



**2017 Halifax International Security Forum  
Plenary 5 Transcript  
Rapprochement with Russia: Post-Putin Prep**

SPEAKERS:

Minister Pavlo Klimkin, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ukraine

Minister Antoni Macierewicz, Minister of National Defence, Ministry of National Defence, Poland (speaking Polish and being translated in English)

Mr. Vladimir Milov, Founder and President, Institute of Energy Policy

Senator Jeanne Shaheen, Senator from New Hampshire, United States Senate

MODERATOR:

Ms. Susan Glasser, Chief International Affairs Columnist, POLITICO

**Susan Glasser:** Alright. Well, I guess that's a movie we would all like to see, hey? Well, thank you so much. I know this is really a marquee conversation I've personally been looking forward to hearing what our incredible panel has to say this afternoon.

So without further ado, I think we're going to run – jump right into it and let me just quickly introduce this – this terrific group of people to talk about Russia, the U.S. and what comes next. Starting from this end, we have Vladimir Milov who is not only the former deputy energy minister of Russia, but most relevantly to our conversation today, he's really the chief political adviser to Alexi Navalny's campaign in Russia. So we're delighted to have him here with us today. We have Ukraine's foreign minister, Pavlo Klimkin who, I think, has been a most valuable contributor already to this conversation, Senator Jeanne Shaheen. She was by the way the very first U.S. Senator to call for a hearing into the investigation of what was happening with Russia's intervention in the U.S. election. She did that in September, folks, of 2016. So she's been getting some hearings unfortunately after the fact, after the fact and of course, we have Poland's minister of defence here with us as well today, Antoni Macierewicz. We're delighted to have him with us.

And so this is – this is a group that maybe we should start at the end of that movie, you know, basically, you see those images from 1989 now, don't you and they seem almost astonishing in that moment of hope that's so far away. Somebody said to me recently, maybe 1989 was the best year of our lives, but we just didn't know it at the time. It certainly feels like a different political moment.

So I want to start out by asking everyone on the panel, and we'll start with our Russian, here as the first person, are we in a new cold war and if so, you know, who's fighting it? This seems like a way without any definition. What's – what's your view?

**Vladimir Milov:** Well, I wouldn't go so far to call it a cold war, but we're definitely in a changing environment because in 1989, 1991, when Francis Fukiyama was rushing a little bit too much ahead with the end of his story publication, we all thought that what's going to happen next is that the liberal world order would advance and autocracies would continue to collapse and basically the few decades from now, we will have a world which is largely functioning as a democracy moving forward and so on. What we have is actually a resurgence of a number of autocracies who are getting the upper hand, becoming stronger, pursuing strategic goals and importantly, act together on most important issues, establishing some form of a cartel, if you will, to advance their interests and to defend themselves from a continued advance of the liberal order.

So Russia is not an exception, it's just a natural part of what we see in different parts of the world, the Middle East, Southeast Asia and so on. So we see that the liberal order is in retreat and the autocracies are on the rise. They're acting decisively, trying to disrupt further advances of the liberal democratic world and of course, Russia is one of the most important players here.

**Susan Glasser:** But is there going to be a 1989 moment again? I mean, you know, are people going to stand on the wall and say "No more Putin"?

**Vladimir Milov:** We have to fight for it. It doesn't come – this new 89 moment doesn't come as a given. We see for instance very dangerous, let's not even talk about what's happening in the United States now, but in certain countries which are members of the European Union, who are thought to be established democracies from now on and forever, right now, actually, we see similar autocratic trends, a dismantling of democratic institutions within the European Union and I think first, point No. 1, since we're here, is for the people from the western world – I can share a lot of experience how gradually democratic institutions are being dismantled.

In a country where people, the establishment, business basically thinks oh, it's a given, it's going to take place forever, nobody is going to take away our rights and then slowly, but surely, step by step, this is being taken away from us. I've observed this process since day one when Vladimir Putin came to power 18 years ago. I can share a lot of experience and I see that a lot of people in the western world are not really paying attention to what is happening inside America, inside Europe which is actually eroding a lot of democratic institutions. Russia was unfortunately on the forefront of this process. So we have a lot to say and we should never let this happen. We should fight back.

