want to bring up something you and I discussed the last time you were at a hearing, but, first, when I see Russia, I see a big bear growling, with "KGB" still written across its chest in the name of Putin, and I do not trust the Russians. They would lie when the truth would suit them better. But be that as it may, this \$1 billion; where are we getting that money?

Mr. FRIED. A lot of it is reprogrammed from other accounts rather than new money. Some of it is from the Millennium—

Mr. POE. What kind of accounts, Social Security? I mean, where is it coming from?

Mr. FRIED. No, no, no, no, from other foreign affairs accounts. State Department is swallowing quite a bit of this itself.

Mr. POE. I would like to know exactly where it is coming from. If you would put that in writing, I would appreciate it.

[The information referred to follows:]

WRITTEN RESPONSE RECEIVED FROM THE HONORABLE DANIEL FRIED TO QUESTION
ASKED DURING THE HEARING BY THE HONORABLE TED POE

The \$1 billion assistance commitment for Georgia, announced by the President on September 3, would be provided in two phases. For the first phase, we have identified \$570 million in existing resources that will enable us to respond quickly to Georgia's urgent humanitarian, reconstruction, and economic stabilization needs. The humanitarian funding comes largely from contingency accounts, including the International Disaster Assistance (IDA), Emergency Migration and Refugee Assistance/Migration and Refugees (ERMA/MRA), and Defense Department accounts. Reconstruction and economic stabilization assistance would come from reprogrammed resources under the FREEDOM Support Act (FSA), Support for East European Democracy (SEED), and Economic Support Fund (ESF) accounts and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC); funding transferred from the Defense Department under Section 1207 authority; and resources from the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC). Regarding the second phase of the assistance package, it is our hope and expectation that the next Congress and next Administration will continue the bipartisan effort to support Georgia and work together to provide the \$430 million balance of the \$1 billion commitment.

Mr. POE. But going on to another issue, it seems to me that, based upon your testimony, you said that, in 2006, the South Ossetians voted for a split from Georgia in a referendum. It is questionable whether or not it was fair, under our terms. The facts are still in dispute, and the jury is still out on what happened between Georgia, South Ossetia, and Russia.

But be that as it may, some have suggested that the United States' position in Georgia is hypocritical, given, at our last discussion, the United States' support for Kosovo independence, despite Kosovo having been long recognized, according to the Serbians, as a part of Serbia. In fact, in the wake of the United States' recognition of Kosovo's secession last spring, Mr. Putin warned, according to the New York Times, that "Russia will feel entitled to do the same thing with South Ossetia and Georgia, another breakaway region."

So can you respond to this argument and explain to me why we believe in self-determination for some folks, as American foreign policy, but we do not believe in self-determination for other folks, such as South Ossetia?

Mr. FRIED. The administration, and, in fact, the United States, generally does not support separatism, and we do not believe that countries should be broken up. Our support for Kosovo independence followed the breakup of Yugoslavia in a series of civil wars and a process started with a U.N. Security Council resolution of finding a definitive solution to Kosovo's status.

That took years of negotiations. It was carefully worked out with the Europeans. We sought to have a compromise with the Security Council, Russia blocked it, and, in the end, the United States and the major European countries made the decision to recognize Kosovo's independence.

Kosovo's independence and the change in Kosovo's status were foreseen in Security Council Resolution 1244 that ended the Kosovo conflict. That was not an easy decision, but it was the right one. That does not mean, and we said at the time, that it did not mean that every separatist group would have a right to split away. We said that the Russians have used Kosovo, or misused this, as a precedent.

Yes, the South Ossetians had a referendum, and the Georgians did not vote. In Abkhazia, in fact, the Abkhaz population was

under 20 percent of Abkhazia before the civil wars of the early nineties. The Georgian majority was driven out in the conflict forcibly.

Mr. POE. Excuse me, Dr. Fried. We are running out of time.

I just want to be clear. It is American foreign policy that we do not support self-determination for regions that want to break away from some other region, as a general rule.

Mr. FRIED. As a general rule, yes, sir, we do not.

Mr. POE. And Kosovo was an exception.

Mr. FRIED. Yes, sir.

Mr. POE. And we justified that because of our own political and military interests in the region. We justified it.

Mr. FRIED. We justified it because of the history of the conflict, the involvement of the U.N., not because of our own particular interests. We did regard it as a separate case.

Mr. POE. What factors do we use to violate the premise that we do not believe in separate self-determination? What factors come into play, so if it comes up again, like with Chechnya or some other place, we will know what factors to apply of self-determination, whether we are for it or whether we are against it?

Mr. FRIED. In the case of Kosovo, the fact was that Yugoslavia fell apart in a series of civil wars, so that country was gone, to begin with.

Then the Serbs embarked on campaigns of ethnic cleansing and repression of the Kosovars. After the war, which NATO had to conduct to stop the Serbian ethnic cleansing, the Security Council agreed that Kosovo's status should be resolved through negotiations. When the U.N. negotiator reported that he had failed in his negotiations and recommended that we move forward anyway, we decided to do so.

Each case is unique, but Kosovo is not a precedent, and we have always said so.

Mr. POE. All right. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired, and our last questioner of this witness, and before our next panel, is the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Payne.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much. I think your clock is not right because you hit the gavel before 5 minutes were up, so I just want you to take a look at it.

Let me ask you, very quickly, Mr. Secretary, do we have conversations with our allies, you know, small countries like Georgia and so forth, about wanting to be supportive but sort of cautioning them on, you know, getting overly aggressive?

Mr. FRIED. Yes, frequently.

Mr. PAYNE. And you did talk to them about that?

Mr. FRIED. Yes, sir.

Mr. PAYNE. And they, evidentiary, did not listen.

Mr. FRIED. In this case, no.

Mr. PAYNE. Now, you know, a lot of times, we get ourselves in and problems occur. I was looking back at some old records. When it appeared that the United States said it was all right for Iraq to sort of take some islands that Kuwait said belonged to them, and then, the next thing we knew, Iraq was in Kuwait and said, Well, the Ambassador, green light, wrong light, you know, and I think,

at that time, Iraq had been friendly to the United States because of Iran.

How much do these people listen when we have so much at stake, I mean, you know, the \$1 billion coming up? Is there any way that we could get our allies to be a little more rational to our friends?

Mr. FRIED. I understand why the Georgian Government made the decision it made. It felt it was under attack. It had been provoked. That does not mean the decision was necessarily the right one. To understand is not to agree with it.

I think that the Georgians are going to have, themselves, a pretty serious, internal discussion of this. I think, right now, in Georgia, there is a natural rallying around the President and the government when they are under such assault. I think that Georgian democracy, which is a work in progress, is still something that is real, and I think the Georgian democracy will answer this question.

Mr. PAYNE. Now, what about the things that we had going with Russia? They were going to help us on some counterterrorism. They were looking at doing some reforms, trying to get into the WTO, and all of that. Are those things off the table now? Do we break off having normality with Russia?

Mr. FRIED. As I said, we are going to have to look at our relations with Russia very carefully. What we are not going to do is react in a kind of spasm of anger and simply trash the relationship. We are going to look very carefully at our relations with Russia, especially when we see whether they will adhere to the cease-fire in Georgia or not, and then we have to draw some conclusions from their actions of invading a neighbor for the first time since the end of the Soviet Union.

There are some issues on which we have common interests with Russia, and we could probably pursue those; other areas where we have some disagreements, and we are going to be working through that in weeks to come, on a bipartisan basis, I should add.

Mr. PAYNE. All right. You know, Russia is trying to get the Olympics, and, you know, already we are talking about, you know, maybe we need to have some conversation. Of course, we did not do much with China, so I do not expect we will do much to stop Russia.

Do those kinds of things get in the plan, your discussions?

Mr. FRIED. Certainly, other people have raised questions about the Olympics, which are being held very close to where this conflict has taken place, but, as I said, we want to think through this very carefully rather than jump to conclusions, and we want to support Georgia, as a first priority, support the other countries in the region that are feeling vulnerable, and also then consider the consequences for ties with Russia, using all of these factors, including the ones you mentioned, sir.

Mr. PAYNE. Where do most of the former Warsaw Pact countries stand? Do they want to delink themselves from Russia, generally speaking, or come to Europe and the United States?

Mr. FRIED. Former Warsaw Pact countries could not wait to get into NATO and the European Union. Most of them have succeeded. They have become prospering democracies, contributors to European security, and good allies of the United States. The policy of

the three last U.S. Presidents of NATO enlargement and support for European Union enlargement has been a fabulous success.

Mr. PAYNE. Just quickly, then, does Russia, then, have this fear that all of this business is centered against them?

Mr. FRIED. Well, I think Russia—

Mr. PAYNE. On one hand, we want to be friendly, and then, on the other hand, we want to contain.

But my last question, since I have 13 seconds left—I do not know what the chairman has. Senator McCain said, “I am a Georgian.” Could you explain what that means?

Mr. FRIED. I see the time has expired. [Laughter.]

Chairman BERMAN. You cannot explain what he said any more that you could explain why the Georgians did what they did.

Mr. FRIED. Mr. Chairman, with all respect, I would be well advised to stay away from that one.

Mr. PAYNE. Okay. Thank you.

Chairman BERMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

I thank you very much. There are questions that, if we were not so late in the afternoon, I would like to ask you, but I think I will try and do that more informally or in writing.

Mr. FRIED. I am certainly available, sir, in any form you find fit.

Chairman BERMAN. Thank you. Professors?

[Pause.]

Chairman BERMAN. I apologize for the late time that you have been asked to come up here, but I know that will not affect the quality of your testimony. It just may affect the tenacity of the questioners.

You have both been introduced. Dr. McFaul, why don't you start?

STATEMENT OF MICHAEL H. MCFAUL, PH.D., PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Mr. MCFAUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Ranking Member Ros-Lehtinen and everybody who is still here and to you in the audience as well. That is a good sign.

Let me just say one thing at the outset. I work for Senator Obama. I advise him, as an unpaid adviser, on the issues we are discussing today, but I want to reinforce the fact that I am here speaking on my own accord as a Stanford professor.

I just happened to bring some statements. If anyone wants to know what the Senator has said, I have them right here, and I will let them speak for themselves and let me speak for myself today.

I tell you, I am not thrilled to be here, just like the last time you asked me to fly across the country to talk to you. This is not the kind of Russia that I had hoped for 20 years ago when I was involved in trying to work inside Russia. It is most certainly not the kind of United States-Russia relationship that I had envisioned 20 years ago when I got involved in these issues.

I do think we have to have a bigger picture, however, involved. We have been focused in the weeds, rightly, about what happened in Tskhinvali and what the Russian response was, and I really do think it is important to get those facts straight. I happen to think it was a really ill-considered mistake that President Saakashvili decided to do what he did in Tskhinvali, and, in my written re-

marks—I have them all there, and, without objection, I would like to have those in the record—

Chairman BERMAN. The entire testimony will be in the record.

Mr. McFAUL. All of that is very important, but we should not get, in some way, distracted from the fact that Russia has a grand strategy that it has been pursuing, not just in August but for several years, in the region, and, most certainly, I think Mr. Saakashvili made mistakes, but let us also not make the mistake of getting in a tit-for-tat of who fired what first because it is a bigger enterprise and a bigger strategy.

In my opinion, if we are going to face it properly, we also have to have a bigger strategy. I am dismayed—I have to tell you honestly—by the way we have been debating this issue so far, and if I could oversimplify what I read in the New York Times today and the press, there are only two responses that the United States can have.

One is business as usual. We need Russia, for instance, for a U.N. Security Council resolution on Iran, and, therefore, we have to soft-pedal what we say about Georgia. I think that is very short-sighted and not strategic and, really, fundamentally, misunderstands how Russia defines its own interests.

You are not going to get a U.N. Security Council resolution on Iran because of soft-pedaling what you say about Georgia. That is not the way the Russian leadership thinks, and we, I think, are doing ourselves a disfavor to think business as usual will yield a different result in terms of Russia's grand strategy and Russia's definition of its own national interests.

At the same time, the Congress, the other extreme of isolation, kicking them out of this club and the other club; that also, I think, is an oversimplified way to think about our grand strategy.

So what I tried to do in my remarks was to lay out a truly big, comprehensive strategy that I will not try to rehearse in detail for you right now, but it consists of 12 steps—not one, not two, not a sound bite—but 12 steps we should do if we want to play on an equal playing field with the Russians in thinking about our own national interests.

Let me just go through, and I want to highlight two at the end, in particular.

First, we need to reunify our alliance. The fact that we are not unified on this issue is hurting us. There is no doubt about that, in my mind.

Second, we need to affirm our Article V commitments to our NATO Alliance partners. There are doubts among them. We need to affirm them.

Third, we need to affirm our recognition of Georgian territorial integrity and make clear, under no circumstances will we ever recognize the territories of South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent countries. I disagree radically with the notion that Abkhazia and Kosovo are the same, and maybe we can get into that during the question period.

I would just note that at the time of Georgian independence, only 18 percent of the population of Abkhazia was ethnic Abkhaz, and it was ethnic cleansing, sponsored by the Russians, that has cre-

ated the situation here. That is the exact opposite of what NATO was doing in Kosovo.

Fourth, we have to rebuild Russia. You spent a lot of time on that. But, Mr. Chairman, I really support, and strongly endorse, your idea that a big chunk of that needs to be democracy assistance. Georgian democracy and, especially, independent media, needs our support, especially right now.

Fifth, we have to preemptively reduce the potential for Russian mischief against Ukraine. I outlined the remarks. I will just skip that for now.

Sixth, I think we have to have a U.N. Security Council vote, even if Russia vetoes it, and continue to demonstrate how isolated Russia is on this issue. Again, it is not like Kosovo. There is one other country in the world that has recognized these two territories—that is Nicaragua—and the more we do that, including with China, including with other countries that generally support Russia, the better we are.

Seventh, we need to reduce dependency of Russian energy exports in Europe and Eurasia. My testimony outlines three very constructive ways to do that.

Eighth, together with our allies, and I want to stress, it has to be with our allies or it does not matter at all, I think we have to consider future punitive measures against Russia if they do not adhere to the cease-fire, if they do not adhere to the terms and pull back to August 7th levels.

I outlined some ideas that I have in my written testimony. I think companies that begin to work inside these two territories should be sanctioned, and countries that recognize them should also be sanctioned. Maybe we can talk about that more in detail in questions.

Ninth, we have to increase the independent flow of information into this region. Your budgets that you have been approving for Voice of America and Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, in my opinion, simply do not reflect American strategic interests. By my estimation, it is about \$800 million, all total, and only \$9 million of that goes to Russia.

If you have watched the Russian news, as I have, it is gross and appalling, Soviet-style propaganda, and I know—I lived in the Soviet Union. I know what it looks like. This is what it is. We have to be engaged in helping to let Russians have independent sources of news.

Tenth, we cannot give up on Russian democracy or democracy in any of these regions. When I look at your budgets for the Freedom Support Act, and I see that they have been halved in the last 8 years—and I want to emphasize this, halved—there are only two explanations: One is that there is just a gross misunderstanding by the Bush administration and the United States Congress about the status of democracy in Russia and Georgia and Ukraine and the region; or this is a statement of defeatism. That means you have given up on democracy.

I strongly urge you to reconsider those numbers moving forward, and that is something the Congress can do, irrespective of who is in the White House. You have to have a real review of what we have gotten, and, I think, to spend more money. Without a real

evaluation of what we have gotten for that money in the last 8 years would be irresponsible as the U.S. Congress, and I outline what should happen. But to give up now, I think, is really short-sighted.

Eleven, and I will end on this, doing all of these things does not mean that we do not talk directly to the Russians about our interests and things that we care about. That means talking to them about reducing nuclear arsenals, nonproliferation, dealing with Iran. But we do it not as a favor to them, we do it not asking them to do us a favor, because they do not think that way, so if we impose that way of thinking, I think we are really naive. But we can talk to them, as we did during the Cold War, by the way, at the height of some of the most tense times, and, at the same time, do these other measures.

And then, finally, as I end my oral remarks, we have to keep the door open for a different Russian response. We have a national security interest in Russia being in all of the Western institutions. And I would say, and I have said many times before, a democratic Russia should be allowed to apply for membership in NATO as well. I want to emphasize the adjective, “democratic Russia,” not the current Russia.

We want to keep that door open that should Russia and Russians, because they do not all think alike, reverse their course and want to reintegrate, we have to keep that door open. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. McFaul follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL H. McFAUL, PH.D., PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for inviting me to appear before your Committee. As has become our custom together in recent years, I appear here not out of pleasure, but because of bad news coming out of Russia and the former Soviet Union. The last time I had the honor of appearing before your Committee, my opening remarks were filled with gloom and a sense of opportunity lost regarding Russian democracy and partnership between the United States and Russia. I'm afraid my message today is even gloomier.

Russia's invasion of Georgia last month seriously undermined peace and security in Europe for the first time in years. Russia's military actions and subsequent decision to recognize South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent states also represent a fundamental challenge to the norms and rules that help to promote order in the international system.

The initial skirmishes between Ossetian and Georgian forces that first sparked this conflict in early August 2008 should have been contained. Had the international community—led by an attentive and proactive American government—engaged both the Russian and Georgian governments in an effort to first stop the violence immediately, and then more ambitiously, to mediate a permanent solution to Georgia's border disputes, this war might have been avoided. It still remains unclear what sequence of events turned skirmishes into war—an international investigation should be conducted to shed light on this question. Irrespective of who moved first to escalate, the Georgian government's decision to use military force to reassert its sovereignty over South Ossetia, which included sending its forces into the South Ossetian capital, Tskhinvali, was short-sighted and ill-considered. Nonetheless, Georgian military action within its borders can in no way be equated with or cited as an excuse for Russia's invasion and then dismemberment of a sovereign country. Russia's actions were disproportionate and illegal. The tragic loss of life—soldiers and civilians alike—on all sides was regrettable, unnecessary and avoidable.

