

# MUTUAL SECURITY ON HOLD? RUSSIA, THE WEST, AND EUROPEAN SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

## *EVENT TRANSCRIPT*

On June 16, 2014, the Global Europe Program hosted a roundtable discussion moderated by **Christian Ostermann**, Director of the Global Europe Program, with a keynote by **Zbigniew Brzezinski**, former National Security Advisor, and comments by **Wolfgang Ischinger**, Distinguished Wilson Center Scholar and Chairman of the Munich Security Conference, and **Steven Pifer**, former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine and Director of the Arms Control and Non-Proliferation Initiative at the Brookings Institution. The discussion focused on the challenges facing mutual security and the European Security Architecture in the wake of the crisis with Ukraine and Russia, and what needs to be done to move forward.



**Jane Harman:**

Good morning, I'm Jane Harman the President and CEO of the Wilson Center and, as I always say, a recovering politician. It is not a 12-step program, but I'm very happy and fortunate to be in this role. I do want to recognize U.S. Ambassador to Egypt Robert Beecroft. Welcome, sir.

And to underscore the title of today's event, which is "Mutual Security on Hold? Russia, the West, and European Security Architecture," this conversation could not come at a more important time with events in Ukraine looming large on the global agenda. I was thinking about it earlier, and I suppose one piece of good news about the assault of the ISIS extremist organization in Iraq is that Russia is distracted. What is Russia distracted by? Ukraine, and its disintegrating relations with Europe and the U.S. The downing of a military transport plane in East Ukraine on Saturday has created outrage in Kiev. The Russian embassy there was substantially damaged by an angry mob. Fortunately, the event was diffused by the Foreign Minister of Ukraine, although a comment he made there has obviously gone viral.

At any rate, no one really believes that Russia isn't meddling and fomenting some instability in Eastern Ukraine and that makes it much harder for Petro Poroshenko, the recently-elected president, to stand up an effective, transparent, and corruption-free -- let's try that -- government for the first time in Ukraine's history. I observed the election on the National Democratic Institute (NDI) delegation, led by Madeleine Albright. We had a chance right before it to meet with the leading candidates, and Poroshenko certainly said the right things about the leadership he hopes to provide for Ukraine, and it is my personal wish that he's able to be successful.

Today's event is really -- although Ukraine will be a focus -- to celebrate the role of the Munich Security Conference and other organizations like the OSCE and the Wilson Center, who pay careful attention to Russia and other major security challenges. The Wilson Center has invested in these issues for 40 years. Ambassador George Kennan and others founded the Kennan Institute in 1974. It's the Center's oldest program. And our Global Europe Program, led by Christian Ostermann, who is moderating today's panel, is the home of our newest distinguished scholar, who was the co-moderator of the OSCE's Ukrainian National Dialogue, Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger. We have 1,400 scholar alumni worldwide from our Kennan Institute, and 100 of them are on the ground right now in Ukraine. In fact, I met several of them and three of them work in a small office that we still have in Kiev.

So, who better to keynote our program than someone who knows a lot about this region? Ambassador Zbigniew Brzezinski. Zbig and I worked together -- I didn't work for him, but I worked in a parallel; he was the big-shot, I was the small-shot -- in the Carter White House in another century when somehow the problems seemed a little easier, other than hostages in Iran, and a few other things. But Zbig has continued to think carefully about the strategic challenges in the world and has, in my view, written some of the most important books that give the rest of us tools to think about those. During his tenure in the Carter White House, he managed the normalization of relations with China, the signing of SALT II, the brokering of the Camp David Accords, the encouragement of dissidence in Eastern Europe, and the fallout from the 1971 Iranian Revolution, although that didn't resolve until immediately after President Carter left office. He's currently the senior research professor at Johns Hopkins, but I actually think he's the second-most important member of his family, after Mika.

After Zbig's talk, Former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Steve Pifer will make some comments. Steve and I testified together a few weeks ago before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which is focused intently on what strategies could be successful in Ukraine.

But before any of that happens, let me introduce Wilson Scholar Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger, who will talk a bit more about the Munich Security Conference's most recent anniversary volume. Wolfgang has chaired the Munich Security Conference since 2008, following a very successful career in Germany's foreign service where he was a Deputy Foreign Minister, Ambassador to the U.S. during the 9/11 period, and then Ambassador to the U.K. The book that he produced, which was released at this past February's conference, includes chapters written by various folks. I was honored to write the chapter on Nunn Lugar, and last year to be involved in a celebration of Senator Sam Nunn for his enormous contributions in the area of nuclear security. The Conference each February is *the* security event in the world. Our Congress sends a major delegation there, and I think I'm up to year 14 attending it.

One last thing about Wolfgang before I introduce him. Among his other extraordinary accomplishments, he is of course a grandfather, but he's also a father of a nine-year-old, and so I've been waiting, Wolfgang, to wish you happy Father's Day. Please welcome Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger.

**Wolfgang Ischinger:**

Thank you so much, Jane. And thank you, Zbig and Steve, and of course Christian, for allowing us to have this session here this morning. Both Jane Harman and Zbig Brzezinski were of course participating once again, after many previous sessions, at the Munich Security Conference earlier this year. And I remember that you, Zbig, participated in a session on Ukraine at a moment when many of us were still considering Ukraine a problem of Ukrainians. And of course now it has become a problem of not only European, but global dimensions, and we'll talk more about that. So, thank you for allowing me just to make a few brief remarks.

I want to present to you this book. There are a few copies of it outside in the hall, and there is also a sheet where you can order a copy from a U.S. distribution company. It's actually, if I may say very modestly, a really good book. I know of very few other collections of essays that offer such a comprehensive overview of foreign policy and global affairs. We have in this book contributions -- and I'll just give you a few names -- from Igor Ivanov, Chuck Hagel, John Kerry, Helmut Schmidt, Bill Cohen, Senator McCain, Sam Nunn, Joe Nye, Jim Hoagland, Jim Stavridis, NATO Secretary General Rasmussen, but also non-Americans, like Klaus Naumann, Carl Bildt, and of course, most importantly, Jane Harman. So, buy the book. It's worth reading it. There are some real gems in the book. And I'm proud that we worked on it for almost a year to come up with something on the anniversary of Munich.