**Susan Glasser:** Ukraine is fighting back, not necessarily of its choosing a war. What – what is your view about this?

**Pavlo Klimkin:** Look, I don't believe we're in a cold war. I believe we're in a real war and not only Ukraine. What else, after Georgia, Ukraine, U.K., Spain, Catalonia, the Netherlands, U.S. just to name a few, would you need to start action? It's not a military conflict like in Ukraine, but Russia has been waging a hybrid war, a real hybrid war against the west, against the western institutions and against the citizens, against the people here and after all that, we still have – we still don't have a sort of common narrative on the nature of this war. We still don't have the common narrative how to counter Russian hybrid threats and it's about (inaudible), it's about meddling into elections, it's about fake news, it's about propaganda, it's about cyber, it's about economy. So it's about (inaudible), what would be called hybrid. Of course, it's still different from Ukraine, but fundamentally, we're still, you know, get apart from clear understanding about, you know, (inaudible), this hybrid war as a goal for actions, as a goal for concerted and coordinated actions against Russia.

And the second very simple point, I'm a bit perplexed by the title of our panel. Of course, it's about, you know, provoking a bit, it's great of course, but what kind of Russia we are talking about? We're talking about a Russia where Stalin is the most popular leader of the Russian era. We're speaking – we're talking about a country where monuments of Stalin are erected again and the (inaudible) are late, we're talking about a country that over the recent ten years, the – you know, we have less and less people who believe that Stalin committed a lot of atrocities. It's now about 30+%, ten years before, it was 70+, so – and many of my friends from Europe tell me, "Look Pavlo, if we turn down the – you know, the sole – the channel of propaganda in Russia, maybe Russia is good again in a year", so my point, no, let's be fair what kind of country we are dealing with and we all remember, after the Georgia War, partnership for modernization reset, all kinds of good things and where are we now with all this reset and partnership of modernization? Nowhere.

**Susan Glasser:** Okay, Cold War, and if so, is Washington even fighting it?

**Jeanne Shaheen:** I don't think we're seeing a resurgence of the cold war actually and now, my issue and I don't think the U.S. government's is not with the Russian people, it's with Vladimir Putin and the Kremlin and the aggressive actions that they've been taking against the west and be – let's be very clear, that just as they are engaged in a military build-up, they're engaged as the minister says in hybrid warfare that is designed to undermine the faith that people in democracies have in their own governments and institutions. That's clearly what is going on and they need to pay a price for that.

Now one of the things that has united the American congress has been concern about what Russia is doing and we past our sanctions bill in response to their interference in our elections and regardless of partisanship around the elections, there is a united front saying that we have got to hold Russia accountable for their efforts to undermine our democracy and you know, I think that – that bipartisan effort to be responsive and to try and hold them accountable will continue.

**Susan Glasser:** Minister Macierewicz, I know you have said recently in an interview that president Putin wants Ukraine and that he needs Ukraine to restore his empire. So I'm guessing you agree that he is at war in some way with the west?

**Antoni Macierewicz:** Yes, of course. I agree. Excuse me, I will speak in Polish, okay, please. (in Polish)

By the translator: So of course, I do agree and there is no doubt, there's no doubt that the current state exceeds what we can call a cold war. Open war is what is going on in Ukraine and this is an aggression that breaks all rules of a civilized world. It breaks the international order in Europe and at the same time, it openly states that Russia – that Russia gives itself the right to change the systems and borders of European countries in that manner, but of course, this is not – this is not everything, because a hybrid war, IT war, does not only include Europe but also the United States of America and it's being executed in a very aggressive way and a very intense way and we've not seen this level of determination in history.

Partially, it's the result of a synthesis between the technical and modern possibilities that we have nowadays and the Russian tradition of – of misleading and introducing disinformation as a fundamental tool of war conducted by Russia.

And finally the third element that one has to mention obviously, because without that, the image wouldn't be complete, is namely what happens for Asia, what happens in North Korea. From the Polish point of view, the activities of North Korea are strictly correlated and connected with Russia plans and aggressive

activities of the Russian Federation. If we don't take this into consideration, we will never understand the scale of aggression and the scale of plans that Russia, for the time being, realizes. This is not cold war anymore and also, the results of the Zapad 17 (ph.) exercises prove that – the Zapad exercises finished two months ago, starting with the Arctic Sea up to the Black Sea, all together with ballistic missile exercises, with Iskander missile exercises that can be equipped with nuclear and also – and not – they did not prepare for defence, they prepared for aggression. So from this point of view, Poland has to accept the assumption that this is not a cold war, but this is the introduction to a hot war.