Because Georgia is a democracy, Georgian voters will someday judge the decisions of their government last month. But let's not confuse that discussion with a clear-headed understanding of Russian motivations. Russia's military actions last month and continued illegal occupation of Georgian territory today were not a mere defensive reaction to Georgian military actions in South Ossetia. On the contrary, the Kremlin's moves represent the latest and boldest moves in a long-term strategy to

undermine Georgian sovereignty, cripple the Georgian economy, and ultimately overthrow the democratically-elected government of Georgia. Moreover, Russia's government actions in Georgia constitute just one front of a comprehensive campaign to reassert Russian dominance in the region through both coercive and cooperative instruments. Last week, President Dmitri Medvedev stated clearly that he considers the post-Soviet space to be a "privileged" sphere of interest for Russia. This campaign of asserting Russian hegemony in the region started well before the Russian intervention in Georgia and will continue well beyond. And it is more than coincidence that the emergence of a more bellicose, anti-American, and anti-Western Russian foreign policy has occurred in parallel to the growing erosion of democracy inside Russia. Developing a sustainable, smart, and multi-dimensional strategy for addressing a resurgent and autocratic Russia has now crystallized as a central 21st century foreign policy challenge for the United States and our allies.

Two responses currently being debated among America's foreign policy elite—business as usual and isolation—must be avoided.

This first school of unqualified engagement contends that we need Russia on so many crucial issues, and therefore we cannot risk alienating the current Russian government over minor disputes such as Georgian territorial integrity. For instance, we need Russia to help us on dealing with Iran—so the argument goes—so we should not make a big deal about Russian actions in Georgia. This way of thinking misunderstands both the current Russian government and American national interests. On Iran or any other issue in U.S-Russian relations today, Russia's current leaders are going to act based on their calculations about Russia's national interests and not as a favor to the United States. Trying to trade soft statements on Georgia for Russian votes on Iran at the United Nations Security Council will never work. Moreover, the engagement-at-all-costs school overestimates our dependence on Russia for pursuing our security needs while at the same time underplays a core U.S. national interest—peace and stability in Europe. After twenty years of working diligently to make Europe whole and free, we cannot abandon this mission now. Signaling indifference to this objective also will encourage more Russian belligerent behavior.

The second school of isolation or containment, however, moves too far in the opposite direction. Russia's invasion of Georgia did not spark a new Cold War. Thankfully, the battle between communism and capitalism is over and the danger of a proxy conflict between the East and West escalating into a nuclear holocaust has diminished substantially. Compared to the last century, Russia's economy is vastly more integrated into world markets, making it more difficult for Russian leaders to ignore the economic consequences of risky behavior. And even during the Cold War, American leaders always talked to their Soviet counterparts about issues of both agreement and disagreement. While Ronald Reagan was rightly denouncing the Soviet Union as the evil empire, his Secretary of State George Shultz was conducting direct negotiations with his Soviet counterparts (well before Mikhail Gorbachev arrived on the scene) about arms control, regional conflicts, and human rights abuses inside the Soviet Union.

Instead of business as usual or isolation, the United States must navigate a third, more nuanced, more complicated, and more comprehensive strategy that seeks to bolster our allies and partners, check Russian aggression, and at the same time deal directly with the Russian government on issues of mutual interest. The long term goal of fostering democratic change and keeping the door of Western integration open for countries in the region, including Russia, must not be abandoned. American foreign policy leaders have to move beyond tough talk and catchy phrases and instead articulate a smart, sustained strategy for dealing with this new Russia, a strategy that advances both our interests and values.

The **first** element of a new strategy must be to re-establish unity with our European allies. Divisions between the U.S. and Europe as well as divides among European countries have created opportunities that the Kremlin has easily exploited. There is no doubt that Russia's leaders were emboldened by the unseemly splits on display at the NATO summit in Bucharest last April. They also are encouraged to hear Vice President Cheney make one kind of argument about Western policy while visiting Ukraine and hear another approach articulated by the French Foreign Minister on the same day. This inability to develop a common strategy before it is announced—be it on missile defense or NATO enlargement—must end.

Second, NATO members must affirm their Article V commitments that an attack on one country in the alliance is an attack on all. In addition, NATO allies feeling especially worried about future Russian aggression should be given additional defensive assistance.

Third, the United States, Europe, and the rest of the international community must stand firm in demanding that Russian soldiers inside Georgia return to their

August 7th positions and that the world continue to affirm its recognition of the territorial integrity of Georgia. Once the terms of the ceasefire agreement have been met, the United States and our allies must press for the beginning of an internationally-mediated negotiation process that seeks to find a permanent solution to the territorial disputes within Georgia. Eventually, this process must aim to replace Russian forces inside South Ossetia and Abkhazia with an international peace-keeping force. In the interim, a robust OSCE observer mission must be deployed inside Georgia to monitor the ceasefire. A neutral, international organization also must investigate claims from all sides of human rights abuses conducted during the war.

Fourth, the United States and Europe must work together to help rebuild Georgia. The conflict has created the conditions for Georgia's economic collapse, an outcome that could lead to the fall of the current government and threaten stability in Eurasia's strategic crossroads. A \$1 billion aid package first proposed by Senators Biden and Obama and now developed by the Bush Administration is an important first step. We must encourage our allies to pledge a similar level of support, and the U.S. must commit to a new assistance package that goes beyond the reallocation of existing funds promised by the Bush Administrations, in order to deliver new money to Georgia. This new assistance will have to go beyond humanitarian and economic aid, and must also include new resources to strengthen Georgian independent media, rule of law, and civil society. The United States and our allies have an interest in preserving both Georgian sovereignty and Georgian democracy, since the overthrow of the democratically government in Tbilisi or the collapse of democracy more generally will send a terrible message to democratic governments and democratic activists throughout the region.

Fifth, the United States and Europe must act proactively to deter Russian hostile actions against the other post-Soviet democracy at risk, Ukraine. The deep cuts in the Freedom Support Act assistance to Ukraine, from \$138.6 million in FY2005 to \$72.4 million in FY2008, must be reversed, as these cuts reflect premature optimism about the stability of Ukrainian democracy. The United States also should expand and intensify training programs for Ukrainian military officers. The United States should coordinate closely with our NATO allies to entertain positively a request from the Ukrainian government to begin a Membership Action Plan (MAP) for NATO, while also emphasizing that such a request must reflect the will of the Ukrainian people and a credible commitment from the Ukrainian government to meet the strenuous guidelines and responsibilities of becoming a stable and reliable NATO member. The current infighting within the Ukrainian government does not instill confidence, but the hope of Western integration can serve as an incentive to Ukraine's leaders to exercise good judgment and rise above narrow partisan politics.

Sixth, the United States, Europe and our partners in Eurasia must reaffirm together the permanence of existing borders of all members of the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). All international forums, including the UN Security Council, must affirm this principle. Russia of course, would veto a UNSC resolution on this issue, but compelling Russia to demonstrate its isolation is important symbolically. China, as well as several of Russia's closest partners, have communicated their lack of support for Russia's illegal actions in Georgia. Countries that do recognize these Georgian territories as countries must face consequences.

Seventh, the United States must work closely with our partners in Europe and Eurasia to reduce their overdependence on Russian energy exports. We must understand that this dependency works both ways; the Russian economy would suffer severely from any sustained attempt by the Kremlin to disrupt energy exports for political purposes. The gradual shift away from Russian oil and gas imports will allow our European allies and Eurasian partners to follow more independent foreign policies. Increasing energy efficiency is the first step, especially in countries that emerged from the Soviet collapse. Developing alternative energy sources is a second step, which of course has the added advantage of slowing climate change. In this quest, several European countries, including Germany in particular, may offer the best set of policies to be emulated rather than the United States. Third, increasing the ways in which energy can be transited through the region—including more pipelines and more LNG ports in Europe—also will reduce Moscow's leverage and increase competition, a benefit for all.

Eighth, the United States must coordinate closely with our allies to consider future actions against the Russian government if it refuses to adhere to the ceasefire agreement that it signed. Russia's actions already have helped to trigger the biggest losses on the Russian stock market since August 1998, sparking a real debate among Russian economic elites about the wisdom of this war. Russian diplomatic isolation is also very palpable—only one country, Nicaragua, has joined Russia in

recognizing South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent states—causing some within the Russian foreign policy elite to question the long-term Russian security benefits of these recent actions. And Russian experts on the Caucasus have cautioned about the explosive consequences that recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia may have for peace and security on Russia's southern borders. These initial costs, however, might not be enough to reverse Russian behavior. For the sake of building a common, unified strategy both within the United States and with our European allies, it is premature for academics like me to begin advocating what these other actions might be. But the list of consideration for future actions must include the tabling of the U.S.-Russian civilian nuclear agreement; postponement of Russian membership into the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); targeted sanctions against those companies making profits from their activities in South Ossetia and Abkhazia and new regulations to generate more transparency of actions and motivations of Russian state-owned corporations operating in Europe and the United States; visa restrictions against those individuals most responsible for this attempt to dismember Georgia; and if the crisis prolongs, a re-consideration of holding the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, just dozens of miles from these disputed territories.

Ninth, the United States must do more to increase the flow of information and independent news into Russia and the region. The Soviet-style propaganda being broadcast on state controlled television stations today inside Russia is truly shocking, even for someone like me who lived in the Soviet Union. Russians must have access to multiple sources of information. So too must other people in the region who rely heavily on Russian media outlets for their news. To conduct a healthy debate about their government's decisions, Georgians also need more media pluralism and independence. Amazingly, at a time when more independent media and information is needed, the United States government has devoted paltry funds to Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) and Voice of America (VOA) programming for this region, and has reduced funding for independent media development within these countries. While the sum total of all American international broadcasting efforts is roughly \$800 million a year, RFE/RL's total operating budget is about \$82 million, and of that sum only \$9 million is budgeted for Russian Service broadcasts. These figures do not reflect American strategic priorities. To reduce stereotypes and increase understanding, the United States should also devote more resources to encourage exchanges between Americans and Russians.

Tenth, the United States must recommit to assisting the flow of democratic ideas throughout the region. Amazingly, at a time when autocracy is on the rise and young democracies are under assault throughout the former Soviet Union, the Bush Administration and the U.S. Congress have worked together to slash funding for the FREEDOM Support Act (FSA). In FY2000, the total FSA budget was \$835.8 million. In FY2008, the total FSA budget was only \$396.5 million, while requested funds for FY2009, as I understand it, are only \$364 million. These numbers either reflect a misunderstanding of the anti-democratic trends in the region or an admission of defeat—a declaration that the United States has given up on the cause of freedom in the former Soviet Union. Withdrawal from this democratic struggle at this moment would be a terrible mistake. Both inside Russia, as well in all the other countries, courageous human rights activists, independent journalists, opposition leaders, businesspeople, and even government officials within authoritarian regimes who are still pushing for the modernization of their political systems and economies. Now more than ever, we need to demonstrate our solidarity with these individuals and organizations. Ultimately, a more democratic Russia will be a better neighbor to other democracies in the region. In addition to greater FSA funds, the U.S. Congress also must consider increased funding for the National Endowment for Democracy earmarked for Europe and Eurasia, and the passage of the Eurasia Foundation Act (H.R. 2949/S. 3024), which would provide direct funding for this effective enabler of civil society throughout the region.¹

I cannot endorse more funding to these programs, however, unless the U.S. Congress commissions a serious and comprehensive evaluation of these democracy assistance programs financed by the Freedom Support Act and other U.S. government sources. The American people have a right to know how their money has been spent over the last eight years. Given the change in administration that will occur in Washington next year, the urgency for such a study could not be greater. The General Accounting Office might undertake such a study, but Congress also should consider constituting a bi-partisan, independent commission to undertake such a review. The situation has changed too dramatically and the stakes now are too high

¹In full disclosure, I served on the board of trustees of the Eurasia Foundation in the past, but do not now.

to simply proceed with our old strategies and programs without being able to measure their effects.

Eleventh, the next president of the United States must move immediately to establish a direct dialogue with President Medvedev to discuss issues of mutual interest. One reason that the United States had such little leverage in deterring Russian aggression last month is because the U.S.-Russian bilateral relationship is largely empty. Even as we pursue the other elements of the strategy outlined above, we can engage directly with the Russian government to reduce the size of our nuclear arsenals; take our nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert; prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, technology, and materials by securing and dismantling the weapons of mass destruction still remaining from the Soviet era; work cooperatively to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon; and develop common strategies for preventing climate change. We also must develop greater dialogue on issues of disagreement including security relationships with countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia, missile defense, energy security, and NATO enlargement. For too long, Russian and American officials have pursued policies unilaterally, without engaging in bilateral diplomacy beforehand. The American and Russian governments must develop multiple lines of communications between our various government bureaucracies to reduce the potential for misunderstandings and increase the possibility for diplomacy during crises, like the one we endured last month. The degree of disconnect between Moscow and Washington today is dangerous as misperceptions can produce bad outcomes for both countries.

To engage in direct diplomacy does not mean that we focus on nurturing friendships with individual leaders or that we check our values at the door. From the very beginning of his presidency, President Bush spent too much time developing a personal bond with then Russian President Vladimir Putin and too little time developing a comprehensive agenda of mutual interest with the Russian government. And too often, President Bush was praising his friend Vladimir at the same time that Putin's government was rolling back democracy at home and taking belligerent actions against American interests abroad. As the next president engages directly with the Russian government, he also must reengage directly with the Russian people.

Twelfth and finally, even though the current Russian government is pursuing policies that isolate Russia from Western institutions and the international community more generally, the United States and our allies must continue to embrace Russian integration with the West as a long-term strategic objective. Eventually, the current leadership in Russia may begin to see how the costs of their current actions outweigh the benefits, or a new government might gradually change course. When such signs of change do become evident, the United States and our allies must be ready to act upon them. Full integration of Russia into the West, including even NATO membership of a *democratic* Russia, should remain an aspiration for visionary American and European leaders. Until Russian leaders make the choice to respect international rules and norms and reengage with the project of becoming a responsible member of the international community again, the United States and our allies must be prepared to pursue our interests and values with a different kind of relationship with Russia than we had hoped for in the past.

The components I have sketched here for building a new American strategy for dealing with Russia are deliberately multifaceted. And more could be added. Given the stakes at play, now is not the time to reduce American foreign policy to one-line sound bites or bumper sticker phrases. Nor is it a time to conduct business as usual. Complex new challenges require complex new solutions.

Chairman BERMAN. Very good. Dr. Kagan?

STATEMENT OF FREDERICK W. KAGAN, PH.D., RESIDENT FELLOW, AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE

Mr. KAGAN. Chairman Berman, Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen, thank you for having me here. As my good friend, Mike McFaul said, this is not a happy occasion. In other circumstances, I would be glad to be in front of this committee not talking about Iraq, but this is, in fact, a very grave moment in international history, and I fear that we are more likely to under react to this than to over-react to it.

So, in keeping with what my focus on this particular crisis has been, which has been primarily understanding, reporting, ana-

lyzing rather than going through laundry lists of recommendations, and I endorse most of the things that my colleague recommends, naturally, and would add a few more, but I think that it is worth laying out a basis of fact, just so that we can understand the actual gravity of the situation because I fear that some of this is being lost.

We must start by dispensing with the notion that there is any sort of legal or moral equivalency between what the Government of Georgia did and what the Russians did, and I am distressed at how often people talk about Georgia invading South Ossetia. South Ossetia was, and is, according to international law, a legal part of the Republic of Georgia, and the Russians themselves, while operations were going on, including the Foreign Minister, publicly recognized that South Ossetia was legally part of the Republic of Georgia.

Now, the Georgian activities and presence in South Ossetia were governed by a number of international agreements that were mostly bilateral or quadrilateral agreements with Russia, but those did not, and explicitly did not, eliminate Georgian control over that republic. And, therefore, to speak about a Georgian invasion of South Ossetia is fundamentally to accept the Russian propaganda line, and I think that we must avoid doing that.

Furthermore, whatever term you want to use for what the Georgians did, it was not an invasion of Russian territory. It did not pose the slightest threat to Russian territory. It was not, in any way, an attack on Russia.

The provisions under which the Russian so-called “peacekeepers” are in South Ossetia, and I have read them—they are not that easy to find, but I tracked them down—do not appear to me to give the Russians a legal basis for the response that they then launched in South Ossetia. Certainly, they had no such basis for the reinforcement with 6,000 troops into Abkhazia, where nothing had happened.

So it actually is, whereas the Georgia action may be open to question, the legality of the Russian action, I think, is actually not open to question.

Now, I think that it is important to note what happened immediately after the Georgians went back into South Ossetia with forces. Within hours, possibly within minutes, a motorized rifle regiment was on the way from the Russian base of Vladikavkaz through the Roki Tunnel, which had previously been secured by forces of either the FSB, which is the KGB’s successor, or the Spetsnaz.

In addition, the Russians immediately scrambled elements of two airborne divisions, one from the vicinity of Skov and the other one from the vicinity of Moscow, and they were on their way, following a path that they had rehearsed not 3 weeks before in a military exercise called “Kafkas 2008” in which exactly one of those airborne regiments had, in fact, done exactly what it did again. And additional reinforcements, including illegal combatants, Cossack volunteers, and, subsequently, the same Spetsnaz forces that committed atrocities in Chechnya were also directed into South Ossetia.

But even more than that, the Russians immediately began to attack targets throughout Georgia, if you will forgive me, because the Russians had the stated intention of weakening the Georgian military overall. And they publicly declared that that was their aim, because they were identifying Georgia as an aggressor state that posed a threat to them. I would like to just run quickly through what they actually did.

Russian mechanized units drove from Tskhinvali to the key city of Gori, which, as we all know, sits astride the road and rail links from Tbilisi to the Black Sea and is Georgia's lifeline. Gori is also the location of Georgia's single separate tank battalion and single separate artillery battalion.

Russian troops appeared to have occupied the cantonments of both of those units. They systemically destroyed the infrastructure at those bases. They ceased a great deal of Georgian military equipment, which they subsequently claimed were trophies of war.

They also advanced from Abkhazia not only to Poti, as has been noticed, which is a civilian port with no military interest for the Russians, but into the Georgian cities of Zugdidi, which is on the Abkhaz border, and also Senaki.