For those of you who have not had the chance to be in Munich, let me just make one comment about the Munich Security Conference. It is at its core a transatlantic event. There are not many events around the world annually where you will find up to 10 active U.S. Senators and a number of members of the House in one place for two days, all together. That's a rare thing to see. I've checked with many of my American diplomatic colleagues and it's something that doesn't happen very often. So there's strong participation not only by all U.S. administrations since the 1960s, but by those in the Congress who lead on foreign policy -- this is a huge asset for the Conference.

The Conference was founded by Ewald von Kleist -- for those of you who don't know, he was (until he passed away last year) the last surviving member of the group of people who tried to assassinate Adolf Hitler in 1944. And he had quite a story to tell about how he escaped death, and how unfortunately the attempt in 1944 failed.

Just one or two words about our topic before I hand over to our keynote speaker, Dr. Brzezinski. I had this opportunity to spend a few weeks in Ukraine on behalf of the OSCE chairman-in-office during the month of May leading up to the presidential elections. I have to tell you that I did not meet many Separatists, and I tried very hard. I went all over the country, and I found that there was huge dissatisfaction, enormous dissatisfaction by many citizens with the conduct of their own government over the last decade or so, because of corruption, because of lack of unity; either there was somebody from the East running the country from an Eastern point of view, or there was somebody from the West running the country from a Western point of view, et cetera. But I did not encounter a great deal of support for the idea that Ukraine should be carved up. Neither, by the way, did I find a lot of fascism or anti-Semitism, which is something that Russian propaganda has tended to suggest over the last period. So we need to be careful that we don't let ourselves be driven in the wrong direction.

Second point, and I expect that Dr. Brzezinski and Ambassador Pifer will correct me if I'm wrong -- my view is that Russian action on Ukraine has not been an action motivated by strength and a strategic sense, but more out of weakness, and in a way almost out of a sense of panic that certain things were sort of drifting apart that Russia thought was important for them. My Russian friend Dmitri Trenin, who represents the Carnegie Endowment in Moscow, has recently said Russia has three options now. Unfortunately, the only good option is the least likely one. He said the first option the Russians have is self-improvement, self-reliance, more democracy. That's not very likely. The second option is that Russia will tend to rely more and more on military options, certainly not a big war, but continue to foment unrest in Ukraine and maybe in other crisis spots in Europe and beyond. And the third option for Russia, as Dmitri put it, is to leave the West and to go war with China, which they've already tried in a certain way, but that would be tantamount to Russia surrendering to China, and would also not be such a good option. So I tend to agree with Dmitri. Russia has a problem, and has created a problem by the very behavior which we have seen.

Finally, let me say that transatlantic coordination on how to deal with Ukraine on the sanctions issue and beyond has actually been relatively good. We have stayed together. On the day I left Kiev, I asked the Prime Minister of Ukraine if he had one wish, what would it be from the West? And he said to me, and I think I'm authorized to quote him, he said "Ambassador Ischinger, there is one thing you need to do. Make sure that everybody understands that what we need is Western cohesion. Don't allow yourselves to be falling apart once again within Europe, and between Europe and the United States." We've actually been quite good at it, but it's not been easy, and one of the reasons why it's not easy, if you look at certain elements of the German and European public, is the loss of trust created by the "Snowden NSA Affair." That is a handicap currently, and I keep saying it while I'm here in this country, you shouldn't think that it will simply blow over. It continues to be a serious handicapping factor for European governments trying to work with the United States in handling these types of emergencies.

Last point, you might think looking at Ukraine that this ambitious title, *Towards Mutual Security* was maybe an illusion. I believe -- and I'm interested in hearing what our speakers will have to say -- that even if this is now a vision that is more remote than we thought two or three years ago it would be, it's still an appropriate vision for a future where Europe is not going to be as divided as it is currently between the West and Russia, but where we will have a Europe whole and free, including with a security architecture that works, and with a kind of relationship of mutual trust that would help us to renew relations with Russia in months and years to come, hopefully. With this, I stop and hand over to our keynote speaker, Dr. Brzezinski.

**Zbigniew Brzezinski:**

Let me try to discuss the implications for the European security architecture of the Ukrainian problem in the relationship of Russia and the West. What we are seeing in Ukraine, in my judgment, is not a pique but a symptom of a more basic problem: namely, the gradual but steady emergence in Russia over the last 6 or 7 years of a quasi-mystical chauvinism. Putin has taken the lead in this and its content is significant for the totality of Russia's relations with the world, and the West in particular.

Recently, the Russian International Affairs Council, an institution in Moscow composed of very reputable and significant scholars -- not dissidents, but independent thinkers, and these do exist these days in Moscow -- in collaboration with RIA Novosti and the Russian think tank the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy have come up with, in their joint publication, an article on Russia's national identity transformation and new foreign policy doctrine. It reports in some detail on the process of creating a wholly new conceptual framework for defining Russia's relationship with the world. A relationship that the Russians feel is needed because of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the partial disintegration of the long-established Russian empire.

It's a longish report but it's worth reading for those who are interested in international affairs. It deals particularly with several key concepts that this new worldview contains. A view of the world created by the need that Russians around Putin and Putin himself have felt for a more comprehensive interpretation of what is the nature or Russia's position in the world and its relationship with the world and the West in particular. It's in this context that the Ukrainian issue then becomes significant.

The key concepts of this report are four: first, that of, and I quote, "a divided people"; secondly, the theme of "protecting compatriots abroad"; third and more broadly, "the Russian world" or "Ruski Mir" in Russian; fourth, the importance of acknowledging and sustaining, embracing and promoting "the Great Russian civilization". I mention this because I think it would be an error to think that Crimea and Ukraine are just the products of a sudden outrage. They are to some extent in terms of timing, but it would have been much smarter for Russia to have had what has happened recently occur about ten years from now instead. By then Russia would be stronger, economically more solid.

But it happened and these concepts are important. A divided people is the point of departure for the chauvinistic claim that Russia's sovereignty embraces all Russians. Wherever they are. And that has, for anyone familiar with European history prior to World War II, some ominously familiar sounds. It leads, of course, to the concept of protecting compatriots abroad. And that has special meaning for those countries which do have Russian ethnic nationals living in their society and who border on Russia. The divided people and the protection of compatriots abroad then raises the question of the Russian world. And the notion here is of an organic integral unity between all Russians, irrespective of their territorial location. And that territorial location can be altered favorably by reuniting the Russian people. Think of the Baltic States.