**Susan Glasser:** (off microphone) brought up that military situation right now, so I want to go back to both of you and talk about in recent days, it's – just yesterday I believe, the \$10.5 billion sale of patriot missiles was approved by the state department to follow up on president Trump's visit. We have reports that the Ukrainian arm sale may finally come through, that the Trump administration is now considering a \$47 million package for Ukraine that would include tank weapons, anti-tank weapons.

So first of all, Minister Klimkin, is that – is that accurate? Do you know expect that the U.S. will step up its presence really in this conflict between Russia and Ukraine? Will we finally be taking this step that's been debated for so long?

**Pavlo Klimkin:** Look, firstly, the whole countering of Russian aggression wouldn't have been possible without solidarity and international support. We started fighting against the Russians, basically with weapons of the 20<sup>th</sup> century against the Russian army fighting with weapons of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It was a fundamental gap between our military forces. In these three and a half years, we've been building up new Ukrainian military forces and it's not just about lethal weapons. So fundamentally for me, what matters, and I'm really serious on that, it's not a slow one (ph.), it's fighting spirit. You know, whenever I talk through our offices and soldiers, what I fundamentally feel is this fighting spirit.

And the second point, our ability to give them all kinds of weaponry of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and it's not just about anti-tank weapons, it's about electronic warfare, it's about drones, it's about counter-weaponry. So what we need is to have all this equipment, to have all this logistical support but also training and we've been having also our U.S. friends, Polish friends, training with our guys together and it's – it's a reciprocal exercise, because we've been giving them our experience, how to fight the Russians.

So it's – it's about (inaudible), it's just not about one piece in this jigsaw, it's not just about (inaudible), it's not just about that, but of course, we've been working on getting more military equipment. We've been getting better, but we need this international support and we will definitely get it.

**Susan Glasser:** So that's a yes, just to be clear for everyone here, you – you now think that the president is going to approve this package?

**Pavlo Klimkin:** I believe that we will definitely get more defensive weapons and military equipment in the future. I can't say, you know, the exact date, but we've been working on that.

**Susan Glasser:** Okay, so I want to – I want to ask everybody here, this is related, the Trump question, it's – it's kind of the elephant in this – in this room so to speak. How much do president Trump's words matter on the ground in Ukraine, on the ground in Poland, on the ground as NATO tries to figure out what to do? You know, we've seen him repeatedly, including just last week, once again, you know, talking in positive terms about president Putin. It suggests that he believes president Putin to count. There's a big debate in Washington and I'm sure around the world, what do we make of those words? So I would love some ground truth from Poland, Washington, Russia and Ukraine, ground truth about president Trump and what his words mean. You can start, yes?

**Antoni Macierewicz:** Okay, I can. (In Polish)

By the translator: I personally, as a Pole and as the minister of national defence, but also millions of millions of Poles, we mostly remember the words that president Donald Trump said in Warsaw on Esquire where the members of the world were uprising, were fighting and he said that the United States will always stand with Poland when any aggression from the east will be a threat and article 5 of the Washington Treaty will be always by the United States respected and executed.

As the minister of national defence, I always want – I also want to say that never ever a president has supported the deployment of NATO and U.S. troops on the eastern flank just like the present administration. It's thanks to this administration actually every single month, we see an increasing number of U.S. troops on the eastern flank and Poland buys the most modern weapons that are able to secure this security in the face of the Russian threat. The practice of the administration of president Trump is the same like the words that he said in the face of millions of Poles in Warsaw in July this year and those words, for us, are credible.

**Susan Glasser:** Senator Shaheen, are those the words you think about when you think about president Trump and Russia?

**Jeanne Shaheen:** Well, I would point out that the European – what is now the European deterrence initiative actually began under the Obama administration. So those troops who were headed for Poland before the – the change of

administration, which I think, has been very important and I was in Poland in February and heard how much the Poles appreciated having that reassurance in country. So I do think that was very important.