Senaki, which is actually nowhere near the combat zone in either location, is the base of one of Georgia's most advanced brigades. And Russian sources report that, as Russian troops sat in Senaki, airlifts continued of various different types of demolition specialists so that the Russians could level the base, which was clearly their intention, and either destroy the equipment that was there or take it away with them.

The Russian troops also occupied the Inguri Hydroelectric Power Station, which had been jointly controlled by Georgian and Abkhaz security officials and is jointly shared. That hydroelectric station provides almost all of the electricity to western Georgia as well as to Abkhazia. It was never in any danger from Georgian troops. It is, in fact, I believe, on Georgian territory as opposed to Abkhaz territory. Be that as it may, there is absolutely no provision for the Russians to have taken it.

Finally, it is very important to recognize that, according to Human Rights Watch, whereas there is no evidence whatever of a Georgian genocide, which the Russians have accused, nor is there any concrete evidence that I have seen of Georgian war crimes, there is very well-documented evidence of a deliberate campaign of ethnic cleansing that was conducted by Ossetians against Georgians within South Ossetia under the control of Russian supposed peacekeepers.

At a minimum, the Russians were gravely derelict in their international responsibilities in allowing such a campaign to go on. In reality, it is virtually certain that the Russians were complicit in that campaign of ethnic cleansing, which, again, I refer you to Human Rights Watch for satellite imagery and a variety of other detailed interviews that demonstrate what was going on.

It is also important to understand that the Russians have made a number of declaratory statements about their justifications for this that should be incredibly troubling, and I would say that I am even more troubled than Dr. Fried purported the administration to be about the import of some of these declarations.

The Russians have asserted their right to intervene in neighboring states on behalf of Russian citizens. Now, the exact language that President Medvedev has used does not imply—in fact, explicitly states—that this is not simply a matter of protecting the lives of Russian citizens in those areas. But the phrase that he always uses is that Russia has the right to intervene militarily in its neighbors to protect the “lives and dignity” of Russians in those areas. And if you reflect on the fact that every single former Soviet Republic has a significant Russian minority, that is a limitless declaration of de facto Russian suzerainty over the former Soviet Republics, and it is clearly intentional.

If you then look at the phenomenally effective Russia information operation campaign, an element of that was to bring the Georgian Government to trial for so-called “genocide,” which did not happen, and, again, you have to look closely at what the Russians are saying. The Russian prosecutor general announced that Russian law specifically gives Russian courts the right to try the leaders of foreign sovereign states for actions committed against the interests of Russia in Russian court under Russian law. Again, this is a de facto assertion of Russian suzerainty, if not sovereignty, over, at least, the territories of the former Soviet Union, and I think that it is incredibly distressing.

So you have—just to sum this up very quickly, Russia invaded the territory of a sovereign state that had not attacked it or threatened it in any way. Russia conducted a deliberate strategic bombing campaign against both civilian and military targets in that state with which Russia was not at war and which was not engaging in any activity remotely commensurate with such a response.

Russia seized—actually, I think “stole” would be a more appropriate word—Georgian civilian and military hardware from Georgia proper. Russia systematically demolished Georgian military infrastructure in Georgia proper.

Russia failed to perform its international legal responsibilities, at a minimum, by allowing Ossetian separatists to undertake an ethnic-cleansing campaign in areas that it was occupying, and it has supported Ossetian separatists militarily in land grab, as they not only drove Georgian peacekeepers out of the Kodori Gorge, but then advanced the border of Abkhazia all the way to the Inguri River with active Russian support.

These activities are flagrant violations of international law; they are flagrant violations of international norms; they are flagrant violations of multiple agreements that Russia had voluntarily entered into, and they are, frankly, on a par, from the standpoint of their legal impact, with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

Now, that is not to say that we should respond with a Desert Storm, or a “Mountain Storm,” in this case, to relieve Georgia, and it is not to say that we should terminate relations with Russia, isolate Russia permanently, or any of that.

But it is to say that we must recognize, in all of these discussions, that the actions we are describing strike at the very root and fabric of international law. And if you ask the question, “What is America’s interest here?” we can talk about the pipeline, we can talk about Georgia as an ally, and I think there is something rather despicable in the notion that, as Georgian troops fled back from

Iraq, where they were fighting alongside our troops, as has been pointed out, attempting to contain Iran, among other things, that we should say, "Oh, well, the Georgians should not have gone into their own territory; therefore, the heck with them." I find that a rather disturbing comment.

But the real interest at stake here is an interest that could not be more important to the United States of America: Does the United States of America support international law, or does it not? If it does, then we have a responsibility to take action in response to this. I would say, to begin with, the objective of that action should be to deter and prevent further conflict.

It is very distressing that the Government of Ukraine has become involved in this conflict in a way that is very destabilizing in Kiev. It is even more distressing when Izvestia publishes a very long article explaining in detail not only what Russia's right is to reclaim the Crimea but exactly how it would go about doing that. And when the Russians then announce that they are increasing their security presence in Black Sea port facilities, I find that very distressing.

Now, the concrete steps; I have gone through some recommendations in this testimony which I would ask would be included. What I would highlight is that the Russian assertion, and anyone's assertion, that we do not have a right to provide our ally, whether it is a NATO ally or not, Georgia, with the defensive capability to protect itself against attack with weapons that do not, in any way, threaten Russia, unless Russia plans to invade again, is absolutely unacceptable.

We should send, in my view, the Georgians military assistance they need right now to help deter further Russian aggression because my assessment of the situation—and I will be eager to hear what the Department of Defense assessment team comes back with—is that Georgia, at this moment, is not in any way, capable of defending itself against Russia, and that means that Georgia's continued existence depends upon Moscow's goodwill; something that has been, hitherto, in very short supply.

I think we also need to relook at the question of our military assistance to the Baltic States, who have a virtually nonexistent air defense, and to Poland, which the Russians have threatened outrageously, even though the antiballistic system there does not threaten them in any way, and I think that we need to consider what measures we can take to help make all of the states—

Chairman BERMAN. Say that again. The "what" does not threaten?

Mr. KAGAN. The ballistic missile defense system that we have installed in Poland, which does not threaten Russia in any way, and I would be happy to go into that more in the questions, if you want.

We should be helping these states to become unattractive targets of further Russian aggression by providing them with defensive capabilities and I think—and I will close on this—it is important to recognize that this is not the Red Army; it is not the Red Air Force. We are not talking about multi-million-man armed forces with which the Russians can overwhelm everybody.

The Russian military threat is a threat that can be deterred. It can be deterred conventionally, and I think that it would be well

in our interests, very much in our interests, to do that because if the objective is not to have conflict, making it so that the states that are most threatened by conflict can defend themselves adequately is one of the best ways to begin. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kagan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF FREDERICK W. KAGAN, PH.D., RESIDENT FELLOW,
AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE

Representative Berman, Representative Ros-Lehtinen, distinguished members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, it is an honor to appear before you today on a matter of great importance to the future of Europe, of NATO, and of the United States. Were it not for the gravity of the issue before us, it would also, frankly, be a relief to be talking with you about something other than Iraq. But the issue is indeed grave. Without hyperbole, it is fair to say that we have reached a watershed moment in world history. The Russian military assault on Georgia, in violation of international law and Russia's own agreements, for the purpose of expanding Russia's influence in the region and, ultimately, I believe, Russia's territory, marks a fundamental inflection point in international relations almost as significant in its own way as Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Much hinges on the West's response to this challenge, which must be both strong and nuanced. Although we must guard against overreacting, we must also guard against underreacting, which I believe is the greater danger now. Whatever we and our allies choose to do concretely in response to Russia's actions, we must begin by understanding the real clarity of the issue, including the international legal clarity of the situation, and the magnitude of the damage Russia has inflicted and proposes to inflict on the global states system.

We must start by dispensing with the notion that there is any sort of legal or moral equivalency between what Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili did on August 7 and Russia's reactions. A magnificently prepared and executed Russian information operations campaign has attempted to portray Georgia's actions as unprovoked aggression and to accuse Georgia of "genocide" and war crimes. The use of Georgian military forces within Georgia's territory (and even the Russian leadership formally recognized Abkhazia and South Ossetia as Georgian territory at that time) is not aggression against Russia under any circumstances. More to the point, Saakashvili's actions were anything but unprovoked. Since the Western recognition of Kosovo's independence in February and, even more dramatically, after NATO's refusal to offer a membership action plan (MAP) to Georgia at the Bucharest Summit in April, Abkhazian and South Ossetian secessionists had staged a series of attacks on Georgians within those regions and on Georgia proper. Russian peacekeepers in both Abkhazia and South Ossetia, legally obliged to prevent precisely such provocations and to identify and punish the offenders, instead aided and abetted them—in at least one case using a Russian fighter to shoot down a Georgian UAV over Abkhazia. Russian peacekeepers were clearly in violation of their own legal obligations long before August 7, when Saakashvili decided that he had to send additional military forces into South Ossetia to protect the lives of Georgians under attack by the secessionists.

In retrospect, it is easy to see that this decision was a mistake. Saakashvili walked right into a well-prepared Russian ambush in every sense of the word. Russian military forces had completed a large-scale military exercise starting on July 15, Caucasus 2008, in which they developed the plans for the invasion of Georgia and rehearsed them—even down to practicing the deployment of some of the units that moved rapidly into South Ossetia and Abkhazia in August. Within hours, perhaps minutes, of the Georgian movement into South Ossetia, a Russian motorized rifle regiment was driving from its base at Vladikavkaz through the Roki Tunnel which separates Georgia from Russia and which had already been secured by Russian Spetsnaz troops on both sides, and toward the South Ossetian capital of Tskhinvali. Airborne units from the Moscow and Leningrad Military Districts were on their way at once and arrived in South Ossetia within days—repeating movements one of them had rehearsed less than three weeks before. And literally thousands of Russian troops began flowing into Abkhazia at the same time, despite the fact that the Georgians had taken no action on that front and were preparing to take none.

One could in principle debate the legality of the Russian decision to reinforce Russian peacekeepers in South Ossetia, although the treaties that established those peacekeepers on Georgian soil did not permit or foresee such a reinforcement. One could make the argument that if American peacekeepers were attacked, the U.S.

might also decide unilaterally to reinforce them, even if existing international agreements did not specifically permit such an action. On the other hand, the fact that Russia has clear expansionist aims in these very regions, deterrence of which was one of the reasons for the initial conflict and the establishment of the peacekeepers in the first place, the appropriateness of even this Russian response is open to question. At all events, if Moscow had confined itself to reinforcing its peacekeepers in South Ossetia and Abkhazia and re-establishing the status quo, we might need to have a very nuanced discussion about the situation.

The next Russian actions obviate the need for any such nuance. Russian combat aircraft immediately began to pound military and civilian targets throughout Georgia, beyond South Ossetia and Abkhazia. They attacked the bases of every single one of Georgia's ground forces units, Georgia's military airfields apart from the military side of Tbilisi airfield itself, command-and-control sites, radars, and port facilities. The intent of this air campaign was clearly to degrade the Georgian military as much as possible, and it seems clear that Russian President Dmitrii Medvedev held off ordering a halt to military operations until he felt that this objective had been accomplished.

Russian troops also invaded the territory of Georgia proper (a term I use without prejudice to Georgia's continued legal sovereignty over South Ossetia and Abkhazia simply to designate the area that even the Russians do not claim and over which they have no international rights whatsoever). Russian mechanized units drove from Tskhinvali to the key city of Gori, which sits astride the road and rail links from Tbilisi to the Black Sea-Georgia's lifeline. Gori is also the location of Georgia's single tank battalion and lone artillery battalion, and Russian troops appear to have occupied the cantonments of both units and systematically destroyed their infrastructure while seizing a great deal of Georgian military equipment. Russian mechanized forces also advanced from Abkhazia to the Georgian cities of Zugdidi, Senaki, and Poti. Senaki is the base of one of Georgia's most sophisticated brigades, and Russian official sources themselves report that Russian troops brought in demolition experts with the express purpose of leveling this Georgian base on undisputed Georgian territory. Poti is Georgia's most important port, it is not that close to Abkhazia and is not the base for any Georgian forces that could have threatened Abkhazia. Russian troops took up positions in and around Poti for no reason other than to be able to restrict the flow of goods from the outside world into Georgia. Russian troops also occupied the Inguri Hydroelectric Power Station, jointly controlled and hitherto jointly protected by Georgian and Abkhazian troops. That power station, which was never threatened by Georgian military action, supplies most of western Georgia's electricity. Russian troops in Abkhazia, finally, supported the assault of Abkhazian separatists to drive Georgian peacekeepers out of the Kodori Gorge and out of Abkhazia entirely, despite the fact that the Georgians had made no move to provoke such an attack. The Russians subsequently supported Abkhazian troops as they advanced Abkhazia's border to the Inguri River, i.e., beyond the legally-defined boundaries of the region. In other words, in the days after August 7, Russian military forces invaded the undisputed sovereign territory of Georgia, attacked Georgian military and civilian targets that were not involved in combat with Russian troops and posed no threat to Russian troops, and assisted Abkhazian separatists to expand the territory of their region in violation of international agreements.

The Russian accusations of Georgian "genocide," while demonstrably false, are both interesting and disturbing. By August 10, Russian leaders were already making this charge and demanding that Georgia's leaders be brought to justice for their crimes. Prime Minister Vladimir Putin instructed Russian President Medvedev publicly to establish an investigative commission to document these supposed crimes and this supposed genocide, which Medvedev immediately did. The next day, the investigative commission announced that it had begun preparing a criminal case against Georgian leaders *for trial in Russian Federation courts* as well as international tribunals. On August 12, the Russian Federation Prosecutor General carefully explained the legal basis under which Russia asserted its right to try the leaders of a sovereign state for criminal actions that did not occur on Russian soil in Russian courts under Russian law. The investigation is proceeding to this day.

The baseness of these accusations has been demonstrated by numerous NGOs operating in Georgia and South Ossetia, particularly Human Rights Watch, the World Food Organization, and the UN High Commission on Refugees. There was no Georgian genocide and no attempt at any genocide. HRW has noted that Georgian artillery and tank fire was insufficiently discriminating and that Georgian troops, faced with Ossetian separatists who fired their weapons from within occupied civilian structures, did not always appropriately weigh the costs of collateral damage against the military advantage gained—the litmus test for the legitimacy of any civilian deaths in war. It is not at all clear that any of these incidents rise to the

level of a war crime, and there are offsetting interviews with Ossetian civilians describing the care with which Georgian soldiers attempted to avoid generating needless civilian casualties. The fact that Georgian troops occupied Tskhinvali for less than a day and that the total death toll was below 2,000 and probably lower than that eliminate the possibility that a genocide was conducted, and the Russians have so far failed utterly to provide any evidence that a genocide was contemplated or intended—as, indeed, it surely was not. HRW and other NGOs, on the other hand, have amply demonstrated a systemic campaign of ethnic cleansing conducted by Ossetian separatists against Georgians, included the razing of villages by fire. This ethnic cleansing campaign was at least tolerated by Russian troops that were legally in control of the area as occupying forces and did nothing to stop it. In all likelihood, they assisted with it. They certainly prevented the Georgians from taking any action to defend their own citizens.

To sum up, Russian military forces at the order of Russia's president committed the following violations of international law in August 2008:

- Invading the territory of a sovereign state that had not attacked or threatened to attack Russia
- Conducting a strategic bombing campaign against both civilian and military targets in that state, with which Russia was not at war and which was not engaging in any activity remotely commensurate with such a response
- Seizing (stealing really) Georgian civilian and military hardware from Georgia proper
- Systematically demolishing Georgian military infrastructure in Georgia proper
- Failing to perform its international legal responsibilities by allowing Ossetian separatists to undertake an ethnic cleansing campaign in areas occupied by Russian forces
- Supporting Abkhazian separatists militarily in a patent land-grab

To all this we must add the fact that Russian troops remained beyond the boundaries of South Ossetia and Abkhazia long after the Sarkozy-Medvedev agreement obliged them to withdraw and that the Russian government unilaterally recognized the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, again in violation of international law but also specifically in violation of Point 6 of the Sarkozy-Medvedev agreement requiring both sides to submit the disputes over these territories to international negotiations. The Russian government is in the process of concluding political and military agreements with the soi-disant republics of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, including basing rights for Russian military forces in those republics. Senior members of the Russian government have also indicated Russia's "willingness" to absorb South Ossetia and Abkhazia into the Russian Federation at the request of those republics.

Perhaps the most disturbing thing of all, however, is the official justification President Medvedev has offered for the entire operation. He has repeatedly declared that the Russian Federation has the right to take armed action in neighboring states to defend the "lives and dignity of Russian citizens." The distribution of Russian passports throughout South Ossetia in the months leading up to the crisis offer a demonstration of the Russian definition of "citizen:" anyone speaking Russian. The further claim that Russian law permits the trial of the leaders of sovereign states in Russian court for actions that are "against the interests of the Russian Federation" is a de facto reassertion of Russian suzerainty, if not sovereignty, over the whole of the former Soviet empire. It is also a clear violation of international laws and norms. It is a declaratory statement that Moscow has backed up so far with action, and it undermines the entire basis of the post-Soviet state system, placing the survival of every former Soviet republic at risk.

The effects of Russia's words and deeds have already been felt throughout Eastern Europe. The NATO members in the region—Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia—wasted no time in condemning Russia's actions, calling for the incorporation of Georgia and Ukraine into NATO, and moving closer toward the US. In Poland's case, this movement manifested itself in the agreement to allow the U.S. to base elements of a ballistic missile defense system in Poland in return for the provision of American Patriot missile batteries to protect Warsaw. The Russian reaction was characteristically hyperbolic and false—Moscow asserted, contrary to the laws of physics, that the BMD system is really aimed at Russia and threatened to nuke Poland in retaliation. The Eastern European members of NATO have all made clear that they feel that Russia's actions in Georgia have placed the significance of their own Article V security guarantees on the line, even though they have not been attacked, and Russian threats only add to their feelings of vulnerability.