Last but not least, the conviction that Russia is not part of the Western civilization. It is also not part of China. It is not part of the Muslim World. Russia itself, it is asserted, is a great civilization. The notion of a "world civilization" emphasizes a set of principles, some of which are not unfamiliar to our society, such as, for example, strong commitment to a particular religion, but much stronger than in the West where religion is part of a more complex social arrangement. The notion that the great Russian civilization stands for certain basic values, not only religious, but in terms of interpersonal relationships, to some extent. For example, condemning some of the changes in the relationship between the sexes and within the sexes that are now taking place in the world. In effect, Russia protects the integrity of certain basic

beliefs that have characterized Christianity, but in the Russian view, that Christianity is now betraying its fundamentals. So this is a comprehensive outlook. An ambitious outlook which justifies, then, the conclusion that Russia is a world power. And nothing has hurt Putin more in the international dialogue with the West than the words of President Obama, who credited Russia with being a significant regional power. He didn't have to say more in order to score a point that hurt.

Understanding the doctrinal framework of Putin's vision is an important point of departure for dealing with the Ukraine issue. The Ukraine issue is not a sudden pique, but a symptom, as I have said, of a basic problem: the emergence of the policies packaged within the larger philosophical framework. What can we, therefore, expect? If Ukraine, in fact, is its manifestation, that problem will be difficult to resolve. And I think it will take some time to resolve. But, of course, resolution of it need not be a unilateral solution if the West has a stake in it. And the stake has to be, then, crystallized into meaningful policy. The Ukraine problem may fade if it is contained. And especially if the Russian increasingly cosmopolitan middle class, which is surfacing, but not dominant currently, becomes politically more important, perhaps repelled by its sense of vulnerability and disappointment in Putin, and at some point assumes a more significant political role when Putin has passed from the stage. But when? There's no way of predicting it. It could be soon. It could be a long time. But also a great deal will depend on whether Ukraine becomes a symptom either of a success or a failure of Putin's point of view. So in brief, the stakes are significant.

In the most immediate sense, the stakes involve, of course, the issue that the use of force in Crimea and the ongoing and sustained effort to destabilize parts of Ukraine pose a threat to the post-World War II notions of international arrangements, and particularly the exclusion of the use of force in resolving territorial issues. That has been a cardinal assumption of the European order after World War II. And Russia has been part of it, including through the treaties that it has signed. But it is now challenging that. That is a significant threat. In a broad sense, an immediate threat. Psychologically at least, but potentially, in view of Crimea, also militarily. To the Baltic States. To Georgia. To Moldova. And more vaguely and directly, but perhaps potentially more dangerous to the others, Belarus. Because Belarus does not have any external protection. The others that I have mentioned do, in varying degrees.

It follows from what I'm saying that the Ukrainian problem is a challenge that the West must address on three levels. We have to effectively deter the temptation facing the Russian leadership regarding the use of force. We have to deter the use of force, simply put. We have to, secondly, obtain the termination of Russia's deliberate efforts at the destabilization of parts of Ukraine. It's very hard to judge how ambitious these goals are. But it is not an accident that in that one single portion of Ukraine in which the Russians actually predominate, the use of force has been sophisticated. The participants in the effort have been well armed. Even with tanks. Certainly with effective anti-aircraft weaponry. All of that is something that even disaffected citizens of a country to which they feel they do not belong would not be storing somewhere in their attic or in their basement. These are weapons provided, in effect, for the purpose of shaping formations capable of sustaining serious military engagements. It is a form of interstate aggression. You can't call it anything else. How would we feel if all of a sudden, let's say, the drug-oriented gangs in the United States were armed from abroad, from our southern neighbor, by equipment which would promote violence on that scale on a continuing basis? So this is a serious challenge. So that is the second objective.

And the third objective is to promote and then discuss with the Russians a formula for an eventual compromise, assuming that in the first instance the use of force openly and on a large scale is deterred and the effort to destabilize is abandoned. That means, in turn, the following. And I will be quite blunt

regarding my own views on the subject. Ukraine has to be supported if it is to resist. If Ukraine doesn't resist, if its internal disorder persists and the state is not able to organize effective national defense, then the Ukraine problem will be resolved unilaterally, but probably with consequential effects that will be destabilizing in regards to the vulnerable states and to the East-West relationship as a whole. And the forces of chauvinism will become more strident. And they do represent the most negative aspects of contemporary Russian society. A kind of thirst for nationalism, for self-fulfillment, gratification of the exercise of power. Something which is not pervasive in the new middle class, which is the longer range alternative.

If Ukraine has to be supported so that it does resist, the Ukrainians have to know the West is prepared to help them resist. And there's no reason to be secretive about it. It would be much better to be open about it and to say to the Ukrainians and to those who may threaten Ukraine that if Ukrainians resist, they will have weapons. And we'll provide some of those weapons in advance of the very act of invasion. Because, in the absence of that, the temptation to invade and to preempt may become overwhelming. But the issue of what kind of weapons is important. And in my view, they should be weapons designed particularly to permit the Ukrainians to engage in effective urban warfare of resistance. There's no point trying to arm the Ukrainians to take on the Russian army in the open field. Thousands of tanks, an army organized for the application of overwhelming force. There is a history to be learned here from urban resistance in World War II and most recently in Chechnya, whose capital persisted for three months in house-to-house fighting. The point is, if the effort to invade was to be successful politically, it would have to incorporate taking the major cities. If the major cities, say Kharkiv, say Kiev, were to resist and street fighting became a necessity, it would be prolonged and costly. And the fact of the matter is, and this is where the timing of this whole crisis is important, Russia is not yet ready to undertake that kind of an effort. It will be too costly in blood, paralyzingly costly in finances. And would take a long time and create more and more international pressure.