I think however that it's important as we all know to have the United States on the same page from the president through the state department through the department of defence and what we've had from our current president is confusing messages about where he is on Putin and Russia. That has not been – it's been contradicted, I think, some of the – his initial comments on NATO, on the importance of the EU. We're not supported by Vice President Pence, by Secretary Mattis, by the establishment, but it sends a confusing message to the world and also to Vladimir Putin about what our real intentions are in a way that could allow for a miscalculation from Putin about how we would respond to certain aggression.

So I think in that respect, it's not helpful as we look at how we address what's going on in Europe, what's happening in Ukraine, where – you know, the United States have been very supportive of Ukraine's independence and very opposed to Russian action in Crimea and in the Donbass. So getting everybody on the same page is very important and it's a continuing challenge.

**Susan Glasser:** What does it mean on the ground to have president Trump sending conflicting message, Minister Klimkin?

**Pavlo Klimkin:** Yes, so when – when we're fighting in Ukraine, of course, we're fighting for us, for our future, how we understand it and we understand it as European and democratic Ukraine, but at the same time, ideally, we're fighting not only for the eastern flank of the transatlantic community but for the whole transatlantic community itself, as a part of this community. So support for Ukraine is in a way absolutely natural and Ukraine became in a way, an indispensable ally not only for the U.S. where we always enjoyed bipartisan support, but for the whole transatlantic world.

And I met, answering directly your point, President Trump three times, two times with the president, once bilaterally and his message was always a message of clear – clear solidarity, you know, “We're with you, we're with you, with Ukrainians” and I perceive this message as total support for Ukraine and for our fight, whether it's on security, whether it's on support for our reforms and fundamentally there should be just one clear point, you can't go to Russia only from the point of strength because otherwise, you can't count all kind of Russian war against the western world, you can't fight all this propaganda and you can't fight basically the way how Russia broke all the international law and trust, because before the war, before the occupation of Crimea and Donbass, the basic international model was based on international law and trust and interest. Now, international law is not there, trust is not there. What is left? Basically the

interest and to such countries like Russia and maybe it's not Russia, but the Kremlin regime. You can only talk from the point of strength because they don't understand any other language.

**Susan Glasser:** So Vladimir, how does it play inside Russia itself? We had a very interesting conversation before we came out here about this question of how much Russians themselves are paying attention to this whole conversation about president Putin and the west?

**Vladimir Milov:** Just let me finish this conversation about Trump, because actually we suffered a terrible blow in the past 12 months. When we're promoting the western democratic values, we always offered western countries as a role model, as an example. How do we build a normal society in Russia? Well, take a look. There, it exists and in the past 12 months, it became much more difficult because basically people look at this and say, "But they elected essentially the same guy, ours and what's the difference?" and particularly when mister – it's far more important at times what president Trump doesn't say and who he is and how he behaves than certain official statements that he occasionally makes on Ukraine, Poland, Eastern Europe or whatever. He never ever said a bad word about Vladimir Putin who deserves this in the first place. Never ever. Not a single bad word, neither during his campaign nor during his presidency.

Look, Russians probably have a better capability to read behind the lines than most nations in the world, you know. So we clearly understand the message, we clearly understand the message. It's there, right. Not to mention speaking about NATO being obsolete and Europeans not spending enough on defence and we are forced to spend more to defend you at our expense and stuff like that.

This is music to Kremlin's ears and this is actually – and a lot – in the eyes of a lot of people in Russia who pay attention, this is extremely destructive, but the good news I have to say is that a lot of people perceive these headlines of like 90% support for Putin which we've been reading for the past three and something years, after the Crimea, is at face value, like everybody loves you and he enjoys universal support on whatever he does.

Not exactly so, because for instance, even the same pollsters which gave Putin great support of Russians, they say that there was a sharp drop in the overall interest in foreign policy in these whole geopolitical games. There's a very clear demand from people to refocus on the Russian domestic affairs which are in dire straight. We have the most difficult economic crises since the collapse of the Soviet Union, but on television, they continue to talk about Ukraine, continue to talk about the European Union, Catalonia, United States, Syria, whatever. This raises a lot of discontent.