The Western European NATO states have, on the whole, reacted much more weakly. French President Sarkozy accepted from Russian President Medvedev what was in effect the Russian ultimatum to Georgia and then presented it to Saakashvili to sign as a “compromise.” The Georgian president was compelled to sign this document while Russian troops occupied Georgia’s soil and Russian military aircraft controlled Georgia’s skies. Sarkozy was thereby complicit—in the name of the European Union of which France currently holds the presidency—in Russia’s effort to compel Georgia to surrender on Moscow’s terms. Even then, Russia did not abide by the terms of the agreement, and the Western European reaction has been extremely weak. Britain’s leaders have spoken out strongly and well; some Western NATO members sent warships into the Black Sea (which definitely caught Moscow’s attention).

But so far from taking any action that might hurt Russia, it is far from clear that NATO will even extend MAP to Georgia and Ukraine at its December ministerial meeting. Russian statements at the start of the conflict explicitly declared that deterring NATO from offering MAP to Tbilisi and Kiiv was one of Russia’s key goals, and it seems as though Moscow may succeed. Moreover, some European states are continuing normal military-to-military relations with Russia, including the visit of a senior officer of the Bundeswehr and the German ambassador to Russia to the opening of a German war cemetery in Krasnodar—the region between Abkhazia and the Crimea and a staging area for Russian forces that moved into Abkhazia—and the official visit of a Belgian naval ship to St. Petersburg, with accompanying reciprocal visits between its captain and the commander of the Leningrad naval base. If Europe’s intention is to show that Russia is isolating itself through its actions, there is little reason thus far to suppose that it will succeed.

The most distressing spin-off from the Georgian crisis has been the deterioration of Russo-Ukrainian relations and the destabilization of the Ukrainian government. Ukrainian President Yushchenko denounced the Russian move at once and threatened to block the Black Sea Fleet from returning to its leased home-port facility in Ukrainian territory (the port of Sevastopol) following its participation in hostilities against Georgia. Moscow immediately responded with exaggerated rhetoric and a lengthy exposition in *Izvestia* about the legal and practical steps Russia could take to regain the Crimea from Ukraine next year. Tensions within the Ukrainian government soared as accusations flew that Yushchenko was playing hard with the Russians for his own political purposes and his opponents were lying low because the Russians had bought them. For a time it seemed that Moscow was preparing the conditions on the ground in the Crimea to stage a provocation justifying the seizure of Sevastopol. For the moment such a move seems unlikely, but it is possible at almost any time.

Russia has not only succeeded in crushing Georgia, therefore, but continues to put pressure on Tbilisi to remove Saakashvili. Moscow has laid the basis in declaratory statements and, in some cases, actions, to carry out similar aggressions in response to staged provocations in any of the states on Russia’s periphery. It has attacked the basis of NATO and called the entire purpose of the alliance into question in a way that threatens to drive a wedge between Eastern Europe and Western Europe. And it has asserted its right to prevent the U.S. from providing military assistance to its allies in Russia’s sphere of influence, and to wage strategic bombing campaigns and conduct invasions to destroy any such assistance as has already been provided. What shall we do about all this?

The announcement of a very large aid package for Georgia is a start, as was the deployment of American and NATO naval forces to the Black Sea. But it is not enough. Our East European allies see the upcoming December NATO ministerial as a test. If Georgia and Ukraine are not given MAPs, then the reliability of the alliance in the face of Russian menace will be undermined in Tallinn, Riga, Vilnius, and Warsaw, at least—and seriously damaged in Kiiv and Tbilisi. The trouble is that MAP makes Ukraine and Georgia targets for further Russian aggression without providing them with any short-term protections, either in the form of security guarantees or in the form of military assistance. The Ukrainian armed forces are already sufficiently robust that the Russians are unable to contemplate a conflict with Kiiv outside of very localized struggles (such as the Crimea). But the Ukrainians are far too intimately integrated into the Russian military structure even now and will require assistance if they are to maintain their deterrence capabilities as the Russian military improves and expands (as it appears to be doing aggressively).

Georgia is in much worse shape. We must proceed from the assumption that the Georgian military cannot resist Russian attacks in the future and that Tbilisi therefore remains at Moscow’s mercy subject only to what the Russians think we and the Europeans will tolerate. That is unacceptable. Georgia is an American ally whose forces were fighting in Iraq alongside ours as Russian tanks invaded their country.

Moscow's assertions that American military assistance to Georgia is a provocation ranks with the most Orwellian of fantasies, resting as it does on the unbelievable assertion that Georgia somehow poses a military threat to Russia. We must work actively to rebuild the defensive capabilities of the Georgian military as rapidly as possible, particularly in the areas of anti-tank and anti-air defenses, neither of which can be construed as posing any threat at all to Russia, unless, of course, Moscow means to reinvade a sovereign state.

The Baltic States are reasonably well equipped from the standpoint of anti-tank munitions, and would even now pose a much more serious challenge to invading Russian forces than Georgia did. But they are entirely dependent on NATO forces deployed outside their borders to provide any sort of defensive anti-aircraft shield. We should remedy that deficiency by helping them acquire short-range anti-aircraft weapons as rapidly as possible. Again, such weapons pose no threat at all to a peaceful Russia, but can have a powerful deterrent effect against a Russian military machine that remains extremely limited in its capabilities. Poland also requires additional bilateral and multilateral assistance. In particular, we must help the Poles understand that the Patriot system is not the answer to all of their air-defense challenges. We must help them develop a layered anti-air defense system of which Patriot is an important part, but not the only part.

But above all we, the United States, must rally the rest of the world in the repudiation of Russian aggression and lawlessness. Ideas like excluding Russia from the G-8, fighting Russian WTO negotiations, and so on are good, but not sufficient. We must work energetically with our NATO and non-NATO allies to express support for threatened states on Russia's periphery, including providing a revised MAP to Georgia and Ukraine. It would help in this regard if Congress continued to express its bipartisan rejection of Russia's actions and declarations and our determination to stand by the principles of international law and by our threatened allies. The current weakness of NATO requires a stronger American bilateral response. We must make it clear to Moscow that we will not tolerate further adventures, and at this point we can only do that by taking dramatic action to help our current allies protect themselves, to extend the umbrella of NATO's protection over other threatened states, and by ensuring that everyone believes in the solidity and reliability of NATO's protection.

And Russia must be made to pay a price for clear violations of international law. If our strategy is to isolate Moscow, and there is much merit in such a strategy coupled with the real defense of threatened border states, then we must make the isolation real. Russia should be forced to veto UNSC resolutions condemning its actions on a regular basis. Belgium should be admonished for continuing unnecessary military-to-military relations with Russia and other states should be dissuaded from doing so. America and her international partners should look hard at the illegal financial activities of Russian mobsters who connect to the kleptocracy that surrounds Putin and explore ways of hurting the individuals who benefit most from Russia's egregious behavior.

The aim is not to return to a Cold War relationship with Russia—success in this strategy ends with re-engagement with a Russia that is committed to being a responsible member of the international community. It goes almost without saying that the aim of this strategy is also to avoid military conflict with Russia and to deter any additional military conflicts between Russia and its neighbors. But there are no meaningful indicators that Moscow's behavior is likely to be self-correcting. The road to re-engagement starts with deterrence, punishment, and isolation. Above all, we must recognize what is at stake. Do the United States of America and its allies believe in the principles of international law and the sovereignty of states or not? If we choose to ignore blatant violations of those principles because responding to them seems difficult or dangerous, then we risk watching passively as international relations degenerate into the law of the jungle.

Chairman BERMAN. Well, you both have given us a lot to think about, and, unfortunately, because of the circumstances of the 24 hours since I have been in this town, I did not have a chance to read either of your testimonies before now, and I intend to do that.

Let me throw out a couple of things on my time now, and then we will hear from others, and maybe I will have a few more things after we go through one round.

Let us start with your last point. I do not know much about that business of conventional deterrence. It sounds quite improbable that there is any level of arms we could provide the Georgians or,

for that matter, the Ukrainians that, if for no other reason than constraining the Russians, those arms would deter Russia from doing something they decided they wanted to do.

Is that my ignorance, or are you overestimating the ability to create that kind of deterrent?

Mr. KAGAN. Mr. Chairman, I am giving you a preview of a report that we will be releasing at AEI subsequently, where we have taken a hard look at what the military balance actually is.

The Ukrainian military is actually a pretty formidable force, and it is not something that I think the Russians could imagine attacking, even as it is right now. The issue with the defense of Ukraine primarily comes in when the Russians have announced, and are engaged in, what looks like a very ambitious modernization.

Chairman BERMAN. Push that a little bit. Forget all of Ukraine. Just talk about Crimea.

Apparently, Pravda told the world how they planned to do it.

Mr. KAGAN. Yes. The Russians probably could take Sevastopol, the port facility there. Now, you get down into very small scenarios. Yes, they probably could do that, although it would be, frankly, much harder for them than what they did in Georgia.

We have to understand that what they did in Georgia was about the easiest thing of any of these because it was right there on their border. They have a military base that is right there.

They were able to control the pass through the mountain right away, and this is a very important point: The Georgians had configured their military to assist us and NATO in peacekeeping missions, and they had not, in any way, configured their military, and this was a lapse, I think, in our assistance program to them. They had not, in any way, configured their military to resist Russian aggression. That is not the case with Ukraine, and it is definitely not the case with the Baltic States.

If you look at the limitations that the Russian military showed, even in this relatively easy undertaking, I do think that it is within the realm of the conceivable that we could make it rather unattractive. Can we stop them? No, of course, not. If they want to take Estonia, we cannot stop them without NATO intervention, and, of course, Estonia is a NATO member.

Ukraine certainly can defend itself, but I think we could make even the Balts, even on their own, very unappealing with not a lot of investment.

Chairman BERMAN. But, in any event, what I could draw from what you said is, not only should we provide military assistance, but it should not be with the notion of replenishing that which they have lost but of seriously upgrading the quality of the equipment, the level of the training, the strategic advice on how to posture against a Russian threat, and that replenishing what they had before might be the closest thing to wasting money one could do.

Mr. KAGAN. Well, it would not necessarily be a waste of money—a lot of that equipment might be helpful—but I agree with the thrust of your point, which is that we need to fundamentally rethink the purpose of our engagement with Georgia, and, frankly, we need to fundamentally rethink the purpose of NATO.

NATO has existed for the past two decades on the premise that there was no military threat from Russia. If that is, in fact, not

true, and the Eastern European members of the alliance certainly feel that it is no longer true, then we need a fundamental, top-to-bottom assessment of the purpose of that alliance, and what we are doing with it.

Chairman BERMAN. Dr. McFaul?

Mr. McFAUL. I just had a couple; one empirical point and one judgment.

Chairman BERMAN. And as you have described it, since my time will run out, your answer can deal with that, but also, at one point you triggered something on a cease-fire. Is it your understanding that compliance with the cease-fire is getting out of nondisputed parts of Georgia and quit fighting? Or is it getting Russians out of South Ossetia and Abkhazia?

Mr. McFAUL. On the first discussion, Ukraine and Georgia are very different. Georgia had 30,000 troops, I think, before the fighting; Ukraine has 300,000 troops and there is no pretext there, although I think we need to be—and this gets to my answer to your second question—we need to be forward leaning on the diplomatic side, engaging with our friends in Kiev today, as we should have, in my opinion.

I, frankly, find it rather mysterious, with all due respect to my good friend, Ambassador Fried, to hear the comments. Georgia is the most pro-American country in the world. Maybe Iranian people might be second. But having been to both of those places recently, this is a place where, if we do not have leverage in dealing with our friends in Georgia, we have no leverage anywhere else.

I am perplexed, and I think we need to understand, how we let our good allies make mistakes that we are now calling mistakes, and the same with Ukraine today. What is happening with the Government in Ukraine, in my opinion, is it could not happen at a worse time, the fighting between President Yushchenko and Prime Minister Tymoshenko. If they are our partners, and if they aspire to be our NATO Alliance partners, which I support, they have to act like stable, responsible partners because what we are doing is we are creating a pretext.

A pretext did not exist just 2 weeks ago. Now, if you read the Russian press, they are talking about Yushchenko and military coups and all of that, and, do not get me wrong, the pretext is a pretext, on purpose, but we want to take that off the table in both of these places, and, leaning forward diplomatically rather than responding reactively with our defensive rearmament.

Chairman BERMAN. Recognizing you have not fully responded to that or answered my question, I am going to cut myself off because I am 1 minute and 20 seconds over. I will give the other people who are valiant to remain the same time, and we will come back to it.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask both of you questions dealing with Iran, like I had asked the Ambassador.

Dr. McFaul, you say, in your testimony, that it is a misunderstanding to think that if we sort of go along with what Russia wants in Georgia, we will be getting more help from Russia in dealing with Iran. If we basically acquiesce in the situation that Russia has created in Georgia, how do we anticipate specifically that we

would be disappointed in our hopes that Russia would be more helpful regarding Iran?

For you, Dr. Kagan, Russia's relationship with Iran is troubling and includes sales, as I had said, of advanced conventional weapons, the nuclear technology, and I came across an interesting op-ed in the Washington Times last Thursday wherein the author alleges that Georgia has had a quiet but substantial relationship with Israel, including a possible agreement that Israel might use Georgian air space and maybe a couple of bases if and when Iran develops a nuclear capability and if and when Israel mounts a preemptive strike against that.

So, by invading Georgia and threatening to destabilize the current Georgian Government, is Russia quietly again smoothing the path for Iran's development of nuclear weaponry? Dr. McFaul?

Mr. McFAUL. So, first, on Iran, I am a student of Russian contemporary history but also Soviet history, and the idea that we can meet with them in New York and say, "Okay, we are going to be quiet about South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and you give us the vote," I was thinking—because I knew you were going to ask a question like that, you or somebody—and I was looking at what is a precedent in Russian or Soviet history where this works, and I had a real hard time finding any precedent.

I think it is naive. It is not the way our Government works, so why should we think that it would be the way their government works, this kind of tit-for-tat, we are going to trade this for that. I would invoke for you the person who I think understood this best of all, my colleague at Stanford, George Shultz. I think it is on page 276 of his memoirs, if you want to look it up, where he says, very explicitly, this notion of linkage does not work in that kind of way.

Russia is going to vote. We need to engage Russia to understand why Russia would have an interest in a nuclear Iran and to have that dialogue and to have a bigger, more interesting, more developed dialogue about that. I am all for that, but the notion that they are going to somehow give us a vote at the U.N., no. They are going to do exactly what you would expect your administration to do, which is to look hard at how they define their national interest and then vote accordingly, not as some favor to Russia or China or Iraq or anybody, for that matter.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, sir. Dr. Kagan?

Mr. KAGAN. Congresswoman, thank you. On the question of Israel and Georgia, I have to say it has been astonishing to watch, in general, the Orwellian information operations campaign that the Russians have conducted trying to persuade the world that Georgia's 19,000 soldiers were a threat to the existence of the Russian Empire, among other things.

But also the notion that this was all an Israeli plot, which was prominently spread initially by the South Ossetian separatist government and then picked up by elements of the Russian media, and, in fact, it has been reported as a United States-Israeli plot to provide us or somebody with the bases from which to hit Iran and so forth.

Of course, in the world, one can never rule out possibilities, and I do not know, but it is one of the most absurd suggestions that

I have ever heard. It flies into the face of the fact that the Israelis actually canceled the defense agreements that they had made with Georgia previously to this. It flies in the face of the fact that Georgia is not a great place to base anything from if you are trying to hit Bashkir, which is kind of a long way away, and neither we nor the Israelis would need to do that. So I think that is unlikely.

Your larger question about Russia smoothing Iran's path, I think, is a very important question, and it is something we need to get into the heart of this whole question, and, obviously, this is not the forum for it.

What exactly has Russia been doing for us vis-à-vis Iran? Russia has been providing Iran with nuclear equipment; Russia has been blocking the imposition of sanctions with teeth and, in general, dragging its feet. Russia has publicly supported Iran's right to a nuclear program, which is basically code in Tehran for a weapons program.

Even though the Russians say that they are not in favor of that, the Russians are planning to provide the Iranians, apparently, with S-300 advanced surface-to-air missiles and so forth. I know that has been denied in the press, but, frankly, lots of things are denied in the press, and so on.

So what exactly they have been doing is unclear. What is clear is that if you look at the reaction in the Caucasus and in that region, it is very straightforward, that the Iranians lay pretty low, the Armenians lay very low, the Azeris immediately left to denounce the Russia invasion. Why? Because there is, in fact, something of an axis that goes from Baku to Tbilisi to Kiev of states that feel themselves threatened by Russia and look to the West. And then there is a Russia—I do not want to include Armenia because I do not want to imply that more than is fair—but a Russia-Tehran access, at any event, which works the other way.

As we look at this, we need to decide this is, I am afraid, a battle for the Caucasus, and, for a variety of reasons, it matters to us who wins, and I think we should not mistake that.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much, gentlemen. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. The gentleman from American Samoa.

Mr. FALCOMA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I do want to thank both gentlemen for being so patient. They have been sitting here all afternoon and listening to all of the questions and the dialogue with Secretary Fried. I do have a couple of questions that I just wanted to get your opinions on.

I noticed that the People's Republic of China and members of the Shanghai Agreement have taken the position of not supporting Russia in this recent aggression against Georgia. Does that give a positive indication, in terms of it seems that even its closest allies being in that region, that this did not come out very positive for Russia? Can you give a comment on that, either of you?

Mr. McFAUL. First of all, I learned a lot, sitting here listening to your questions with Secretary Fried, so I appreciate the lesson.

I think it is very important. I think it is fundamentally important that it was China, that it was the Shanghai Cooperation Agreement, that none of them, and Russia went there, the President went there, they went there to get the acquiescence, and they

did not get it, and I think that sends a message that this is not like these other cases you all were discussing; and, two, that Russia is really isolated.

This may give me a chance to say something I did not in my initial remarks. We are not the only ones following this. There are Russians also following this, and it is not just my democratic opposition friends, who, by the way, passed resolutions denouncing only what Russia did being not in Russia's national interests—right?—so there are voices saying, We need to have a notion about this, but also denounce the illegality of what Russia did, both in using force and in recognizing these two territories.

By the way, it is not just the opposition. It is the business elite. About \$300 billion has been lost on the Russian stock market since this has happened. Actually, it is more than that, \$600 billion or \$700 billion, and those that follow it closely say about \$300 billion is directly attributable to this war.