Accordingly, I feel that we should make it clear to the Ukrainians that if they are determined to resist, as they say they are – and seemingly they are trying to do so, though not very effectively – we'll provide them with anti-tank weapons, hand-held anti-tank weapons, hand-held rockets, weapons capable for use in urban short range fighting. This is not an arming of Ukraine for some invasion of Russia. You don't invade a country as large as Russia with defensive weaponry. But if you have defensive weaponry and you have access to it and know it's arriving, you're more likely to resist. And hence that acts as deterrence and that, in turn, can permit them more effective operations to terminate some of the violence that is being sponsored on the borders between Ukraine and Russia. That, I think, would help in any case to contain the risk and the temptation to resolve this issue by force of arms. On the Russian side, given the great ecstasy over the Crimean success which was quick and decisive and which encountered no resistance, the temptation to seek its repetition can be quite appealing to a political leader who desperately needs a major success.

However, at the same time we need to engage in some exploration of possible arrangements for a compromise outcome. Especially if it becomes clear to the Russians and to Mr. Putin that either destabilizing Ukraine or taking it by force poses great risks and may not be attainable. Deterrence should be accompanied, therefore, by an effort to engage in dialogue. What should be the formula for such a possible compromise? I think it's relatively simple: Ukraine can proceed with its process, publicly endorsed by an overwhelming majority of the Ukrainian people, of becoming part of Europe. But it's a long process. The Turks have been promised that outcome, and they have been engaging in that process already for 60 years. In other words, it's not done very quickly. Therefore, the danger to Russia is not imminent and the negative consequences are not so destructive.

But at the same time, there should be clarity that Ukraine will not be a member of NATO. I think that is important for a variety of political reasons. If you look at the map, it's important for Russia from a psychological, strategic point of view. So Ukraine will not be a member of NATO. But by the same token, Russia has to understand that Ukraine will not be a member of some mythical Eurasian Union that President Putin is trying to promote on the basis of this new doctrine of a special position for Russia in the world. Ukraine will not be a member of the Eurasian Union, but Ukraine can have a separate trade agreement with Russia, particularly taking into account the fact that certain forms of exchange and trade are mutually beneficial: agricultural products, for example, from Ukraine to Russia; industrial products that Russia needs and are being produced in Ukraine. Not many people realize that some of Russia's best rockets, most of the engines for Russian civil aviation, and some of the rockets used by the United States, are produced in Ukraine. It's a profitable and successful industrial enterprise. And that therefore should be continued under an arrangement whereby Ukraine and Russia have a special treaty.

I think something like this might actually at some point become appealing. And it should be surfaced in the context of an open, not covert, effort to convince the Russians that any use of force will have negative, but enduring consequences for Russia itself. Not involving a threat to Russia's security, but involving rising costs of the assertion of Russia's power at the cost of Ukrainian independence. In my view in that context, NATO should also act somewhat more assertively in reducing the insecurity of those NATO countries that border on Russia and happen to have Russian nationals who constitute on average about 25% of their populations. I speak specifically of Estonia and Latvia. America has committed its military presence there. I would think it would be very productive if, in addition to America, some leading European states, notably Germany, France, and Great Britain, deployed some symbolic forces in these three countries. So that they're there too, and not just Americans. On a regular basis. So that this would reaffirm the fact that NATO stand, together. In international politics, symbolism is as important as decisiveness and can avert the necessity for extreme measures.

Given the current consequences of the very massive expansion of NATO in the last several decades to 28 members, it might be also appropriate in the light of the ongoing experience to take another look at the structure of NATO itself. I have in mind, particularly, a review of the historical paradox involved in the very important Article 5. Article 5 provides for the procedure in undertaking a military response to an aggression directed at it in general or at one or two or more of its members. You doubtless recall that Article 5 has a provision that decisions to engage in hostilities by the alliance have to be unanimous. This, in other words, means that every country has a veto. It was the United States that insisted on this provision when NATO was first formed. It insisted on it in order to obtain popular support for NATO in the American congress from the isolationist portions of the American body politic. They feared that an alliance of this sort would violate the American tradition of no foreign entanglements. Unfortunately today, with 28 members of varying degrees of genuine political commitment to some of the security assumptions of the alliance, the situation has become reversed. It is some of the new allies that may be tempted in certain circumstances to invoke Article 5. A unilateral veto would not entirely prevent NATO from responding, because I am convinced if that were to happen after prolonged debates, much resentment, internal threats, the country concerned would be persuaded to join or de facto ejected out of the alliance.

One possible solution might be simply the adoption of the provision that there will be no veto right in the alliance for sustained, enduring underperformers of jointly agreed commitments. Some members of NATO don't meet their commitments even by remote approximation. And hence their membership in NATO is a free ride all together. Why should a member that doesn't meet NATO commitments

practically in total then have the right to veto the other members' right to engage in collective self-defense? It's an anomaly and potential source of gridlock and confusion. As this crisis is gradually resolved, I hope NATO will take another look at it and will also take a look at the issue of additional new members in NATO more critically. It doesn't follow that a country whose security NATO has an interest in has to be a NATO member. NATO can have an interest in its security, but without having it in NATO. There is some talk of new members in the EU. And perhaps some of these will seek NATO membership, and in recent years some countries have obtained a NATO membership while being territorially remote from the possible conflicts on the East-West dividing line. I think more discretion here may be actually beneficial and some reflection on the subject might in fact enhance NATO credibility and create some pressure on those members who wish to be active members in NATO to do more to meet the commitments they have formally undertaken.

Finally, looking much further ahead, I think that one way or another, with or without a compromise solution, Crimea is going to become a serious economic burden for Russia. There is no way that the kind of economic activity in which Crimea has been able to engage quite profitably -- namely as a major source of tourism and visits and international liners on a large scale coming into its ports and foreign tourists engaging in trade, collection of souvenirs and so forth -- can be sustained. As long as the international community doesn't formally recognize the incorporation of Crimea into Russia, it means that the exploration of the underwater resources within Crimea's territorial confines on the sea cannot be undertaken by international companies because they will be subject to suits from a variety of interested parties. In brief, Russia faces the prospect of the necessity of subsidizing on a significant scale economic activity in Crimea to the benefit of its citizens. Prices have already risen three fold since the incorporation of Crimea into Russia. This situation creates a potentially serious liability for Russia, which already is in a relatively weak economic position.