So on the ground, actually things are not what they seem on the surface and there's a clear demand from the society to refocus on the domestic issues and fix them which is something that the government is not doing and this is something that gives steam to Alexi Navalny's presidential campaign. We might talk about it a little bit later.

**Susan Glasser:** Well, you mention Navalny's campaign which you're running, but he's not going to be allowed to run, so how is that going to --

**Vladimir Milov:** This is not the question, that's not the question. This is what Putin wants you to think, that he will never step down from power, he will be forever and Navalny will never be allowed to run. Both formulas are not true. There's a clear legal pattern forward, how to register Navalny. This law which ban him from running, it's unconstitutional. As a matter of fact, this law was declared unconstitutional by the Constitutional Court more than a dozen times on different provisions, but still, the reputation of this law is disastrous. He sentenced criminal sentence was already overturned, word by word, a similar sentence by the European Court for human rights and the Russian Supreme Court and we will make them happen again.

So there is a legal – a legal way to get him registered, but we have to fight for it. It's a matter of – it's a matter of constant fight.

**Susan Glasser:** And so how do you explain the opposition candidacy of Ksenia Sobchak, is that a story that will be sufficient to bring people out to the polls in March if Navalny is not allowed to run?

**Vladimir Milov:** You show a picture of like some open military conflict of like a helicopter flies and it shoots some false targets, you know, so they – so somebody fires an anti-aircraft missile, it's more likely to hit the false target than the helicopter itself. This is what Ksenia Sobchak is all about.

**Susan Glasser:** Okay, Minister Klimkin, I want to make sure we bring in – do you want to have a quick intervention here, sir? Okay, I do want to bring in our audience in just one second. Let me ask you quickly, there is a proposal out there, it's not clear how serious yet for peacekeepers and to make this new step in the Ukraine conflict. Is that a serious effort in your view and is it in president Putin's interest to do something like that and to end the conflict before the election?

**Pavlo Klimkin:** No, it's just another – it's just another attempt to do some sort of a camouflage move or operation.

**Susan Glasser:** So it's like Ksenia Sobchak, is that the Ksenia Sobchak –

**Vladimir Milov:** We have an experience with Russian proposals on peacekeepers and other frozen conflicts, all of them were disastrous, so never trust this guy who is the president of Russia.

**Susan Glasser:** Is that your view too?

**Pavlo Klimkin:** Look I don't know how dangerous Ksenia Sobchak is for the Russian presidential elections, but the trick behind Putin's idea on peacekeepers is really dangerous, because the idea itself is really worthwhile discussing, it's a serious idea, but Putin's narrative behind it is to legitimize the Russian protectorate, it's to stop talking to Russia – to Russian proxies on the ground, it's to create a kind of bodyguard nation for the OACE which would basically create a total stalemate on the ground. The idea is to put these peacekeepers only on the Dutch line which would freeze up the whole situation and create another border. The whole occupied territory would be nowhere and the uncontrolled part of the Ukrainian-Russian border, where we've been having continuous inflow of regular troops, weaponry, re-ammunition and mercenaries will be out of control.

So it's a very dangerous truck in the sense of saying, Ha ha, you want peacekeepers? They're not real peacekeepers, they're quiet bodyguards but for that, you need to basically to freeze up the situation, you need to start talking to our proxies, to our protectorate, but Putin doesn't care about Donbass at all. The whole idea is about Ukraine and the idea is to create out of the Donbass pretext a sort of federalization of Ukraine to fragment and to weaken up Ukraine, to grant a quasi-federalization with its rights for the decisions of the central government. So no foreign policy, no economic policy, no different policy, basically nothing. A kind of you know, weak area where Russia would be able to steal everything. So peacekeepers are fine in itself, but not along the narrative presented by the Russians.

**Susan Glasser:** So I see a lot of head nodding, but we want to get to our audience a swell. So if you have something quickly to add, on this point.

**Jeanne Shaheen:** Let me just real quick say that I applaud Kirk Balker's (ph.) efforts in this area. I think it's important for us, but what's being proposed by the Russians is a total non-starter, I totally agree with both of you.

**Antoni Macierewicz:** Absolutely. (Words in Polish)

By the translator: Absolutely. A very short message. The message was I agree.