So people are having this discussion and saying, just like the Chinese, just like in Azerbaijan, is this really in our interests, as Russians?

Mr. FALCOMA. Dr. Kagan?

Mr. KAGAN. I think it is very clear that this action that the Russians have taken has strained Russia's relationship with every country that Russia has a relationship with, and it has imposed a very interesting set of cross-strains, both on the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and also on the Commonwealth of Independent States, whose significance, I think, has been revealed to be busier than one might have thought.

I am of the opinion that the statement of the SCO was less of a slap to the Russians than some might imagine. I have a hard time believing that Putin thought that the Chinese would back him publicly in this regard, given China's own issues. So I would not imagine that he looked for that, and the statement itself is actually rather balanced and nuanced. The slap part got a lot of play in the Western press, but the rest of it; there is support for Russia there, too.

I think that what surprised the Russians is that the Kazakhs and the Byelorussians, whom they had thought would be tame lap dogs, have still not recognized, and I think that is an indication to them that the states of the former Soviet Union are looking at this and saying, Hey, are we really going back to that or what?

Mr. FALCOMA. Well, one thing that I wanted just to ask both of you gentlemen, taken collectively, or the summation of the whole period since the collapse of the former Soviet Union and having these states now, do you think that maybe our country could have done a better job in working with the new Russia? Because it seems that we are treating Russia, from the very beginning, like, really, not part of the club, so to speak. We have not invited them to join NATO, even though we are making these conditions, pre-conditions, even before they get to another level, and I am just wondering maybe we may have missed the ball somewhere along the line because I kind of like to think that they really are trying to reach out.

I mentioned President Medvedev's speech in Berlin, which I thought was very profound. It seemed to me that he really wants

to reach out and not be treated like it was another enemy since the Cold War. I may be wrong, but my general observation is that we build a missile defense, supposedly for defense purposes, in Czech Republic. We somehow are not communicating, and maybe it is because I do not speak Russian, but I just wanted to ask your opinions, gentlemen.

Do you think that maybe our country could have done a better job in really bringing Russia into the mainstream of the world? After all, they do have a democracy, but, still, they are building on it.

Chairman BERMAN. Could you yield for 1 second?

Mr. KAGAN. Please.

Chairman BERMAN. When you check out the speeches—you have mentioned Medvedev's—check out the Putin speech in Munich, about 2 years ago. That was also profound, in a way.

Mr. FALCONE. I definitely will look at the Putin speech. Gentlemen?

Mr. KAGAN. Are we going to race to the buzzer?

Chairman BERMAN. No. We are being lax here.

Mr. KAGAN. First of all, Medvedev made another speech. He gave an interview on August 31st, in which he laid out the five principles that govern Russian foreign policy, and one of those principles is that Russia has a sphere of influence which includes the territories of the former Soviet Union, and everybody else needs to keep out, and it was as clear a statement of a Russian Monroe Doctrine, as you can desire.

So Medvedev plays different speeches to different audiences rather better than Putin, by the way, who is rather monotonous, and I was there, Congressman Berman, at the Virkunda, where he made that speech, and it peeled the paint off the walls.

But, on the general point, I think that—I, personally, think that we probably could have done more in the 1990s to reach out to the Russians, and I was actually watching from afar, not happy with some of the decisions that were made and, particularly, some of the rather condescending and hectoring tone that we used toward the Russians and toward Yeltsin's Russia, which was clearly trying to move in the right direction.

I was also, and I will be honest with you, I was skeptical about the wisdom of expanding NATO precisely because of the question of whether we were prepared to back the Article V guarantees that we were extending.

What I want to say, though, is, unfortunately, we are where we are, and whereas I think that we might have had more luck with Yeltsin's Russia, I do not think we ever really had a chance with Putin's Russia. And the problem with some of the discussions we have had about the desirability of NATO expansion or this or that is that we have done it. We have expanded NATO. And the new NATO states, which are not that new anymore, in the Balts, identified their security interests with the security interests of Georgia, and they have done that explicitly in, among other things, calling for Georgian accession to NATO.

So, although I agree with you that we can go back and look at errors that were made in the past, I think, unfortunately, it does not help us inform future policy decisions.

Mr. FALCOMVAEGA. Dr. McFaul?

Mr. MCFaul. If I could just add a couple of ideas. I have written a whole book about it, so I will send it to you. Two and a half big things: One is, we could have done more, and I agree, and that is what the book is about, that we did not, in a way, like Fred was mentioning today, in a way, we did not realize the bigness of the moment, at the collapse of the Soviet Union.

If you remember, we were in an election year soon after that and the phrase that won the election was, "It is the economy, stupid." Right? It was not, like, 1946 or 1947 or 1948 where we thought, if we could just integrate this struggling democracy, seeking to create democratic institutions and market institutions and integrate into the West. We did not have the big strategy, and I think, for a variety of reasons, in the book, I could tell you, partly, that is our fault.

Second, it is not all our fault. I do not think it is just a coincidence that, as Russia has become increasingly autocratic, I do not consider Russia today a democracy, and, as it has become increasingly autocratic, it has become more belligerent, not only toward democracies on its borders but toward the West and the United States, and that is a fact that is bigger than just Russia. Understanding that fundamental relationship that we sometimes get confused about; that, I think, we could have seen coming.

By the way, I wrote about it 8 years ago, under the Clinton administration, just to be clear, and I was reprimanded by Secretary Albright for the day the piece came out when I said we are not paying enough attention to this.

So it is a nonpartisan comment that I am making, but that was 8 years ago, and the fact that we did not focus on this, that we let the relationship drift, that we got focused on other security interests and that we do not have much. So when we get to August 6, 2008, when you look at, well, what is left in the bilateral relationship, there is not a lot of "there" there, and so Russia and the Russian leadership—I want to make clear because Russia did not decide; the Russian leadership did—when they made the decision to go into Georgia, the states, the negative states, in terms of our bilateral relationship, were actually rather low, and that, I do think, is our responsibility as well.

Mr. FALCOMVAEGA. I look forward to reading the book.

Mr. MCFaul. I will send you a copy for free.

Mr. FALCOMVAEGA. Thank you.

Chairman BERMAN. Mr. Payne, for as much time as he may consume—well, no, no.

Mr. PAYNE. I will not do that.

Chairman BERMAN. Up to about 8 or 9 minutes.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much. You know, the fact that it did appear as though, when the U.S.S.R. broke up, and, you know, there was a new Europe, it appeared to me that there were opportunities to try to perhaps embrace Russia. It seemed, though, that there began an increased NATO enlargement, you know, later, the missile shields.

Was there ever, in either one of your opinions, a thought that there could be normal relations, that Russia, maybe 25 years from now, could possibly be a big ally like Western Europe was at one

time? Or was there, in your opinion, always a fear that you are just going to have to contain these Russians; they are just czarist, medieval people?

Where did we fail, you know? Listening to some of your talk, you know, it sounds like the sixties with Khrushchev and Kennedy and batting the heel on the U.N., you know, this war thing is a serious thing. And I hear all of this really tough talk—"We need to do this, and let us put the missiles in—" I mean, I am not so sure that Americans want to just let us take on another war. We have got our hands full, as you know, in Iraq, and then we are looking at Iran. No one is even talking about the People's Republic of China.

I mean, you know, we need to reassess this 1890s, 1900s "U.S. and the world," and, you know, maybe we should remain strong and have a common defense and a strong country, but I am not so sure that the stuff we are talking about is going to fly in the next 20, 30, 40, 50 years. I do not even know how we are going to afford it, \$1 billion for 5 million people. Suppose something happens to a 100-million-people country. Do we give them \$50 billion?

Mr. McFAUL. If I may, first, I absolutely believed and continue to believe in the future that there is no reason why Russia cannot be a strong ally of the United States, and, in the nineties, when there was a democratic Russia, and when Boris Yeltsin was leaning forward, these peacekeepers that we now have to call "alleged peacekeepers," they were peacekeepers, and they were peacekeepers because the policy of Moscow was fundamentally different in Abkhazia and South Ossetia at the time.

Mr. PAYNE. Why do you think it changed?

Mr. McFAUL. Because Mr. Putin is not—whether we are to blame or he is to blame, but he has fundamentally given up on two projects that were alive 20 years ago: (1) democracy in Russia, and he has rolled it back 100 percent, and let us have no illusions about that; and (2) integration into the West, and he does not believe that anymore. I have followed this gentleman. I met him in 1992, just so you know. I met him a long time ago, 1991, actually.

In my opinion, he has a very classic, 19th-century notion of Russian power, and so when it is the military, there is a famous slogan that "Russia does not have any allies but its military and its Navy," and he would now add GAZPROM. Right? So GAZPROM is not a company seeking to maximize—I do not know if you have any shares in GAZPROM, Congressman, but it is not to make you wealthy. It is to exercise Russian power, and that is the way he thinks, and that is fundamentally different than the leadership that was in power in Russia 15 years ago.

I also want to report, though, that it is not consensus, the way Mr. Putin thinks, inside Russia today. Even I would dare say, even within the Russian Government today, there is a real division about, you know, the cost-benefit analysis of where "Mr. Putin's war," as they call it, is taking Russia, and if we had that relationship, then we could do missile defense cooperatively. That is an idea that is 20 years old, by the way.

If we had that cooperation, then Russia could actually do important things in a military alliance of some sort with the United States. They have assets that could be very important to us. I am

really glad you brought it up. You can tell I am a little passionate about it.

This notion that somehow there is a genetic code for imperialism; now that is the stuff my grandfather's generation said about Germans and Japanese. That is not useful in terms of understanding Russia today.

Mr. KAGAN. I want to violently agree with that. I have been studying Russia, one way or another, almost all my life, and, like Mike and unlike some of my colleagues in the field, I like Russians. And I did think that in the 1990s there was a real possibility for the development of a strategic partnership, and I was one of those people who were running around saying, you know, the United States and Russia have no interests in conflict in the world, and there is no reason why we should not, and we have many interests in concert.

As the Russian democracy was developing, it seemed to me that the window toward normalization was opening, and I very much wanted to see it that way. And I have to tell you that I have been feeling this sort of a personal pain as I have now had to go through reading Russian military Web sites, which before I had been reading just to sort of see the Russian take on things and treating Russia like any other state, and now have to look at them as a state that has attacked and invaded the territory of our ally. I actually find it emotionally distressing, I have to tell you.

So I am not here beating the drum for war with Russia: (A) I do not want to fight a war with Russia, and (B) I am not here with any enthusiasm along the anti-Russian lines. I think Kennan was wrong. I think the problem was the Soviet Union and was not Russia.

I have written a book that I will not send you because you would find it very boring about how Russia actually did not have the sort of imperialistic designs, even in the 19th century, that are commonly attributed to it, and so I totally agree with Mike that that is not the deal.

But the problem is that we do not deal with peoples; we deal with leaders, and, in Putin, we are dealing with an ex-KGB thug who has very much of a KGB mind-set about the world and Russia's place in it. This is a guy who has mourned the loss of the Soviet Union, which is a remarkable statement in itself if you think about it and clearly has designs.

Mike is right. They are not the unanimous designs of the Russian people, but we have had this conversation before, too.

If what we want to do—and I think this is all of our objective—is to find a way to work Russia back into being a constructive partner and a member of the world community, then you need to strike the right balance, of course, but you cannot reward the aggressor, and you cannot allow the aggressor to benefit, and you need to show that there is a price, and you need to show that the next thing will be harder and something that really does not want to happen.

That is why I think concepts of deterrence and containment come back here, but the objective is not to isolate Russia or make this government fall or anything like that. The objective is, of course, to work Russia back onto the path of a normal relationship.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much. My time has expired, but I thought that, with the prosperity in Russia, things would, you know, improve. I visited Russia in 1967, and you talk about a poor country. I went down the Don River and the Volga River down from Rostov all the way to the south for 2 or 3 weeks, and you would think that, with the new economics, that they would appreciate the quality of life that it brings. I will yield back the balance of my time, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. And now, in what will surely be an historical novelty, Mr. Rohrabacher, bring us the perspective of Russia that you have been talking about.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. All right. Well, listen, I, again, do not have to remind people that my anti-Soviet credentials are——

Chairman BERMAN [continuing]. Top notch.

Mr. ROHRABACHER [continuing]. Without doubt. I am one of the few people that I know that actually engaged with Soviet troops during the Cold War. And let us just note that this is not the Soviet Union, and I think, to the degree that we cannot change the mind-set of some people to understand that the Cold War is over, that has contributed greatly to the negative relationship that we have now. This is not just a KGB thug that now came up and, because he is a bad guy, our relationship is going to hell, no.

Russia was wide open to being our friends, and, like you say, all of the interest of both of our countries is to work together, and, systemically, we froze Russia out of our markets. The EU, of course, never let the Russians in their markets, even as looters from the West flooded into Russia, making themselves partners with Russian crooks, and so patriots in Russia were able to look and see their country being looted by foreigners who had made deals with their own corrupt elements in their own society.

Where is that going to leave a patriot? This is not even negative nationalism at play here in Russia; it is people who believe in their country.

You just said that we cannot make sure that aggression is rewarded. What are the Russians to think about that? We know absolutely the Georgians were the ones who broke the truce. They committed the aggression. They went in and killed 150 Ossetians, and what is it? The Ossetians are a separate ethnic group that has a different language. Do either one of you believe that the majority of Ossetian people do not want to be independent of Georgia in a free election, that that is what they would choose? No, but everybody understands the Ossetians want to be free and independent, just like the Kosovars.

So are the Russians going to sit down and let aggression be rewarded by letting the Georgians come in there and slaughter a group of Ossetians who just want, basically, their own self-determination, just like the Kosovars? I can identify with that because I supported the Kosovars. I thought it was a good idea for us to use military might to defeat the Serbs, who were down there ready to kill the Kosovars and to eliminate their right of self-determination.

What we have got right now; we have turned Russia into an enemy with hostility and double standards, and part of that hos-

tility is keeping them out of our Western markets. If we are going to have peace in the world, we need the Russians at our side.

I sat next to Ronald Reagan half-a-dozen times when Ronald Reagan said, "This missile-defense system we are talking about, the Russians should be our partners, and if they can ever get them out of Eastern Europe, that is what we are going to do. We are going to make them our partners in building a missile-defense system that will protect all of us."

He said that a half-a-dozen times, and, instead, what did this administration do? It moved forward in missile defense, and then, fait accompli, announces, "Oh, yes, we are going to put it up on your border," and expect them not to think that that is a hostile act. It is our hostility, and not Russian hostility, that is being manifested right now in our relationship with Russia.

I am an American patriot, and I want what is best for my country, and I do not blame Russian patriots. I was against the Soviet Union because it was being run by people who were ideologically being driven because they hated America's democratic and capitalistic system, but, as you say, that is not true of the Russian people at all. They have got good hearts, and they are good people. I do not know about the nature of Putin. He may be a real bad guy, or he might be just a patriot reacting to the looting of his country, and you are very welcome to refute—

Chairman BERMAN. The issue has been joined.

Mr. McFAUL. If I may, I am also an American patriot. I have also lived in the Soviet Union and Russia for several years of my life. Some of my closest personal friends in my BlackBerry, on speed dial, are Russians. Okay?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Great.

Mr. McFAUL. All right? This is not about Russians and Americans; it is about the Russian Government, in my opinion.

Just a couple of reactions. I, too, before you got here, I also think it was a really ill-considered notion, and it is in my written testimony, what happened in Tskhinvali. I think that was a mistake. There were civilians that were lost. We should have an investigation of that, and we should acknowledge that.

Having said that, one should be able to say that first and then say, secondly, it is not right for a country to invade another country and then to unilaterally dismember it. We should be able to have those two thoughts together, and, in my opinion, the first does not justify the second.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. You are suggesting that the Russians are trying to dismantle Georgia?

Mr. McFAUL. Yes. I am not suggesting that. It is a statement of fact.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. You are not just saying Ossetia and these two breakaway regions where people do not want to be part of Georgia and do not speak Georgian, that that is dismantling their country—

Mr. McFAUL. Well, let us get to those two places.

Mr. ROHRABACHER [continuing]. As compared to Kosovo.

Mr. McFAUL. First of all, before Russia invaded Georgia, every country in the world recognized those two territories, including the

Russian Federation, as part of Georgia. There is not a single country in the world that ever recognized them as independent.

Second, we have to go back a little bit in history. Do you know—because you were asking the rhetorical question, let me ask you—do you know how many Abkhazians lived in Georgia and Abkhazia in, say, 1989 or 1990?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Abkhazians lived in Abkhazia or Georgia?

Mr. MCFAUL. In the state of Abkhazia, how many were there?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. I am not sure, but—

Mr. MCFAUL. I know, 18 percent.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. I did not know what percent.

Mr. MCFAUL. Right. So 82 percent were non-ethnic Abkhaz.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Right.

Mr. MCFAUL. Right?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Right.

Mr. MCFAUL. So what happened to them? There was ethnic cleaning in Abkhazia that was recognized, if I may remind us all, at the OSCE—

Mr. ROHRABACHER. That is correct. It is exactly the same argument that the Serbs used against the Kosovars, exactly.

Mr. MCFAUL. I just find it—

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Exactly the same argument, exactly the same argument. What you have to do is decide who is there today, and, unfortunately, you cannot make up for all of these past errors. I agree with you. There was a conflict, and that conflict was started because Joseph Stalin decided to make those borders and put Abkhazia and these countries together under the Georgians because he was a Georgian.

Chairman BERMAN. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MCFAUL. If I could just finish.

Chairman BERMAN. Just yield 1 second.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Yes.

Chairman BERMAN. Do the Kurds, who were thrown out of Mosul by Saddam Hussein, have a right to participate in the future of Mosul?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. I would suggest that when we do elections in this world, because of the complications that are inherent with what we are talking about, that we have to talk about elections based on people who live in a territory right now, and I know that that is not justice for everybody in the world, but it is a workable way of moving forward.

Mr. MCFAUL. Well, I would respectfully disagree.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Okay.