Beyond that, there is the potential reality that I think will become an enduring fact as Ukraine succeeds: that Russia has generated in Ukraine widespread hostility towards Russia on the part of some 40 million people. Unlike many other Slavs, Ukrainians have not been anti-Russian historically. Ukrainian enmity towards Russia is new, but it is becoming very intense. Ukraine will therefore evolve not only into an enduring problem for Russia in that respect, but represent also the permanent loss of a huge swath of territory, the greatest loss of territory suffered by Russia in the course of its imperial expansion. This may in turn eventually begin to work against this new mythology regarding Russia's place and role in the world, with which I started my presentation. That mythology may be refuted by realities. And this is why I am increasingly hopeful that the new emerging Russian middle class -- realizing that the kind of mythology that Putin has adopted, and which a significant portion of the less educated, more chauvinistic Russians, have absorbed and embraced -- is a road to nowhere. That the real place of Russia as an important country is in Europe, as a major European country. And they will be reminded of that imperative every time they look to the east and ask themselves: What does China mean for the future of Russia? Thank you.

**Christian Ostermann:**

Thank you so much, Dr. Brzezinski, for these brilliant remarks, very clearly laying out your views on Russian motivation and Western actions. We now have the privilege to have comments by Ambassador Steven Pifer, who is the Director of the Brookings Arms Control and Non-Proliferation Initiative, and served for 25 years in the State Department, including as Ambassador to Ukraine from 1998 to 2000. Ambassador Pifer.

**Steven Pifer:**

Thank you very much, and thank you to the Woodrow Wilson Center for inviting me here. It's awfully hard to follow Dr. Brzezinski when he covers such a broad bit of history, or of current history, and he does it in such comprehensive and such terrific terms. So, some of my comments will be merely underscoring points that he made.

And I would agree completely that the thing the West needs to do is support Ukraine. It seems to me that the best rebuke to the Kremlin's policy of the last six months would be if three to four years from now, Ukraine is looking each day more and more like Poland, a normal, democratic, rule of law European country. And I think the West can do things to help make that happen, including in terms of economic support, advice on things like energy diversification, which is going to be a real issue today with Gazprom's decision to reduce the gas flows to Ukraine.

I would second his point about provision of military assistance to Ukraine. Certainly non-lethal assistance makes sense, but light anti-armor weapons and man-portable air defense systems make sense in terms of making sure that the Russian military, which I believe is not eager to go into Eastern Ukraine -- I think they worry precisely about the sorts of urban fighting that Dr. Brzezinski described, and they're not eager for that. But we ought to be providing weapons to the Ukrainian military to in fact affect that calculation. And particularly in the case of man-portable air defense systems, there's almost sort of an obligation for NATO, which over the last 10 years has been running programs to destroy stocks of Ukrainian man PADS.

A second direction is the point of assuring NATO counties, particularly those in Central Europe, who today are much more nervous about Russia, Russian policies, and Russian actions than they were six months ago. The U.S. military has deployed four companies of airborne forces, 150 troops each, to Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. I think that is a good response. The Pentagon says that is persistent, that it will last for up to a year. I think having ground forces like that, which do not have heavy equipment, do not have significant offensive capability, but are a tangible signal of American commitment is important. I would agree it would be useful to have them joined by European forces, for example, a German company paired with the American company in Lithuania, a British company paired with the American company in Poland, a Dutch company paired with the American company in Estonia, to make clear to Russia that the commitment is a NATO commitment; it's not just an American commitment. And again, I think it can be done in a way that would not be provocative, very much like the Berlin Brigade -- British and French counterparts for 30 years, vastly outnumbered by Soviet and East German forces, still managed to keep West Berlin free by their presence.

The third area I think that the West needs to work on, and perhaps needs to work a bit more on, is the question of sanctions on Russia. And the goal of these sanctions should be to change Russian policy. There is evidence that comes in now that suggests that those sanctions, which to date are relatively modest, have had an economic impact on Russia. For example, Russian companies in 2013 were able to sell foreign currency bonds worth about \$43 billion. In January and February, they sold those bonds for about \$6 billion. Since March, they sold zero. So, I think the sanctions are successful in their economic impact, but they have failed in their primary political purpose, which is to affect a change of policy in the Kremlin.

And I worry that the West has not handled the sanctions process well. The last day on which the United States and the European Union announced sanctions together at the end of April, the Russian stock market gained one and a half percent. I would suggest that's not a positive signal for the effect of the

sanctions. On May 2nd, President Obama and Chancellor Merkel said that if Russia interfered with the May 25 presidential elections, there would be sanctions. A substantial portion of the Ukrainian electorate in Donetsk and Luhansk could not participate in that election, because of activities by armed separatists supported by Moscow. We have not seen any punishment for that. And the G7, when they met in Normandy, said that there would be additional sanctions over the course of the next month if Russia stopped being part of the problem. But again, I think we've seen continued problems, including the introduction of heavy weapons on the part of the separatists: tanks, missile launchers, and I think fairly sophisticated air defenses, as evidenced by the recent shoot-down of the Ukrainian Aleutian 76.

And so, I think the West needs to be tougher in terms of imposing costs if we're going to try to encourage the Russians to shift their policy. The last point is -- it does seem to me that, if the Russians are prepared to be a part of the solution, you can see the elements of a compromise. The government in Kiev has talked about decentralization of power, decentralization of political authority, which makes sense. Governors in the regions should be elected, not appointed by the president. They've talked about some status for Russian language, which addresses some of the concerns expressed by those in the East. There's talk of early parliamentary elections, which would be a good step; it would revalidate the democratic legitimacy of the Ukrainian parliament in the way that the May 25 election gave the president a new democratic mandate.

And as Dr. Brzezinski suggested, I think you can see the elements in terms of how Ukraine orients itself in foreign policy, drawing closer to the European Union, but not pursuing NATO. I would try not to ask Ukraine to say no how, no way, never. But you can certainly finesse this issue and make clear to the Russians that NATO is not on the agenda for the foreseeable future. And the most important reason that Ukraine would want to pursue that is not a foreign policy reason, but that would be usually controversial within Ukraine. President Poroshenko is trying to find a way to mend internal divisions. He does not need the controversy that NATO would provoke with Eastern Ukraine.