**Susan Glasser:** Alright, here we go, we'll take Jamie Kirchick (ph.) there and then we'll –

Question: Thanks, Jamie Kirchick from the Brookings Institution (ph.). Primarily for Senator Shaheen but anyone else can take it. Do you think the Russians got what they wanted in Donald Trump?

**Jeanne Shaheen:** A short question. I don't think we know the answer to that yet. I can tell you that, as I said, one of the things that's happened in response to what they did is they've united the congress and they certainly weren't anticipating that and I do think that, as we hear more and more of their meddling and spying in Catalonia and the EU with – or the U.K. with Brexit, as we hear what they tried to do in France, I think it's not yet clear what they might have done in Germany, there's a growing backlash in a way that also unites the west as we haven't seen in sometime on Russia and I think that may actually undermine or beat the start of undermining what Putin is trying to do.

**Susan Glasser:** Any other takers on that? Sir, you've been very patient here.

Question: (In Russian)

By the translator: Thank you. I'm Michael Bociurkiw (ph.). I'm a former spokesman for the OACE special monitoring mission to Ukraine, so I spent a lot of time on both sides of the contact line. It now looks like the so-called conflict is turning into a slow burn, you know, frozen conflict, diplomatic toolbox, it seems to me empty in terms of finding a solution. Now that things have gone on for so long and in fact, it now looks like the rebels are targeting the Donentz water filtration station, where there's chlorine stored, it now looks like they were able to get coal out of Dumbass and sell it to places like Poland according to reports.

What is it that will really make Russia -- the Russian-backed rebels feel the burn? Will it be increased sanctions? Will it be other targeted measures because it does look like it's going to stay for quite some time, and perhaps this is for Minister Klimkin and anyone else who can. Thank you.

**Pavlo Klimkin:** It's again a total mythology. There are no independent fighters for, you know, Donbass independence, for – no. They are a kind of gangs or a bunch of gangs of criminals and semi-criminals, fully controlled by Russian military and special services, buoyant (ph.). So the whole batch of actions should be targeted against Russia itself, not against Donbass. In Donbass, we have almost humanitarian – humanitarian and environmental catastrophe because a considerable number of coal mines are now filled with water. You mentioned yourself that water supply is targeted and the electrical supply is targeted, but they don't care because they fundamentally are involved in all kinds of smuggling and all kinds of grey and black operations.

So what we have to do is to target Russia with more political pressure and solidarity, definitely with more sanctions, but we don't have shared narrative for that, but also what I've told, with all kinds of this hybrid warfare against the west where there should be a coordinated answer on how to counter all the threats. Otherwise, it would be, you know, Russia has been handling insecurity like a kind of commodity on the stock exchange. Here is Georgia, here is Donbass, Syria, you know, North Korea. The next time, it will be something else. Without a coordinated counter and offensive effort, there would be no way to sort out Donbass and other places which are burning as you said.

**Susan Glasser:** Okay, let's get a few more here. Alina?

Question: Thank you. Alina Polyakova (ph.), Brookings Institution. We haven't talked about sanctions exclusively. I think Senator Shaheen, you're correct that Russia has become the bipartisan issue in congress which was not really expected by the Russians or I think anybody else frankly, but you know, have sanctions actually have the kinds of policy outcome that was intended vis-à-vis the Russians? The legislation that passed and that president Trump signed, it seems like the White House is basically nothing to implement those sanctions. So I would like to take – hear your view, Senator, on what – how the congress can actually pressure the White House to follow on and on the other hand, if sanctions are the only policy tool that we actually have at the transatlantic level and have the right outcome that was intended?

**Jeanne Shaheen:** Well, I think the sanctions have not yet worked in the way we hoped them to. I think the administration has been slow to implement those and congress needs to hold their feet to the fire to do that and I think there's a growing awareness in congress about that. I think in addition to the sanctions, we're seeing a number of actions that were talked about yesterday and earlier today with respect to NATO and what NATO is doing and the positioning of troops in the Baltics and Poland on continued support for Ukraine and what's happening there.