Mr. MCFAUL. And I would just remind you that the Government of Georgia recognized the ethnic cleansing that I am talking about at three OSCE meetings in the 1990s. This does not go back to the 13th century; this is something that just happened a decade ago, and those displaced people are still living in Georgia and the same in Ossetia.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Maybe you can answer it because you are an expert on this. How many, before Stalin put these provinces into Georgia, how many of them were Georgians then? How many were native to the ethnic group?

Mr. McFAUL. I think the substantial majority were. It was a mix, by the way. It was not just Georgians and Abkhaz, but six different ethnic groups there.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Right.

Mr. McFAUL. My point is, one, I do not see the parallel at all to Kosovo. We were using our force to stop ethnic cleansing. The Russians were using their force to promote it.

But, second, where do you stop? So Chechnya; do they get a state? Does Dagestan get a state?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Well, I happen to believe, to answer your question, and I am not speaking for anybody, I happen to believe that we should be on the side of self-determination, and we should just hunker down and say, "Okay. This is the principle we believe in," and, at the end, it will make us many more friends around the world than if we decide, No, we are going to support any country that tries to suppress an ethnic group that is trying to break away, even if that ethnic group was put in that country by Joseph Stalin or some colonialist.

Chairman BERMAN. Russians in Kazakhstan?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. What was that?

Chairman BERMAN. Do Russians in Kazakhstan have a right to—

Mr. ROHRABACHER. The Russians gave up Kazakhstan, did they not?

Mr. McFAUL. No, but the 40 percent or 38 percent of ethnic Russians that live in Kazakhstan; if they want to declare their own state. I guess we just disagree.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Okay.

Mr. McFAUL. I mean, I think your scenario leads to, you know, what we saw in the Balkans but with countries with nuclear weapons, and I think the big dog that did not bark, I am struck by—

Mr. ROHRABACHER. So you were opposed to our efforts in Kosovo?

Mr. McFAUL. No. I supported it.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Oh, okay.

Mr. McFAUL. But with all due respect, Congressman, one was to stop ethnic cleansing, the Russian use of force in Georgia—

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Right.

Mr. McFAUL [continuing]. And it was not even supported by Boris Yeltsin, by the way, was to promote ethnic cleansing, and I think we cannot make those kinds of false parallels.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Okay. Well, if we are talking about an analysis, all of the sinister talk that we hear coming out of our leadership now about this horrible genocide that the Russians were committing against Georgia—I got many, many briefs, intelligence briefings on this in Europe during the break, and I was very diligent on this, and I was talking to intelligence people from other areas and they all suggested that the Georgians who went into Ossetia killed more people than the Russians that went into Georgia. More Georgians were slaughtering these other people than the other way around.

Chairman BERMAN. Twice, the time of the gentleman from California, with a few interruptions by me, has expired.

The gentleman from Massachusetts?

Mr. DELAHUNT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the frustration that I hear from my good friend from California and the ranking member of the subcommittee which I chair is that Putin is a thug, the Russians are the aggressor, and there is this almost dismissive, throw-away line about, "Well, they made a mistake." I am referring to the Georgians. It was a tactical blunder, and yet, when you read the reports coming out of South Ossetia, people were killed. Bodies were not moved because there was fear that if civilians went out, that the Georgian soldiers would kill them.

I mean, I think, to quote a phrase, the American people and Members of Congress are not receiving a fair and balanced picture. Is Saakashvili a thug? Was he a thug during the elections when he closed down those TV stations, when he sent the riot police in? Who is Saakashvili?

Now, we know he is well connected here in Washington. We know that Georgia has a very effective lobbyist in Mr. Sherman.

I guess what I am saying is, all I hear is this rather black-and-white depiction and my instincts say, I am getting a sales job. And then I read stories from reporters whom I respect, and this is from the New York Times, again referring to Saakashvili:

"He made the return of the separatist areas to Georgian control a central plank of his platform. American officials said they repeatedly and bluntly told their Georgian counterparts that the Iraq mission should not be taken as a sign of American support or as a prelude for operations against the separatists."

I have this very uneasy feeling that because we have got 2,000 Georgian troops, that was a message to Saakashvili, and the so-called "inner circle" around him, that he could really, you know, do some strutting and had a swagger, and I think that was a very bad message to sell.

His group, and I know both of you are aware of it, the International Crisis Group, is a group that I respect. I think their work is solid and good, and they do the pro forma criticism of Russia. But then they go on to say this:

"Georgia, too, has mishandled its relationships with Russia, South Ossetia, and Abkhazia since 2004, abandoning real confidence building and often following confrontational policies toward the conflict regions. With patience, it might have demonstrated that the regions would be better served by enjoying extensive autonomy within an increasingly prosperous and democratizing Georgia. Instead, President Saakashvili and a small inner circle of bellicose officials used menacing and arrogant rhetoric that made the dispute with Moscow and the conflict regions bitter and personal. All sides bear responsibility for the humanitarian consequences of the violence, as tens of thousands of civilians in these regions and the rest of Georgia have been displaced amid disturbing reports of atrocities."

I mean, who is Saakashvili? I am just really concerned. We heard testimony earlier from Secretary Fried: "Do not go in." He was ignored. They are in, and, for that, we are going to reward them with

a check for \$1 billion. That makes me very, very nervous. I do not know if that is the message that we want.

Now, there are groups within—I think I alluded to this earlier—a popular opposition Member of Parliament has called for an investigative commission. “Eighty organizations and individuals have signed a petition calling for a broad debate, and most opposition leaders refuse to sign a government pledge of unity,” according to a newspaper:

“Critics also accuse the government of dishonesty in its characterization of the war’s income. Several have blasted the government as staging celebrations during and after the war and for claiming the conflict was an international public relations victory.”

I do not want to get involved in a public relations war. I always remember, you know, Ahmed Chalabi saying, “Well, you know, there were heroes in error.” Enough. I do not want to go down that route anymore, and I do not want to write a check out for \$1 billion for someone whom, it appears to me, there are serious questions about his judgment.

Are we going to ally ourselves with someone who certainly ignored this administration that has been very supportive of him and went in? We talk about Russia being the aggressor. Mr. Rohrabacher is correct. Who lit the match? I know it is not an academic policy issue, but it is the question that most Americans will probably ask, if they understood that Georgia was a country and not where Atlanta and Savannah are situated. Who started it? It is really kind of common sense. Who started this all? It is gray.

You know, I am willing to advocate for the U.N. or some independent, international body to go in and do an independent inquiry, if that can be accomplished. But how about some facts? How about some real thorough review, where the tanks and the tunnel, if we listen to Mr. Fried, well, they told us that they believed. You know, we have heard great strategies before. We have read a lot of books, and we ended up in Iraq, as a result, the gathering storm and weapons of mass destruction.

This is about war and peace. This is about money that we do not have. This is about letting us do this in a thoughtful, measured way. We are not all Georgians. I represent the United States. I represent the American people, and I am interested in our national security. Mr. McFaul, if you would care to comment.

Mr. McFAUL. I have many comments, and you are going to tell me when I am done.

A couple of things: I share your concern about the decisions that Mr. Saakashvili made. I have them in my testimony, where I say, very clearly, “Irrespective of who moved to escalate, the Georgian Government’s decision to use military force to assert its sovereignty over South Ossetia, which included sending its forces into the South Ossetian capital, Tskhinvali, was shortsighted and ill considered. We have no disagreement about that.” That is the first thing I would say.

The second thing I would say, I am delighted that the folks you cited inside Georgia are beginning to speak up and having a debate, and that is a good sign, and a healthy sign, about Georgian

democracy. When I was at the convention in Denver a couple of weeks ago, there was a Georgian delegation there that did not just represent Mr. Saakashvili, and, at an appropriate time and place—the country, after all, is under military assault—there needs to be an appropriate time and place—they are going to have that discussion. I am very optimistic about that, and I would hope you would all do the things necessary to help them to have the instruments to do it.

For instance, independent media, as you rightly said about 3 hours ago, is under assault in Georgia, and what happened in November, there is no excuse for it, in my opinion. So we should be supporting independent media in Georgia so that they can have that debate, and I think that is a healthy thing, and the Georgian people should one day have the right, and they will because they live in a democracy, unlike in Russia, they are going to have a say about what happens.

The only other thing I would say is it is not just enough to figure out who shot first. I have looked at this very closely. I grew up in a town called Butte, Montana. I do not know if anybody has been to Butte. Butte is a pretty rough town. All right. Good. So you know.

Well, I grew up with a couple of guys called Eddie and the Fishlips. They were bullies, and every day when I walked home from school, they came up to me, and they taunted me, and they were trying to pick a fight. My mother said, “Do not swing unless you know that you can take on those three. Do not be an idiot,” in other words. Well, one day I was an idiot, and they beat the hell out of me. That, I think, is the right analogy here.

To think that somehow Russia has just been sitting by quietly, waiting to defend the poor South Ossetians, which, by the way, is a giant police state, thug state, human trafficking—we have not even talked about what South Ossetia really is—

Mr. DELAHUNT. I presume it is like our other ally, Uzbekistan.

Mr. McFAUL. Much, much worse than Uzbekistan.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Really?

Mr. McFAUL. As somebody who was kicked out of Uzbekistan many years ago, much, much worse, which is to say, they have been wanting this fight for a long time, which is no excuse for what Saakashvili did. Do not get me wrong.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Okay.

Mr. McFAUL. But we have to be able to separate those two things. Russia has been wanting to do this. They have had their sanctions—

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. McFaul, I do not disagree with you. I agree, and I have to because, to be honest, I am not, obviously, as conversant with the region. I do not have the breadth of knowledge that, for example, the chairman of the full committee has on this particular issue. So I have to accept a lot of what you are saying. I will make the effort to immerse myself and understand this. Okay?

But what I am seeing, as an observer and somebody who has to cast a vote, is an unbalanced perspective here, and it sounds to me an awful lot like, as Mr. Rohrabacher said earlier, “Russian bashing,” because it is in vogue. Let us be honest. It is in vogue.

Mr. McFAUL. If I could make one small point. It is very important.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Putin bashing.

Mr. McFAUL. What we really need to look at is the missed diplomatic mistakes before the war, and that, by the way, we all knew it. Senator Obama said it many times on the record that this war is going to happen. Georgia should not take the bait. That discussion, and that, I put upon you, to explore that because that, to me, is the real failure. We are paying for our failed diplomacy with that \$1 billion check. This could have been avoided, in my opinion.

Chairman BERMAN. I thank you, Mr. Delahunt, for a segue into the question that I would like to get into.

For a long time, a couple of years—actually, it has only been since I became chairman as before that I was thinking about fair use with intellectual property—I have been thinking, Has our policy to Russia been handled right? I agree with what you are saying. I see the thuggish behavior, I see the reporters getting assassinated, and I see the NGOs being stifled. I see the television press being taken over by the government, and it is very depressing.

I see the administration's policies—I call them “stovepiping”—and maybe that is unfair. Well, we like missile defense. We have loved missile defense. It is almost a religious thing. Iran could have nuclear weapons, certainly is getting missile technology. Let us use our missile defense to stop those nuclear-tipped missiles, and there is a reason to deploy them where we are talking about deploying, but the Russian feelings about that do not make that much sense.

Kosovo is a critical humanitarian issue, I think. I do not think it is the equivalent of the situation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, but I know there are going to be consequences from it. What are we doing to deal with those consequences?

For me, it gets back a lot to Iran with a nuclear weapons capability, both because of who is in control of Iran and because of what that will mean for Iranian efforts at hegemony in that part of the world. And for the reason that once Iran goes, a number of other countries are going to now seriously focus on getting nuclear weapons.

Iran, in some ways, is the most urgent. Maybe it is not immediate, but it is closer to immediate than most other things around. I hear you say, “They will do, Iran, what they want to do, and we should never reward aggression, and do not kid ourselves into thinking that.” I do not want to reward aggression, and I do not think Georgia and Russia are morally equivalent in this case. I do think we have to stand up, and that is where I do think we have to provide this assistance.

In Iraq, our military—and I think it was a brilliant and right move—paid off some people who had been involved in trying to kill American soldiers, taking advantage of their own disaffection with al-Qaeda in Iraq and doing the kind of thing that would have put any of us in jail with their walking-around money to help build support. We rewarded some people who had done some evil things for a greater good.

World War II is the classic example of making book with Stalin, when the Germans finally double-crossed him, to stop the Nazis. I could agree with everything you say about Russia now and still

think, with the importance of some of these other issues, one has to think about the relationship of all of them. Maybe on some issues, you do not give. You do not turn your back on Georgia after what has happened, but maybe there are other aspects of it where you pull your punches a little bit in order to achieve a bigger goal.

We know that Russia and Iran have always had an historical tension. We know that Russia knows it is not in their national interest for Iran to get nuclear weapons. They may be more interested as I said in my opening statement, in thwarting U.S. policy. I mean, they are so upset about the humiliations they went through and our role in contributing to them, some of the issues Dana mentioned in the 1990s, and their anger at a unipolar world, that nothing we do will get them to cooperate. That is what this search is partly about because if there is nothing that will get them on our side, then that ought to be our frame of reference.

But maybe, to some extent, we have contributed or have not done things well enough to maximize the chance of them helping us. I think their help is absolutely essential, unless this is going to be a military issue with Iran, but I think their help is absolutely essential. Maybe there are ways we could work through that relationship with Russia better to achieve our goals.

So, in addition to what has happened to the Georgian people, and what has happened to a nascent democracy, part of what depresses me about the events of this summer is, it seems to me, to have put the nail in the coffin of that kind of collaboration on Iran, and one non-military way I saw of forcing an Iranian change of behavior is lost.

Have I used my time? I guess I have. I am getting twice the time now. So I would be interested in your reaction, and, in the course of it, I would like to get back to that earlier question about what is a cease-fire versus moving their forces out of South Ossetia and Abkhazia? What is our standard here, as we move ahead in dealing with Russia? What is the European standard? Okay.

Mr. KAGAN. Congressman, if I could start?

Chairman BERMAN. Sure.

Mr. KAGAN. On the last point, I think it is important to understand that the Russian recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia is itself a violation of the Six-Point Agreement.

Chairman BERMAN. The recognition is?

Mr. KAGAN. The recognition.

Chairman BERMAN. But it seemed to me that the cease-fire was fuzzy about that.

Mr. KAGAN. It depends on what—

Chairman BERMAN. The meaning of “is” is, no.

Mr. KAGAN. No, it is not, actually. I mean, the problem with the cease-fire is that the cease-fire itself was, de facto, the Russian ultimatum to Georgia, which our good friend, Mr. Sarkozy, presented as a compromise, but, in fact, it was not, and it was virtually dictated by the Russians.

It did not contain in its provisions addressing the question of Georgian peacekeepers in Abkhazia or South Ossetia, which the Russians expelled and which the Russians have now said will not come back.

So this is not actually a cease-fire, in the sense of any sort of return to a status quo.

Chairman BERMAN. But then there was a clarification of the cease-fire.

Mr. KAGAN. We clarified, which the Russians rejected, and the Russians have stated repeatedly that the South Ossetians and Abkhazians will not tolerate the presence of Georgia.

Chairman BERMAN. So the recognition violates the cease-fire because—

Mr. KAGAN. Yes, sir.

Chairman BERMAN. And tell me why.

Mr. KAGAN. Because the sixth point of that agreement, of the Sarkozy-Medvedev Agreement, is that the future status of those two areas would be determined through international negotiation—

Chairman BERMAN. Okay.

Mr. KAGAN [continuing]. When the Russians unilaterally recognize them, and that is a violation, which, of course, is in contrast with what happened in Kosovo, as has been pointed out.

Also, I think it is important to point out that one of the interesting things about Kosovo is it was not a unilateral American action; it was a multilateral action. We did it in concert with the Europeans. At various points of the negotiation, we had to be led by the Europeans. This is being portrayed as an American action, when, in fact, it was a Western action, which the Russians chose to resist. We can have a conversation about that.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Chairman, could I ask for a clarification on that one point?

Did the Russians recognize Ossetia before or after the truce was broken when the Georgians invaded Ossetia?

Mr. KAGAN. Congressman, with all respect, the truce was broken when the Russian so-called “peacekeepers” allowed South Ossetian militias to attack Georgians, both in South Ossetia and outside of Georgia.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Okay.

Mr. KAGAN. You might also say—

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Can we go back to my original question? Did the recognition of Ossetia happen after the Georgian Army entered Ossetia or before, which was a violation of the cease-fire?

Mr. KAGAN. It happened—

Mr. ROHRABACHER. It happened afterwards. Thank you.

Chairman BERMAN. Obviously, we are talking about different cease-fires. There was a 1994 cease-fire.

Mr. McFAUL. That is right.

Chairman BERMAN. But if you are talking about the Sarkozy cease-fire—

Mr. McFAUL [continuing]. It happened after that and while the Russians were still in violation of that cease-fire, which they are, to this day, still in violation on multiple points and not just this issue.

If the Russians had pushed back the Georgian troops that invaded South Ossetia and reestablished the borders of the area and stopped, we would not be having this conversation, and we could, instead, have a very elegant, nuanced discussion about who was

right and who was wrong and even what the international legalities are because, frankly, I find them rather complicated.

But they did not stop there. The Russians conducted a systemic, strategic bombing campaign aimed at destroying the Georgian military. There has been no more flagrant violation of international law that I can think of since the invasion of Kuwait, and that is why, with respect to Mr. Delahunt, elements of this discussion are black and white, and the international legal situation here is very black and white, and I think that, unless we recognize that, we are nowhere in this conversation.

Mr. Chairman, just briefly addressing your point, if I thought—

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Chairman, just on that point, if it was supposed that, and we are saying we do not keep quibbling over who was first, but if, indeed, you did have an incursion into an area, as it is alleged Georgia did, what international law says that you stop an offensive? I mean, what is the signal that you stop?

Mr. KAGAN. I understand, Congressman. The problem is that South Ossetia was not, at the time, an independent state. It was, at the time, a part of Georgia, and the only reason there were Russians present there was because of bilateral and quadrilateral agreements that they had with the Georgians.

So, in principle, Russia has no right to go beyond those boundaries, under any circumstances, in international law because there is no justification in those agreements whatsoever. It is not even clear to me that those agreements provide justification for the reinforcement, although, again, if they had stopped at that.