So I think those are the elements, and I would agree on the case of Crimea, perhaps the way to handle Crimea is to set that aside. It's not going to be addressed early on. My own analytical judgment is it's very hard to see a scenario in which Ukraine is able to regain sovereignty over Crimea, but that does not mean that the West should accept it, and the West should continue a policy of non-recognition until such time, if and when the Ukrainians decide to do something otherwise. But that can be an issue that you perhaps put down the road.

The other pieces here might put together a basis for a compromise that would help mend the divisions within Ukraine, and I think, could be an acceptable way forward. But I think the big question is, at the end of the day, is that still acceptable to Russia? I'm not sure that the Russians are happy just with Ukraine saying no NATO. I think the Russians still are unhappy with the idea that Ukraine wants to draw -- and this is not just the president, but it's also the parliament, and I think, the majority of the Ukrainian people -- that they want to draw closer to the European Union. When you look at the Association Agreement and what that agreement does, if -- and it's a big 'if' -- but if Ukraine implements the EU Association Agreement, it is irretrievably out of Moscow's geopolitical orbit. And I think that still remains a sticking point for the Russians.

**Christian Ostermann:**

Thank you very much, Ambassador Pifer. I want to quickly get to your questions and comments, so get ready. But before we do that, I'd like to give Ambassador Ischinger an opportunity to respond to Dr. Brzezinski's remarks.

**Wolfgang Ischinger:**

Very little to add. Thank you, Zbig, for a brilliant presentation, and thanks, Steve, for your comments. Just a few very brief points I'd like to add from my point of view. First, in a way -- and I mean this only half-cynically -- we can say, thank you, Vladimir Putin, for reminding us that there is a good reason for having NATO. NATO was in the process of getting off the radar screen a little bit of the major European and transatlantic debate. Now, it's back on the radar screen, and that's good.

Second, President Putin has also, by doing what he did, reminded Europeans that there is an overwhelming good reason for trying to get our act together in terms of speaking with one voice, for the EU to be a political actor that can exercise a significant role, as it should, representing 500 million people. And third, I think these events are already reenergizing the debate about how best European countries, including my own, can unburden themselves from too great a dependency on energy imports from Russia. So, that's actually all pretty good.

Third point, when you discuss delivery of support, extension of support, including weaponry, to Ukrainians, the one problem I believe we would run into is that the Ukrainian military is in terrible shape. And that is not the fault of the Russians or of anybody else. It's simply the fact that they have been understaffed, underfinanced, underequipped, and it's not going to be very easy, over the short-term, to make of this rather sorry state of the Ukrainian military something that can work efficiently as a military body.

The next point, deploying NATO forces to Eastern NATO countries, like Poland or the three Baltic states, the new German Defense Minister, Ursula von der Leyen, will be in Washington and I'm sure somebody's going to ask her that question: whether Germany should or could join those who have already taken some steps. The one word of caution I would add is that we should think twice before we violate the promise we made in the context of the NATO-Russia Founding Act almost 20 years ago, when we said that we would not permanently deploy major combat troops in the East among the new NATO members.

Now, I think this can be handled. Sending major combat troops is something that can be interpreted, but sending a smaller force, sending a few airplanes is probably not a major combat force. And I think even symbolic acts would be helpful in the sense that Dr. Brzezinski has suggested. Finally, one point that I believe merits being mentioned: President Putin has not only challenged the European security architecture, as Dr. Brzezinski described it, he has also presented a challenge to the very idea of European integration, to the idea of Europe.

Is it not amazing that not only the post-communist leaders of West European parties, including the Linke in my own country, are traveling to Moscow to conduct discussions with the Russian leadership? That's normal. But it is very surprising, certainly to me, and I'm sure to many in my country, that Marine Le Pen and many other right-wing leaders in Europe have discovered that Vladimir Putin is their hero, the hero of something that rejects overcoming the nation-state that looks for nationalistic leadership. These are strange bedfellows, the European right wing, and President Putin. And in my view, this is a rather fundamental challenge to the very concept of Europe. I'll stop here. Thank you very much.

**Christian Ostermann:**

Thank you so much. Let's go to your question and answers. We'll start with President Harman.

**Jane Harman:**

Thank you all. Zbig, I remember you talking in the cabinet meetings of the Carter White House, and I think it was your warm-up act. This was just magnificent. Thank you very much for coming here. My question is about an organization that got very little mention, but Wolfgang recently spent a lot of time connected to it, and that is the OSCE. The OSCE Secretary-General Lamberto Zannier was here about a month ago, and it was the roundtables in Ukraine that Wolfgang chaired that are credited to some extent with really encouraging Ukrainians to participate in the election. It is true, as Ambassador Pifer said, that unfortunately some in the eastern part of Ukraine couldn't participate, but the turnout was substantial -- above 60 percent, better than our elections. So my question is, could the OSCE, which is a security organization, which includes Russia, but which operates by consensus, play a bigger role in negotiating an outcome here that would be satisfactory both to the West and to Russia, and benefit Ukraine?

**Christian Ostermann:**

Thank you.

**Zbigniew Brzezinski:**

Well, I suppose it could, but probably at this stage, only *sub rosa*. In other words, the discussions were informal and basically not open to the press and conducted in private, because right now we're not at a stage at which it is likely that they could lead to something very positive. But certainly, doors should be open to that. So I think it's desirable.

Could I make just two comments on what else was said earlier? Very briefly on the arms, the ones I'm talking about are defensive, they're for urban warfare. They cannot be used offensively against Russia. So there's really no reason to say that this is provocative to Russia. And it doesn't require a lot of military sophistication to use them, which means that if the military is disorganized -- as you're right to say, Wolfgang, they are -- civilians, who are motivated, can take part in it. And that really works. I mean, I could regale you with some stories about what happened when the Russians tried to storm Grozny, and how surprised they were. And certainly, during World War II, there were examples of urban warfare that endured. So it's a very useful way of simply conveying to the Russians, don't expect an easy walk in, because it's going to be painful, costly, prolonged.