So I think we have a number of other things that we should be doing and that we are doing to address Russian aggression. The area where I think we have the most to do and where I think we're still developing a coordinated response is in the area of cyber and disinformation and one of the challenges and I've been struggling with this. I introduced legislation earlier in the year that would address our Foreign Agents Registration Act because we've seen RTE and Sputnik (ph.) in the United States spreading disinformation directly from the Kremlin without any warning to American citizens about who is paying for it and whether this information is really accurate.

And we've been struggling with that, because in a free society, where we believe in our constitutional right to free speech, the Russians have been very effective

at taking advantage of that. And so we've got to continue to think about how to respond to that and how to address the Russian propaganda which – which we did a pretty good job of during the cold wars. We're talking about the cold war, we had a whole apparatus to address that and that's all been dismantled and so we're really starting again. We're trying to figure out how best to respond.

**Susan Glasser:** So there's head nods here and I think we'll take a couple of questions at a time now given that I see so many hands up still. You, sir, I promised, David Kramer and you, so these three, okay.

Question: Andrew Wichhauser (ph.) Russia program. There is all sorts of phrasing this, but very simply because of time, how far do you think there will be changes if – by far means if Putin wins a further term in office, by which I mean how far will it deteriorate? Thank you.

Question: David Kramer, Florida International University. My question is for you, Vladimir. Putin's greatest export I would argue is corruption, but in order to export it, we import it in the west, but also his circle keeps its money in many respects in the west. How vulnerable is Putin and his circle if we actually really targeted these assets and went after them in a serious way?

Question: Thank you. (inaudible) from Georgia. The hybrid war in my country has been started 25 years ago. It was before the Putin, it was Yeltsin's time. Then in the Putin's time, it's just Russia just advanced this technology. 2008, it was direct aggression in Georgia and it was followed by a reset. Reset was following by Ukraine and after Ukraine, it still took some time until the west gained this understanding that Russia is a real threat and today, Russia pays political price for its aggression in Ukraine, not for Georgia, but it's also good that it starts to pay for Ukraine, but what I'm really afraid of, that tomorrow if the Kremlin regime is so wise to change his mask and change Putin with a more pleasant face, the west still fall in love and start a new flirt with Russia, which will be a disaster for our countries. That's why we're talking about a rapprochement and the post-Putin era. I think we have to take into consideration that security guarantees for the countries to sacrifice for democracy is crucial (ph.). So tell me please if I'm wrong.

**Susan Glasser:** Okay, so do you want to try – any of you?

**Antoni Macierewicz:** (In Polish)

By the translator: Yes, I would like to say two sentences. So first of all, one has to be clear that no Russian ruler for many years, tens of years actually if not longer, did not lead to such a backwards movement of the Russian interest like the aggressive posture of Putin. Starting with the 17<sup>th</sup> century for Russia, the fundamental of its empire was Ukraine. Putin lost Ukraine forever. What

happened between Ukraine and Russia resulted in a situation that Ukraine as an independent country created itself in a stable and in a way, forever different than Russia. This means a deep geopolitical Russian change.

Second of all, starting with WWII, all Russian rulers were mostly afraid of a situation in which NATO and U.S. troops would be close to their borders. Putin let to such a situation because of his aggressive policy and this shows that the only effective way to counteraction Putin is a broad portfolio of tools. This, that you mentioned, as hitting his financial means, what you said also, touch – hitting him via sanctions that would decrease the economic development, but what is most important is a military reaction because Russia is afraid of the fact that their power will be stopped with the power of the free world. Thank you.

**Pavlo Klimkin:** Maybe not on this point, maybe it would be a good idea for you to go to Sochi (inaudible) and ask Putin about how he sees his political legacy. It's not about, you know, figuring it out here in Halifax, but I believe it's pretty straightforward. It's not about, you know, very difficult criminology. He sees Russia as a special area, a kind of success of empire with a special set of values. All empires normally control the territory and the people. They have spheres of influence and they talk to other empires to decide the fate of the world. It's exactly, you know, the sense of how Putin sees the future for Russia. In what way he's able to reach his role in a different one, because you started talking about the cold war, in all the cold war, there were no attempts to meddle in elections in the west. There were no attempts to print propaganda on an industrial scale. It was Russian Soviet propaganda, definitely, we all remember it, but a completely different one and there were no attempts to create the whole hybrid warfare, but I believe Russia will be able and willing as far as to deliver this point. Empire control of its territory and people, it's fair for influence and talking to other empires in the world, very simple, unfortunately.