But the point is we have to stop treating these areas as though they were independent. Legally, and according to the Russians, they were part of Georgia, so there was a movement of Georgian forces around Georgia, and we are having discussions, but that is the answer.

But moving beyond that, where we could have a nuanced discussion, when they moved into Poti and Senaki and Gori, that was a straightforward violation of international law.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Would you say that that was comparable to our bombing of Belgrade when we were there to protect the Kosovars expanding that war into Serbia?

Mr. KAGAN. And if I said that it was, would—

Mr. ROHRABACHER. I supported that, by the way.

Mr. KAGAN. And I did, too, but would we then say that we, therefore, have to support every illegal action that happened subsequently?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. I would say that we would have to have one standard instead of a double standard.

Mr. KAGAN. Well, Mr. Congressman, with respect, I think the standard should be the standard of international law that we are supporting, and if we want to say that Kosovo was a mistake, which I, frankly, do not think it was, then we can say that it was a mistake. But if we are going to use that as justification to, you know—

Chairman BERMAN. Let us bring it back to my question.

Mr. McFAUL. I want to address your 30,000-foot question, if I may, about the relationship, in general, which I think is important, and we have not spent enough time on.

I think you have to go back to the beginning of the Bush administration when they made a bet on Putin. The President himself said it in their first meeting: "He is a man I trust." You all know his comment. I had seen the President, by the way, just a few weeks before then. I then commented in the New York Times, on page 1, he made a "rookie mistake" and was never invited back to see him again, by the way, after that comment.

But it was a gamble, and the idea was—I know it seems like ancient history, but it was a gamble because it was before September 11th. It was a gamble. It was the idea, Look, we want to build missile defense. That is all they wanted to do at the time. They cannot stop us. We want to get his acquiescence to it, and if I reach out to him and have a personal relationship with him, we will get it, and they did. I remembered running into Condoleezza Rice several weeks afterwards and saying, "Well, maybe I was wrong. He got the deal. I was surprised."

Then September 11th happened, and we missed a big opportunity, in my opinion, to restructure this relationship on the basis of mutual security interests, and when we go back and look at that history, and you should, and I think it is wise, no matter who wins, before the next administration takes over, to look at that because we had a bunch of opportunities to build on that, in retrospect, we did not build upon.

We got distracted other places. We did not think we needed the Russians. To say it very bluntly, we thought we could do a lot of things unilaterally, and missile defense is a great example. This is a no-brainer. They have technologies. We could have cooperated on it. We could have done it together. We could have informed our allies about it, by the way, before we announced it. That is diplomacy.

I could blame you all, too. Jackson-Vanik. Remember that? It sounds like ancient history now, but when you talk to Russians, they look, and they say, "If you cannot even retire something that is a Cold War relic, then we do not think you are credible on any of this other stuff." Now, whether that is right or wrong, their perspective, but I am reporting to you, that is a pretty low bar to jump over, going back all the way to the beginning of 8 years ago.

So we look at it, and there is no "there" there. When I looked at that—

Chairman BERMAN. Seventeen years ago.

Mr. McFAUL. Or even 17 years, fair enough. When I look at the Sochi Agreement that President Bush went and signed with President Putin, I look at it, and it is exactly the talking points from the beginning of the administration.

So, moving forward, if you do not have any "there" there, then there is no stake, and there is not much agreement, and there is not much talking about interests. We can disagree, but, at least, we should have some dialogue. You, yourself, said, "We should, at least, be sending our diplomats, our senior diplomats, to Moscow and agree to disagree rather than not talking past each other."

Here, not to keep invoking my friend, George Schultz, but when George Schultz talks about diplomacy, he compares it to gardening. He says, "It is boring, it is not very interesting, but you have got to do it every day because if you do not do it every day, some day you will walk out, and you will see your garden, and it is going to be filled with weeds." I think that is a metaphor for United States-Russian relations over this last several years, whether you start 8 or 15, to make it nonpartisan, but we have not been nurturing this relationship because we thought this one was over.

We thought, This is over. The Cold War is over, Russia does not matter, Congressman, your point—Senator someday—your point about, you know, that we just checked out, we did not think about Russian interests, and, frankly, we were distracted with other theaters that we thought were more important, of our own choosing, and now we have come back to realize that there are other strategic interests that we have.

Chairman BERMAN. In the theater we were always interested in because they have impacts.

Mr. MCFAUL. And the one footnote, because I keep skipping your question about Iran: I would say we want to work with Russia. Of course, we do, and we want those U.N. Security Council Resolutions, but I have to say—I work on Iran in another project—to think that that is the only thing, and I know you do not think this—

Chairman BERMAN. No.

Mr. MCFAUL [continuing]. But if we could just get our European allies to go along with some sanctions, we could bring a lot more pressure to bear.

Chairman BERMAN. No, no, no. I want to just clarify my point. I am thinking, in the confines of what this administration is willing to consider, which seems to be wedded to a specific program of modestly enhanced sanctions, which is dribbling along while every day Iran enriches, but that is—

Mr. MCFAUL. That is another hearing, yes.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Would the gentleman yield for a minute? I interpret that as a "yes," and I thank the chair.

Chairman BERMAN. All discipline, including mine, is gone, frittered away.

Mr. DELAHUNT. You know, we talk about the psychology of the post-Cold War, in terms of Russia, the humiliation. We use these kinds of terms. I find it interesting that foreign policy expertise has this psycho-analytical expertise to it as well, and I want to compliment both of you on your expertise, in terms of divining the Russian psyche, or, at least, the post-Cold War, post-traumatic syndrome, I guess, is a way to put it.

But I think my own interaction with heads of state and with Foreign Ministers is that words make a difference, and if those words are bellicose in tone, if we continue to call those with whom we disagree "thugs" and other such language, it makes it that much more difficult to sit down and have those conversations when there are real issues of substance that must be discussed, when we do not have an option other than to have a conversation.

This is what I see emerging, in terms of the bilateral relationship between Russia and the United States, and that is why I went on

earlier about having a more balanced—we talk about Putin, and we talk about him in very derogatory terms, and I am sure, when the Duma sits, or when he is there, and he is now becoming very personal, it becomes almost, if you will, adolescence in a sandbox, and, boy, that is dangerous when you are dealing with issues of war and peace and the international order, and I would welcome a comment from either one of you.

Chairman BERMAN. Well, it was a yield. Okay. The gentlelady from Texas, which is going to be, I think, our sort of final gasp on this, other than parting words, Ms. Jackson Lee's questions or about Mr. Delahunt's comment about trash talk.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. We will pick your choices, which would be the last, but let me just say, the spirited nature of this hearing has rocked the halls of Congress. Let me apologize to the witnesses. I was chairing another committee on the difficulty of our watch lists and, therefore, was delayed.

But I do want to just inquire of the chairman, because I started out with my opening remarks, Mr. Chairman, I wanted to inquire of you, there has been a public representation of \$1 billion to Georgia. Is that something that we have conceded to? Will that come before our committee? I appreciate the oversight of this hearing. What will be the next step, as it relates to the proposal or recommendation of a \$1 billion humanitarian relief?

Chairman BERMAN. A very interesting question.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. And I yield to the distinguished chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. I appreciate the gentlelady yielding.

The administration has announced that they intend to seek permission, reprogramming permission in other words, not a supplemental appropriation but a reprogramming of what they hope will be \$1 billion, but, for this fiscal year, will be 500-and-something million dollars, a little more than half. It will fund different kinds of economic assistance, some of it infrastructure repairs, some of it humanitarian assistance, refugee assistance, other things like that. The funds will come from various different accounts, which, by the way, is a very interesting question. To the extent they take it from freedom-support accounts devoted to democracy building in, believe it or not, Russia, I could see President Medvedev, or, more likely, Prime Minister Putin, saying, "Hit me again with that one. Take away those NGOs' money. You know, you are really punishing me with that move." But, in any event, I digress.

So we are thinking, however, of putting forth, and I need to talk to the leadership. We are thinking about putting forth an authorization bill to provide, to authorize, some of these programs as well as some of the democracy-in-Georgia programs that have been referenced up until now. But no final decision has been made.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Reclaiming my time, I thank the chairman for that very artful and important explanation. I want to go back to my original comments, and I am going to yield to both of our esteemed scholars.

I struck the chord of balance. I hear the chairman striking the chord of balance. Hearing \$1 billion, I just came out of a hearing, since I have been in many today, that dealt with the loss of 13,000 jobs in Ohio because of a monopolistic situation between package delivery companies.

A billion dollars to Georgia strikes me as potentially insulting, and I am, obviously, not going to be overwhelmed by being guided by someone else's hurt feelings, it happens to be Russia. But I do believe it is important to the American people that we have a balance in our foreign policy.

There are some skepticism and some curious actions that Georgia can be cited for as to why they thought it necessary to move as they did.

The other question becomes, what is NATO's involvement? So it does not look as if the United States, even with humanitarian aid or giving them construction aid, is, again, making a statement of "It is us against you."

My question to you, the issue of balance and how we fair when we can, at least, show balance so that even if Russia becomes smug, they cannot say, "You know what? The United States does not have a fair assessment of our concerns."

Secondly, where is NATO on this? When I say "NATO," let me say the European Union as well, under its new President. Why can't they be in front with the aid, which, again, is a balance, because we support the EU, we support NATO, so that we can strike the balance that we want between Georgia and Russia? Because I think it would be the same thing if the United States—say we were the smaller country, and we decided to show ourselves off and decided to shoot at one of the Caribbean countries, who might, let us say, in my metaphor, be the bigger country?

Anybody shooting at anyone gets themselves in a lot of trouble. So how can we strike that balance? I think \$1 billion is going overboard, and your assessment on that, and that goes to both Dr. McFaul and Dr. Kagan.

Mr. KAGAN. I am a firm believer in the question of balance, particularly in the issue of analysis, before coming to conclusions, and that is why I have spent my time miserably engrossed in Russian press statements, Russian media, South Ossetian press statements, Abkhazian press statements, as well as Georgian press statements, and, frankly, I spend more time reading what the Russians have to say about this and what the South Ossetians do than looking at the formal press statements from Georgia.

I am very cognizant of the fact that the Russians are engaged in a very massive information operation that has as its aim deceiving us about what actually happened. And I could take you, if you wanted, through a number of very specific cases where the Russians have put out things that were factually incorrect, repeated them multiple times, and then dropped them when it became clear that they were being revealed.

This goes also to the question of the point that Mr. Delahunt raised about the trash talk. We are not engaged in trash talk. If you want trash talk, read what the Russians say.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. But if we know that, Dr. Kagan, we know the game they are playing—heighten the Cold War in the 21st century—how do we get balance? We do not have to listen to their trash talk. Trash talk does not bother me.

Mr. KAGAN. It does not bother me either, but I think that you have to recognize that there has to be an element of response to

what they perceive as an expression of their strength, and that is the part of the balance that has to be there.

I think, frankly, \$1 billion; I do not know how to evaluate whether \$1 billion is the right amount of money for this. Georgia has suffered very, very badly from this. We are not the only state contributing, although that would be, by far, the largest contribution, obviously. I think the Kuwaitis immediately wrote them a check for something. And you are right. It would be nice if everyone else would step up.

Frankly, in my opinion, I think the administration is overcompensating with the size of that money for the fact that it is unwilling to provide military assistance directly to Georgia.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. You are probably right.

Mr. KAGAN. I would prefer to see, in principle, a smaller amount of humanitarian aid and providing Georgia with the military capabilities that it would need to defend itself. And I agree with you, we do not need to engage in trash talk. But we do have to deal with this Russian information campaign that seems to be confusing a lot of people about what actually happened, and, granted, we should do that in a non-confrontational way. If you would like, I will retract calling Putin a bully or a thug or whatever I called him. But we need to face the facts, and the Russians have been trying to present a certain set of facts, and they are not correct.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Dr. McFaul, I want to clarify. I think Dr. Kagan is right. I think we can express ourselves such that we can refute trash talk, and we probably can do a one-upmanship.

I do not particularly find Russia to be the clean-hand proponent here, but I got a little choked up when Dr. Kagan said "military presence." But how can we strike the balance so that Russia is not overbearing, if that is something you can respond to, but yet show our friendship to Georgia? And what about EU and NATO collaboration and putting them out front?

Mr. KAGAN. Well, it is an excellent question and may be a good one to end on, it sounds like. I would add to your adjective, "balance," I would add "smart, multipronged, strategic, dual-track," and many other adjectives so that we get beyond, either we just do nothing and get back to where we were before or isolation. And that was the thrust of what my written statement is about, exactly, we have to do these things in a smart, big, multipronged way.

The second reason I want to emphasize is this is not just about Abkhazia and South Ossetia. If you come away from this hearing thinking that this is just some little crisis, and when it gets out in the New York Times or the Wall Street Journal, this is a much bigger strategic challenge that we are facing in the heart of Europe. I think it has been an incredible achievement, and you are all part of it, that we have a Europe, whole and free, and that we help to manage the collapse of the last great empire on the planet in a rather peaceful way. That is now what the stakes are.

So whether a billion, that is why you get paid the big bucks you do, to make—

Ms. JACKSON LEE. There are big bucks we get paid. That is right.

Mr. KAGAN [continuing]. Those decisions about the tradeoffs. I take those as very serious questions.

But I want you to know that we are talking about some really big stakes here, and I would not want the historians, when they go back, to say, "It was in Abkhazia or South Ossetia that Europe, whole and free, began to unravel." We do not want to be the ones that were not seeing the bigger picture.

Finally, Congressman, if I could just echo, I think what you said about personalization is a very, very important point for diplomacy, and it is not just about the trash talk. It can be about the love talk, too. You know, we do not have to have friends. We do not have to have buddies. We do not have to look into people's souls.

We have interests that we advance by engaging with other governments, and I think—thinking of our relationship with Russia, perhaps even our relationship with Georgia, and we could go back to our relationships with other leaders in other places, including earlier in Russia—that is a means to an end; it is not the end of American foreign policy. Of course, we would rather have good relations, but the over personalization, I think, has gotten us into a whole heap of trouble with these countries that we have been talking about now, and I would strongly resist ever personalizing the relationship again.

The last thing I would say, President Medvedev is not in charge of foreign policy. I know, analytically, that is not true. As an academic, I am going to tell you that is not true, but we have a national security interest, I believe, in affirming what the Russian Constitution says and to deal with him as a professional, not as a buddy, not as an enemy, but as our interlocutor moving forward.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. And give him the credibility of the Russian Constitution in dealing with him in these negotiations, which would include how NATO should deal with him, how the EU should deal with him.

I think we can get out of this heap that we are in, and I think you have made a very important point, Mr. Chairman, I just want to reemphasize on the record. All of the work that has been done by the dissolution of the Soviet Union and this new look, no matter how much pride Russia seems to have, can dissipate, be destroyed, be lost, if we continue to have tender skin.

I would like to see us move to this balance, and I hope, Mr. Chairman, we can pursue this legislatively, and I thank the chairman for yielding to me, and I thank the witnesses for the answers to my questions. I yield back.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Chairman, yes, just a point of personal privilege. If you could get the administration's information in regard to where—

Chairman BERMAN. The money is coming from?

Mr. PAYNE. Yes, because, you know—

Chairman BERMAN. Absolutely.

Mr. PAYNE [continuing]. That is going to be very critical because I can see it coming from some hunger program in the middle of Central Africa somewhere.

Chairman BERMAN. You will not believe it, but part of it is coming from Iraq.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Unnecessary.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Maybe we can borrow money from that Iraqi surplus of \$70 billion, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman BERMAN. Okay. We talked about Medvedev's five principles. I had thought he said a sphere of influence among Russia's neighbors and protection of Russian citizens anywhere. I may be wrong about that, but it sounded like one of you conflated that to be protection of Russian citizens in Russia's neighbors.

Mr. KAGAN. Well, Congressman, I can read you, at any event, my translation of his interview, which is: "Fourth, an unquestionable priority for us is the defense of the lives and dignity of our citizens wherever they are located."

Chairman BERMAN. Including West Hollywood.

Mr. KAGAN. It is not specified.

Chairman BERMAN. Okay. That is my point: It was not limited geographically.

Mr. KAGAN. It is not limited. That is correct, sir.

Chairman BERMAN. With that, this is the last 5-hour hearing of this year.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. No.

Chairman BERMAN. You want more.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Next week.

[Whereupon, at 6:20 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE ROBERT WEXLER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF FLORIDA, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE

Chairman Berman, I want to thank you for holding today's hearing. I also want to welcome Assistant Secretary Dan Fried. I have great respect for Ambassador Fried who is one of our nation's finest diplomats.

I want to join you in strongly condemning the Russian government's military invasion into Georgia on August 8—which has resulted in the needless deaths of countless Georgians, led to thousands of internally displaced refugees, and caused the destruction of numerous cities, ports and infrastructure.

The gross human rights violations committed by the Russian military or carried out under their watch is unacceptable and in violation of international law. I was appalled by the indiscriminate and disproportionate force used by the Russian military which unconscionably targeted and killed noncombatant Georgian civilians.

Russia's decision to "punish Georgia" by trampling on its sovereignty and territorial integrity has raised the ugly specter of a Soviet Union style power grab and has created an atmosphere of deepening distrust and hostility between the West and Russia as well as instability and fear in many European and Central Asian nations.

It is essential at this difficult juncture that the United States and our allies in Europe continue to stand with the Georgian people and its government in rejecting Moscow's illegal recognition of independence for the breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and their open and misguided efforts to forcibly remove the democratically elected Georgian President from office.

The US and our North Atlantic Treaty Organizations (NATO) allies must also remain firm with Prime Minister Putin and President Medvedev and remain resolute that it will not be "business as usual" between the West and Russia until the Kremlin fully complies with the six point ceasefire agreement it agreed to.

To this end, Russia must remove its troops from Georgian territory including the breakaway regions and allow European Union Monitors to deploy along with a more robust Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) presence.

Despite an agreement reached between Russian and European leaders yesterday, to withdraw troops and allow for EU monitors to be deployed, I remain deeply skeptical of Russian intentions given their failure to live up to past agreements.