And one more aspect, and this pertains a little bit to what you ask, Jane, namely, the dialogue with the Russians. Right now, the Russians are really in a phase in which they are trying to modernize global support for Western reactionaries, and that's what you referred to. And the interesting thing about the Western reactionaries is that they like the content of what the Russians describe as the Russian global civilization; that is to say, anti-modernistic, and is socially and sexually, reactionary. It's kind of drawn inward, but very self-righteous. And this is what makes the new Western right-wingers all of a sudden the equivalent of the old Western left-wingers, who loved Russian communism. So we're seeing a flip around here. But my guess is that the changing character of Russian society over time, particularly the changing character of the middle class in the big cities, is going to spell the doom of that once two things happen: Putin is not successful in militarily asserting himself; and two, at some point, one way, or another, is no longer the central player.

**Christian Ostermann:**

Thank you. Ambassador Ischinger on OSCE.

**Wolfgang Ischinger:**

I think it remains to be seen whether OSCE could play a role in the actual negotiation of the settlement. Again, I think a lot of that depends on how the Russians approach this. But certainly, if you did have a settlement, it seems to be that OSCE mechanisms, the monitors, could be important in getting ground truth, building confidence on the part of the Ukrainian population that whatever accords worked out will hold.

**Zbigniew Brzezinski:**

If I may, one brief word on that. We had, on the 17th of April, a meeting in Geneva between Secretary of State John Kerry, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, the European Union, and the Ukrainian government. That was so far, unfortunately, only a one-time event and, in my view, it is highly desirable that a second Geneva, Geneva II as we have tended to call it, should take place. And OSCE, I think, is a good organization to support and help implement the kinds of decisions that were taken already in Geneva I, and are still not fully implemented, unfortunately. But so, I do agree that OSCE has a potentially important and continuing role to play in supporting what, at a different level, needs to be hammered out between the U.S., the European Union, the Ukrainians themselves, and of course, the Russian government.

**Christian Ostermann:**

Thank you. Please state your name and affiliation.

**Steve Laramie:**

Steve Laramie, Rand Corporation. A quick comment to Wolfgang, and then a question for Dr. Brzezinski. Wolfgang, that statement that you mentioned regarding troops and so forth, the beginning of that sentence is very important, because it said: as long as the current security situation does not change. Well, it certainly changed when one country invades another and annexes it, and tries to annex it. I think the situation, most people would say, has radically changed; and therefore, Western policy is no longer obligated by that statement. To Zbig, I would say, I want to get your reaction to China. How do you think China looks at this, because they certainly were not very happy with the annexation of Crimea? And what implications do you think that this might have for U.S. relations with China?

**Zbigniew Brzezinski:**

I have to say that, regrettably, in my view, neither China nor America have handled their relationship all that well in the last couple of years. I'm not thinking just of the American press. I'm thinking of some American official pronouncements and actions, such as the pivot speech, which unfortunately, I think, was not well-worded, because its intent was not to give the impression that the United States is committed to the physical, military containment of China, but the emphasis on the pivot, on the reallocation of troops, on the deployment of troops in Australia, which as far as I know is not under the imminent threat of an attack from Papua New Guinea, so it had to be China. We gave the Chinese the impression that we are really sliding into position of siding with whatever neighbor of China has a territorial conflict with China. That's an exaggeration, but that's the way they have interpreted it.

And secondly, on the Chinese side, in the last year or so, there has been a dramatic increase in public pronouncements in the officially controlled and censored press, but also in the statements of particular officials from different parts of the government, and notably the military, extremely hostile to the United States. So, I think this relationship needs some careful tending and correction.

However, on the Russian-American “conflict”, the Chinese have been scrupulously neutral with the effect of, of course, not backing the Russians, who would have wished for such backing. In the UN, the Chinese abstained. So, they did not support the motion that was introduced, but they did not vote against it as the Russians did. It was a kind of in between posture reflecting a preoccupation with their own national interest more than anything else, and incidentally, a posture copied, not much noticed in the American press, by Israel, who is of course, the principal beneficiary of our military assistance, political assistance, and so forth. And they took this neutral position for their own reasons and interests. And so one shouldn't be too surprised that the Chinese did it too.

In the Russian-Chinese relationship, I think what we are seeing is a gradually increasing Russian dependence on China. That 30-years Treaty, by and large, is more advantageous to China than to Russia, even though the Chinese squeezed the Russians into some price concessions, because the fact remains that the major financial investments in order to make this treaty operative are going to be made by the Russians in communications, facilities, pipelines, and so forth. And the Chinese are going to have alternatives in terms of price as soon as Iran opens up, as soon as they reach out to deal with Saudi Arabia, and so forth. And therefore, at some point, the Chinese will be able to go to the Russians and say, “Well, it's very nice, we value this treaty, but you really have to lower the price, because the world price is going down, and we have these options.” And the Russians will have no choice. They'll have to accommodate, which means that the benefits of this treaty will be increasingly favorable to the Chinese, who are at the same time moving into Central Asia, quite visibly and openly.

**Christian Ostermann:**

Thank you.

**Obrad Kesic:**

Thank you, Obrad Kesic, the RS Office for Cooperation Trade and Investment. I have two questions, one pertaining to trust. I think one of the common elements that I picked up on is there's a definite lack of trust of the Russians. And my question is: what makes you think that we can build trust with the Russians -- because it's on the basis of our actions over the previous years, in terms of invading countries, in terms of spying on our own citizens, in terms of illegal detentions, in terms of our own disregard of international law -- what makes you think that we can somehow convince the Russians to sit at a table and trust us if we don't trust them with good reason, given what you have all described? How do we get back to building trust?

And the second question pertains to the cost of doing what you have said. It is clear, in terms of the cost you've laid out for the Russians, but what's the cost in supporting Ukraine for Europe and for the U.S.? How much is that going to cost, and can that be borne, the burden, by the recovering economies of Europe in particular?

**Christian Ostermann:**

Thank you. Who'd like to take that on?

**Steven Pifer:**

Well, I can answer the second question. Ukraine has struck a deal with the International Monetary Fund, and the IMF has agreed to provide Ukraine \$17 billion over two years, provided -- and this is a very important ‘provided’ -- provided that Ukraine does the necessary reform steps that are required in the program. And then, the way the IMF doles out the money is, every several months there is a review.

If Ukraine has met the conditionalities it's agreed to in terms of reform steps, then they get the next dole out of money.