**Susan Glasser:** Do you want to answer David's question, Vladimir?

**Vladimir Milov:** Yes, I might touch also on the presidential election thing, I think Putin doesn't have really a good scenario of extending his mandate for another six years because again, since the Crimean annexation, we've been living under the notion that he enjoys like 90% support, how much, you name it, right, but this is all opinion polls. It's a big question where it's credible or not. So what he needs from this election is a mandate that actually proves that yes, he's got a supremacy and nobody else can compete with him. Already this scenario doesn't work because if he allows Navalny into the race, there will be a real contested election and a lot of trouble for him. If he bans Navalny and chooses to run against three elderly gentlemen, toothless, being around for 25 years plus Ksenia Sobchak, this is – this will be a joke. This will not be serious and a lot of people, including the establishment, will get (ph.)

So, and on the other hand, the movement that I represent is arguably the strongest bottom up policy movement in a quarter of a century, since 1991 essentially. You see that geographically, it spreads all over, more than 100 cities in Russia, cities that were never on the political map in our country. So we will – we're committed to tearing him down from the pedestal. He may extend his mandate, but there will be a lot of trouble for him and you probably have seen it in pictures from Moscow street rallies where we have a lot of riot police blocking Turiskawa (ph.) and thousands of people protesting, regardless that the rally is forbidden. So he's – his quiet life has ended, despite the fact that he still probably most likely will extend his mandate, but we're committed to actually deprive him of his living.

Now David's question, importantly, import of corruption exists because of demand. Many people become very wealthy by accommodating all this corrupt capital, not only from Russia. I have been asking myself this question many times. Why is that that the west is so concerned about Putin, but is actually not doing anything to target this corrupt capital there? Now my version is very simple. Because this will send a bad signal to all the corrupt folks from these other autocratic regimes. If they came after Russians, they might come after you name it, right.

So I think this – this is reason why it will indeed be a big trouble, although Putin and his cronies started to relocate capital to places like Singapore, Emirates, Hong Kong, whatever, but this will be indeed a blow, but I don't see it likely taking place because of the reasons I just mentioned.

**Susan Glasser:** Alright, Senator Shaheen, I think we're about to get – and a final question from Julia Ioffe if we have 30 seconds.

**Jeanne Shaheen:** I just wanted to add to that, I think it's not just that, and I think you're right, David, we need to take a look at that, shutting down that money that's being laundered through legitimate firms and institutions in the United States and the west, but one of the problems is there are too many people making a lot of money that way and that that's one of the challenges with addressing it.

**Susan Glasser:** Okay, final question and then we'll get our panel for a final lightning round or we'll get in trouble.

Question: Hi, Julia Ioffe of the Atlantic. Thank you for this excellent panel. This is a question for the Polish Minister, Mr. Macierewicz. Do you have any comment on the Polish march that we saw or the big rosary event to kind of pray the Muslim migrants away from Poland? To what extent do things like this fit into the European project and to what extent do they play into Vladimir Putin's

propaganda about resurgent kind of nationalist that flirts – nationalism that almost flirts with neo-Nazism? Thank you.

**Antoni Macierewicz:** (In Polish)

By the translator: I'm very pleased that you highlighted this Putin element in the paroles (ph.). Yes, this was Russian provocation. As you know out of 60,000 great Polish patriots, that showed their pride to regaining independence in this march, it was Putin, I agree with you and it goes to the Putin direction and in this march were a couple of people that – who held banners with mottos that were never said, because in Poland, you never find paroles that for example, “White power is to rule in Poland”, this is absurd. This is way of thinking that never ever was present in Poland, but in Russia, around Putin, such paroles were really present and of course, it's clear that everyone in Poland condemns this unanimously, because this was Russian provocation, aiming at a depreciation of the Polish patriotism in the eyes of the west. Luckily unsuccessfully.

**Susan Glasser:** I think we're going to end it on the note of Poland instead of Russia, but I want to thank you, Minister. I want to thank you, Minister, Senator, Vladimir Milov and all these fantastic questions. Thank you very much.

(applause)