Mr. Chairman—I also want to express my strong support for your efforts along with those of Senator Biden and the Administration to shape a bipartisan aid package for Georgia that will address the humanitarian needs of the Georgian people.

American aid is critical to Georgia's future as the Georgian people rebuild their shattered lives and communities.

American assistance along with that of the Europe and the international community is also necessary to ensure that Georgia remains on its democratization track and that they are further integrated into the Euro-Atlantic community.

Mr. Chairman, in the coming months, it is essential that we thoroughly review this Administration's efforts to prevent the conflict between Georgia and Russia as well as our efforts to end the bloodshed once it started. We must also review a failed American-Russia policy that placed too much stock in President Bush's personal relationship with Vladimir Putin and did little to strengthen the US-Russian bilateral relationship.

As one of today's witnesses Michael McFaul states in his testimony "had the international community—led by an attentive and proactive American government—engaged both the Russian and Georgian governments in an effort to first stop the vio-

lence immediately, and then more ambitiously, to mediate a permanent solution to Georgia's border disputes, this war might have been avoided."

Despite Russia's aspirations to be a leading world power, its irresponsible and illegal actions in Georgia and the Kremlin's continuous manipulation of energy supplies for political purposes suggest otherwise. To that end, it is critical the United States, Europe and the international community draw a line in the sand and hold Russia accountable for its actions.

Mr. Chairman, as the US and Europe work together to confront the security challenges of a resurgent Russia, it is essential that we renew and double our efforts to promote democracy, human rights and civil society in Russia as well as in the former Soviet States. This is especially important in those nations like Georgia and Ukraine who wish to join or create stronger links to Euro-Atlantic institutions such as the NATO and the EU.

While I strongly believe we are not on the brink of another cold war, it is clear that we cannot continue "business as usual" with Russia.

I look forward to hearing the testimony of Assistant Secretary Fried as well as from the distinguished witnesses in the second panel—Michael McFaul and Fredrick Kagan.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE GENE GREEN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this hearing today.

This is an incredibly important issue, and I think that we, as a legislative body, should deeply explore all of our possible policy options and the ramifications of these options as we consider how to move forward in our relationship with Russia.

This hearing today is no doubt a step in the right direction, but it is just that—a step, and we should use this hearing as a vehicle to bring as much information to light as possible so that we can accurately assess how to move forward.

Russia is an important and powerful country and we cannot afford to make rash decisions.

However, let me emphasize that I support Georgia's territorial integrity and Russian troops should not be allowed to occupy Georgia.

I believe that the United States should continue to send humanitarian aid to the region and deal with the numerous displaced persons that are a result of this conflict.

While there are several hypotheses about what Russia's exact motivations were at the beginning of this conflict, what is evident is that Russia does not want the United States and Western institutions infringing on what it considers its sphere of influence.

This reality has a whole host of potential policy ramifications as we seek build relationships in the region and to integrate Eastern European and ex Soviet countries into NATO.

Ambassador Fried, I am deeply interested in your views on how this devastating conflict will affect our relationship with Russia on issues such as nuclear non-proliferation, Iran and North Korea.

How does the Administration plan to move forward and how do our European counterparts plan to move forward?

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing and I look forward to the testimony of our witnesses.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JOE WILSON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Thank you, Chairman Berman for holding this hearing today on our nation's relationship with Russia.

The United States and Russia have a long and complicated history. Since the defeat of Communism, it has been the hope of Western nations and my personal hope that Russia and the nations that formerly comprised the Soviet Union would emerge from the decades of oppression and become our partners in the pursuit of a peaceful and prosperous world. I have visited Russia a number of times from St. Petersburg to Novosibirsk, and I am always impressed by the extraordinary people of Russia, their beautiful culture, their inspiring architecture, and their profound literature. While Russia has recently seemed to slide backwards in the pursuit of strong democratic values, the emergence of nations like Ukraine and Georgia are positive examples of democratic progress. This makes Russia's recent decision to invade parts of Georgia all the more troubling.

As a nation dedicated to supporting democracy around the world, the United States is rightly expected to respond in some form or another when a democratic ally is attacked. Our response to Russia's recent activities has been in the form of humanitarian aid for the people of Georgia, and I believe those actions are appropriate.

Moving forward, the international community needs to be principled but not belligerent in our reaction to Russia's conflict with Georgia. We must show strong support for our democratic ally Georgia. Their future success is part of a greater ongoing movement towards democracy and freedom in that region. We must be straightforward with Russia, and make it clear that we seek a mutually beneficial relationship with that country but will not turn a blind eye to aggression.

Again, I wish to thank Chairman Howard Berman and my fellow Committee members for this opportunity, and I look forward to today's testimony.

WRITTEN RESPONSES FROM THE HONORABLE DANIEL FRIED, ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF EUROPEAN AND EURASIAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF FLORIDA

Question:

What right, as a sovereign country, does Georgia have to arm itself in the defense of its territory and people? Does Russia have a right to obstruct Georgia's defense of its territory? What steps will Georgia have to take to build a strong defense of its territory? Will the US and NATO assist Georgia in such an effort?

Response:

Georgia has the same prerogative to defend itself as any other sovereign state, and we do not accept arguments that question Georgia's development of a legitimate self-defense capability.

As it assesses the lessons learned from the clash over South Ossetia and Russia's invasion, the Georgian Government will have to determine the steps necessary to best ensure the defense of its country and people. Georgia has been a valued partner in NATO and coalition operations in the past, including in Kosovo and Iraq, and we anticipate that both the United States and NATO will cooperate with Georgia as it rebuilds in a responsible way. NATO plans to establish a NATO-Georgia Commission to coordinate the Alliance's support to assist Georgia in recovering from the recent conflict.

Question:

The need for successful non-proliferation programs in Georgia stems from the possibility that terrorists might obtain nuclear materials within Georgia itself or use that country as a transit route for such materials obtained in neighboring Russia or elsewhere. The Russian invasion of Georgia has undoubtedly severely disrupted our efforts in Georgia to prevent such proliferation.

Russia continues to provide nuclear materials and technology to Iran. A dangerous radioactive substance, which is produced almost solely by a Russian state-owned enterprise, was smuggled out of Russia and purposely used to poison Alexander Litvinenko, a critic of the Putin regime in Moscow.

In light of those facts and the Russian invasion of Georgia—which disrupted our ability to prevent and intercept proliferation of nuclear materials—why would the US continue to provide non-proliferation assistance to the Russian government?

Response:

It is in the national security interests of the United States to provide assistance to eliminate nuclear weapons and their delivery systems at the source, to consolidate and secure potential WMD materials and prevent their smuggling, to increase transparency. Under the Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program, we have had many successes since 1992. For example, nuclear weapons are being transported securely from the operational bases where they are being deactivated to secure storage or dismantlement. Delivery systems such as strategic submarines with submarine-launched ballistic missiles, land-based silo-launched ICBMs, such as SS-18s, SS-19s, and SS-25 road-mobile systems, are being eliminated. Since 2001 when the limits of START I were met, the number of START-accountable warheads remaining on strategic delivery systems of the former Soviet Union has decreased from 6000 to approximately 4000, in seven years. It remains in the U.S. interest to continue to cooperate in reducing proliferation risks not only through CTR but also through the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism.

Question:

On August 18th, on her way to an emergency NATO foreign ministers meeting on the Georgian crisis, Secretary Rice said that "Russia will pay a price" for its actions in Georgia. What exactly did the Secretary mean by these words?

Response:

Russia's brutal military actions, failure to implement the ceasefire agreement President Medvedev signed, and Moscow's recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia have damaged Russia's international credibility; its standing in the world is worst than at any time since 1991. Russia has been condemned by the European Union, the Chair of the OSCE, and by the G-7 Foreign Ministers. Even the members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) or Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) failed to follow Russia's lead in recognizing the two breakaway regions.

Russia is an emergent economic power and a net exporter with interdependency with the rest of the world in very different ways than in the Soviet past. This interdependency has raised the costs of military actions in Georgia for Russia and its newfound prosperity. Russia's efforts to join the World Trade Organization and Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) are now in jeopardy. While the conflict with Georgia is not the only cause of its current financial strains, Russia's President has acknowledged that Georgia is one factor in them. The price Russia pays for the bad choices its leaders have made will grow over time, if these choices remain bad.

Question:

Given Russia's invasion of Georgia, which resulted in scores of people being killed, displaced and a significant amount of Georgian infrastructure destroyed, should the U.S. have a new perspective on how we allocate our foreign aid to Russia? Should we continue to allocate aid funds to Russia while it invades a neighboring state—Georgia—threatens others—such as Poland—and reportedly is considering handing out Russian citizenships to residents of parts of Ukraine?

Response:

We will support our friends, our allies and our principles in the face of Russian aggression. Russia has faced and will continue to face consequences for its actions. However, an elimination or reduction of the programs we have operating in Russia would not best advance our objectives, as these programs are designed to advance enduring U.S. interests.

In FY 2008, the majority of our assistance to Russia is directed to the Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) and other nonproliferation programs. These programs increase the security of America and our allies by working to ensure the security of Russia's nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons stockpiles, expertise, and infrastructure.

The greatest part of our remaining assistance to Russia supports the efforts of Russians to strengthen democratic development and the rule of law, including in the critical North Caucasus region. It helps non-governmental actors to promote human rights, strengthen civil society and independent media and encourage democratic political processes. What programs we have with Russian governmental bodies promote political decentralization and increase judicial independence and access to justice. These programs work to empower the Russian people, encourage greater government transparency and accountability, and increase checks and balances. Our programs further our interest in a Russia ready to pursue a cooperative, not antagonistic, relationship with Europe, the United States, and the rest of the world. If we were to eliminate this assistance it would be at the expense of our friends, security and values and to the advantage of those who support the brutal Russian military invasion of Georgia.

Question:

If the Russian business elite were to be confronted with financial losses or an inability to travel to and reside in the US and Europe due to the impact of Russia's aggressive policies towards its neighbors and due to possible sanctions by the US and European states, do you believe that it would place pressure on the Kremlin decision-makers to end such aggression?

Response:

Our relations with Russia have been under intense review. Secretary Rice has said Russia's future is in Russia's hands. Its choices will be shaped, in part, by "both the incentives we provide and the pressure we apply."

Power in Russia is increasingly concentrated in the Kremlin and Russian White House. While many in Russia's business elite are insiders, others are the very people who are and will continue to foster the positive change in Russian society we support. Any action by the United States, including travel- or financial-related actions must be carefully calibrated, and coordinated with our European allies.

Question:

Aside from assisting Georgia with humanitarian aid and helping it rebuild its infrastructure and economy, what steps is the US taking or planning to take in order to ensure that Russia withdraws all of its troops—of any type—from Georgia?

Response:

We continue to work with our European partners to press Russia to meet its commitments under the French-brokered Ceasefire Agreement of August 12 and the additional agreements reached on September 8, including withdrawing its armed forces to positions held prior to August 7. Specifically, the Sarkozy-Medvedev agreement of September 8 stipulates that Russia must complete withdrawal within 10 days of the deployment of a European Union monitoring mission, scheduled to deploy by October 1. Russia's announced plans to deploy up to 7,600 troops in South Ossetia and Abkhazia would violate the Ceasefire Agreement.

By helping Georgia recover from the conflict and retain its sovereignty and independence, and supporting its territorial integrity, we and our European allies can deny Russia its objectives in attacking Georgia. We have worked closely with President Sarkozy and the EU leadership in recent weeks to shape the upcoming international conference on stability and peacekeeping modalities for South Ossetia and Abkhazia in Geneva on October 15.

We also continue to make clear for Russia the consequences of its actions in Georgia as a means of ensuring compliance with its commitments. Should Russia not fulfill its obligations under the agreement, it will continue to pay a price and remain in self-isolation.

Question:

Many experts predict that Ukraine may become Russia's next "target," now that it has invaded Georgia on the pretext that it was coming to the aid of Russian citizens. What can and should be done by the US and the European Union to ensure that Ukraine is strengthened and better integrated into Western institutions in order to resist any such Russian pressure?

Response:

Russia's invasion of Georgia has generated apprehension across the region. We reject Moscow's apparent claim for "spheres of influence." We respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of an independent Ukraine. Vice President Cheney's September 4–5 visit to Kyiv demonstrated the importance the United States places on Ukraine. During his trip, the Vice President expressed his strong support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. I will meet with President Yushchenko, Prime Minister Tymoshenko, and other senior Ukrainian government officials in Kyiv September 11–12 to underscore the Vice President's message and to discuss ways both nations can increase their cooperation on a broad range of political, political-military, and economic issues.

Senior Department officials, including Secretary Rice, will meet with Ukrainian representatives on the margins of the UN General Assembly in New York.

We also continue our efforts to encourage the European Union to work with Ukraine on meeting the EU's accession requirements. During the September 9 EU-Ukraine summit, both parties agreed to continue negotiations on deepening EU-Ukraine relations and to sign an Association Agreement. The EU for the first time formally acknowledged the "European aspirations" of Ukraine. The two parties also decided to launch a dialogue aimed at visa-free travel by Ukrainians to EU countries.

We continue to support a NATO Membership Action Plan (MAP) for Ukraine. MAP is a work program designed to help NATO aspirants make the reforms necessary to prepare them for NATO membership. No third country has a veto over NATO's membership decisions.

The strong international response and condemnation of Russia's action in Georgia has also helped Ukraine by making clear that Russia's efforts to intimidate have not met with success.

Question:

Do you think Moscow's invasion of Georgia will serve as a wake-up call to Europe to enhance its efforts to diversify its energy supplies away from a heavy dependence

on Russia and push for alternative pipelines that would bypass Russia? Will Russia's actions in Georgia instead create uncertainty among European investors regarding Georgia's stable role as a key transit country for future pipelines planned to bypass Russia? In particular, what impact will the conflict in Georgia have on the "Nabucco" pipeline, which seeks to bring central Asia's gas to Europe?

Response:

The European Union (EU) and its Member States have made clear that diversification of energy supplies is and will be a priority. We support this assessment and believe, moreover, that in the wake of the Georgia crisis, the EU needs to elevate the importance of diversification of gas supplies within the EU energy debate.

In particular, Russia's invasion of Georgia has underscored the need to strengthen and expand a Southern Corridor of energy infrastructure to move Caspian gas and oil westward through Turkey to European and world markets. Various Member States are considering diversification strategies with a new sense of urgency, including the expansion of a Southern Corridor of energy infrastructure not controlled by Russia. We support these efforts and are working with the EU and the individual Member States to promote development of the Southern Corridor and other diversification options.

While the Russian incursion into Georgia may have created apprehension among some investors, the Baku-Tblisi-Ceyhan (BTC) oil pipeline and the South Caucasus Gas pipeline (SCP)—the anchors of the Southern Corridor through which Azerbaijani oil and gas flow to Europe—remain intact. Partly as a result of European and American efforts to support Georgian sovereignty, we see no reason the Georgia conflict would impede the construction of the proposed Nabucco gas pipeline, an EU priority project to move Caspian gas westward; likewise we do not anticipate problems with any of the other proposed pipeline projects in the region as a result of the conflict.

The development of Caspian energy resources and diversified export routes is an additional means to support the sovereignty, independence and economic development of Georgia, as well as other countries in the Caucasus, Central Asia and Central Europe. Senior U.S. officials have taken this message to the region in recent weeks; we encourage EU leadership to do so as well. With our European partners, we will emphasize the importance of this corridor's expansion and its continuing ability to attract the investment required to help Europe diversify its natural gas supply.

WRITTEN RESPONSES FROM THE HONORABLE DANIEL FRIED, ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF EUROPEAN AND EURASIAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE EDWARD R. ROYCE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Question:

As recent events in South Ossetia have shown, "frozen conflicts" can have the potential to thaw quickly. The Caucasus are also home to Nagorno Karabakh. Just a few months ago, President of Azerbaijan Aliyev stated at a military parade, "the Azerbaijani people are tired of these [peace] talks, which cannot go on forever." What is your assessment of the peace process surrounding Nagorno Karabakh? Does the conflict in Georgia impact the way this conflict is viewed by Washington?

Response:

We believe that we have a window of opportunity to achieve real progress on Nagorno-Karabakh. We have seen hopeful signs that both sides are ready for meaningful discussions. In June, Presidents Aliyev and Sargsian met for the first time and instructed their foreign ministers to work together to finalize the Basic Principles, a document that has been under discussion by the two sides. In July, the Minsk Group Co-Chairs—the United States, France, and Russia—traveled to the region and sought further clarifications from the two sides on the remaining differences on the Basic Principles. Later this month, Deputy Assistant Secretary Matt Bryza will travel to the region to build on this progress.

Concerns about Russia's intentions following its invasion of Georgia have fresh thinking about the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Progress in Turkish-Armenian relations has also helped open new perspectives for progress. In these circumstances, Armenia and Azerbaijan have both expressed a desire to intensify their efforts to find a peaceful and negotiated solution based on the Basic Principle, efforts we support.

We were preparing for a heightened push on Nagorno-Karabakh this fall even before Russia attacked Georgia. While Russia's actions did not change our view of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the dislocation and damage caused by the invasion has added impetus to our efforts to help achieve lasting stability and security in a region of strategic importance.

Question:

As a result of the two blockades of Armenia (by Turkey on the West and Azerbaijan on the East) over 90 percent of Armenia's trade flows through Georgia. Is the U.S. making efforts to alleviate the disruption of the flow of goods to and from Armenia through Georgia?

Response::

Supporting other countries near Russia has been a key American objective since Russia's assault on Georgia. We believe that our continued efforts to assist with Georgia's reconstruction will help not only Georgia, but also its neighbors such as Armenia, which also suffered ill-effects due to Russia's invasion. As the situation in Georgia has stabilized, we have already seen the positive impact on Armenia, with trade beginning to flow again.

We are also focused on long-term solutions to end Armenia's economic isolation. We welcomed the initiative of Armenian President Sargsian to invite his Turkish President Gul to Yerevan. Their meeting has created a new atmosphere in the relationship and gives hope that a long-overdue opening of relations can take place. We continue to urge Turkey and Armenia to normalize their relations and open their border, since this would be in both country's best interests, and would open up new trade and transportation routes for the entire South Caucasus.