It was interesting -- there have been a lot of IMF missions to Ukraine over the last 20 years. And usually, the mission would go there and sit down with Ukraine and say, here's the problem, and it would be the IMF's mission saying, here's what you need to do. What I understand was, in March, when the IMF mission went to meet with the new acting government for the first time in dealing with independent Ukraine, the acting government said, here's our to-do list, and it was the right to-do list. And I think people like Acting Prime Minister Yatsenyuk, I think President Poroshenko, they understand the economic reform steps that Ukraine has to take.

There have been discussions with Ukrainian governments about these for 20 years. The real question there'll be is: can they sustain the political support for these steps, which are going to be, in some cases, very painful? So, for example, to get access to the program and start the program on May 1st, Ukraine raised the price of heating to every household. May 1st is a great time to raise the price of heating, because nobody needs it. But in November, December, when the temperature's down in the 20s and the teens, people are going to notice that their heating bills are way, way up. And at that point, politically, is the government going to be able to say to the public, "we need to do this, we need to get through the next couple of years?"

And moreover, it doesn't stop with the IMF. With the IMF program in place, and there are other funds available from the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Union. And so Ukraine has potentially access to \$25 to \$35 billion over the next couple of years, primarily in the form of low-interest loans. And that should help Ukraine get through this period, if they do the right things.

**Christian Ostermann:**

Wolfgang, would you like to take on the trust question, the first part of the question?

**Wolfgang Ischinger:**

Yeah, I'll be very brief. I mean, I don't think it is fair to compare Russian behavior on Ukraine and especially Crimea with Western behavior -- that's a very popular thing for Russians to claim, that we are at fault, because as Russians say, we the West, we aggressed the former Yugoslavia. We did what we did in Libya, and in Iraq, et cetera. I believe that it is important to note that, for example, in the case of Libya, we the West, certainly the United States, went to the Security Council of the United Nations and obtained, actually, with Russian abstention at the time, a resolution endorsing activities directed at Libya.

The same is true in a number of other activities. We went to the Security Council I don't know how many times, trying to find a way forward on Syria, trying to find a way forward on Kosovo, and on Bosnia, et cetera, in years past. I am not aware that the Russian Federation even tried, not even once, to seize the Security Council to authorize Russian action on Crimea. So I think the comparison is not fair.

I would grant you one point: the European security architecture, as it exists with institutions like NATO, the NATO-Russia Council, OSCE, et cetera, is not working the way it should. We do not have a sufficiently functioning body of institutions and rules. That's my take from what we are witnessing. So that needs to be improved and repaired, but in order to do it, you need to have a minimum of trust that

all actors are singing from the same page. And that's very hard now that we had such a terrible loss of trust in the predictability of Russian policy, as it happened over the last few months.

**Christian Ostermann:**

Thank you. David Ignatius, and that'll probably be our final question.

**David Ignatius:**

Thank you. I want to ask Ambassador Ischinger for his assessment of whether Germany, meaning both the government of Chancellor Merkel and the German people, whether Germany is prepared to support the policies of deterring this chauvinist Russia that Dr. Brzezinski described, even though Germany will pay significant costs in doing so.

**Wolfgang Ischinger:**

David, I think, yes, but the question is how, how exactly? If you take the majority view of the German public, you find a lot of skepticism regarding our jointly adopted decision on sanctions. You will find a lot of skepticism regarding the question of weapons delivery. You will find a lot of skepticism regarding deployment of military force to eastern NATO countries. In other words, there are obstacles to overcome in terms of public opinion.

And as much as I personally agree with the point that our eastern NATO members need to be reassured, should be reassured, by certain types of activity including symbolic or not-so-symbolic military deployments, I think that our priority number one needs to be to stabilize Ukraine. And quite frankly, by sending a few airplanes to Estonia or to Poland, we are not directly doing anything to help these poor Ukrainians to handle their problems. So I think the first objective, the first priority, needs to be things that will help Ukraine directly.

I know of -- having been involved in these discussions over how to deal with the Ukrainian crisis, over the last month or so -- I know of no leader, certainly no leader in Europe, who has spent more time than Chancellor Merkel trying to explain to President Putin that he's making a mistake, a big one. And I think Chancellor Merkel has also been quite successful, surprisingly successful, in convincing the German business community, which has a much larger stake in Russian business than the U.S. business community, that it should not oppose sanctions against Russia. In fact, just over this past weekend, the leadership of the German business community, the BDI, issued a statement supporting sanctions "with pain", as they said. For us, this is painful, but we accept that this has to be the prerogative of political decision-making among transatlantic partners, and if they believe that sanctions are needed, and maybe more sanctions are needed, then so be it. That's a painful thing for somebody to say who actually represents many hundreds, if not thousands, of large and small businesses, who have been doing a lot of business with Russia and with their subsidiaries in Russia. So, it's not a small thing.

**Zbigniew Brzezinski:**

I very much agree with what Wolfgang just said about the problems, and especially the problems that the Europeans and the Germans face when it comes to sanctions. I just wanted to add a little bit to it, namely it's true that their difficulties in that regard are greater than our difficulties, but we also have expenses. For example, the President has just committed to \$1 billion for the reinforcement of Central European security. That will come out of the pockets of the voters, but it is a step in the same direction, so that we assume certain obligations and difficulties; costs as well.

I also think that, in any case, solidarity is what is essential, and solidarity need not only be tangible. It can be symbolic. And anything that our European allies can do to show that the issue of European security is of common concern and a common responsibility is to the good. And it's not an anti-Russian step. It is a stabilizing step. In the last several years, the Russians have held several exercises, military exercises, in these western territories -- in fact, in large measure, on Belarussian soil, which brings it much closer to the Baltic States. And these are enormous exercises by our standards, large army formations repelling an alleged attack, and then moving forward. And the last one ended with a simulated nuclear attack on a Central European capital. *Nuclear attack*. No one has had nuclear weapons since 1945. I mean, these are things that we haven't paid much attention to, but they're part of this equation, and building security has to be very much a reciprocal responsibility, in addition to solidarity in the face of challenge.

**Christian Ostermann:**

Thank you so much. This was a terrific roundtable. Let me just congratulate Ambassador Ischinger, again, on the volume. I highly recommended it to all of you. Thank you, Dr. Brzezinski, for your extraordinary keynote, your very thoughtful comments, Ambassador Pifer, and all of you for joining us. We're adjourned. Thank you so much.