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Hearing on "An Emerging China-Russia Axis? Implications for the United States in an Era of Strategic Competition"

Thank you to the Commissioners for the opportunity to testify today. The Commission has asked me to focus on assessing Russian and Chinese goals in the Middle East, how Moscow and Beijing engage and interact in the region, and to provide associated recommendations for how the United States can manage great power competition in the region.

I want to begin by providing four key observations on the broader state of Russia-China relations. These observations provide the necessary context in which to view Russia-China relations in the Middle East.

1. Ties between Russia and China are deepening.

The relationship between Russia and China has improved steadily since the waning years of the Cold War. This trend accelerated in the last decade and especially since 2014 when Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea shut down Russian opportunities in and cooperation with the West. Indicators across virtually every dimension of the bilateral relationship highlight their growing alignment.¹ Economically, China is the largest purchaser of Russian crude oil and has surpassed Germany as Russia's largest trading partner. Militarily, their defense cooperation continues to grow, including through defense dialogues, joint exercises, and regional security cooperation. Russia continues to sell China increasingly sophisticated military technologies, though that aspect of the relationship has diminished in relative importance as China has enhanced its capabilities in this area. Politically, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping enjoy close relations, and exchanges and interactions at lower levels of the Russian and Chinese governments are frequent.

¹ See Richard J. Ellings and Robert Sutter, eds., *Axis of Authoritarians: Implications of China-Russia Cooperation* (Washington, D.C.: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2018); and Graham Allison, "The Russia Card," *The National Interest*, 2019, see pp. 5-9 for in-depth discussions of the deepening ties between Russia and China.

Bold.

Innovative.

Bipartisan.

2. Russia-China relations will continue to deepen as the key drivers of their relationship strengthen and constraints erode.

Both Putin and Xi view the United States as a significant threat to their power. Their shared perception of the United States as a threat is an important driver of their relationship. U.S. actions such as sanctions against Russia and the administration's trade war with China are justified approaches to addressing hostile adversaries, but also serve to push the two countries closer together. The strong consensus in Washington around great power competition as the centerpiece of U.S. foreign policy is likely to continue to provide incentive for greater alignment between Russia and China.

The growing similarity between the Putin and Xi regimes is also likely to provide a basis for future cooperation. Xi has consolidated power and dismantled the consensus-based decision making that has dominated China's post-Mao political system. While meaningful distinctions between the governments remain, China's political system more closely resembles the Putin-dominated Russian regime.² Research suggests that shared regime type enhances cooperation between states.³

Not only are the key drivers of bilateral relations strengthening, but many of the factors that observers long assessed would constrain the relationship are eroding. First, analysts have long held that Russian concerns about insecurity in its far east would stymie cooperation. However, the Kremlin's concerns about this source of insecurity have diminished; today, the Russian and Chinese governments are moving ahead with infrastructure projects in border regions that had long been delayed. Moreover, Putin likely understands that China constitutes a long-term threat to Russia but appears to calculate that a far-off and uncertain threat from China is more acceptable than the immediate and certain threat he perceives from the United States.

Cultural factors and historical enmity are likely to be enduring constraints on Russia-China relations. However, Xi and Putin dominate the media environments in their countries and are capable of slowly turning public opinion over time. Such a process would be hard and slow, but Beijing and Moscow have the capacity to re-shape public attitudes, should they decide to. Already, surveys show that 69 percent of Russians hold a positive view of China—the same percentage of Russians that hold negative views of the United States.⁴

3. Russia and China are united in their discontent with U.S. dominance—a marriage of convenience—but sustained cooperation and repeated interaction raise the likelihood of more meaningful alignment.

Putin and Xi prioritize their own survival in office above all else. They both judge that the United States and its efforts to support democracy present a threat to their hold on power, and that the U.S.-dominated international order disadvantages them and fails to accommodate their interests.

² Erica Frantz, Andrea Kendall-Taylor, and Joseph Wright, "Did Xi Jinping Just Become China's Strongman? Not Quite," *Washington Post*, March 13, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/03/13/did-xi-jinping-just-become-chinas-strongman-not-quite/?utm_term=.da0dce42214e.

³ Brian Lai and Dan Reiter, "Democracy, Political Similarity, and International Alliances, 1816-1992," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 44, no. 2 (2000): 203–27.

⁴ Cited in Graham Allison, "The Russia Card," *The National Interest*, 2019, pp. 5-9.

They are united in their discontent and share an interest in weakening Western cohesion and subverting many of the values and rules that define the post-World War II order.

Although they have banded together in discontent, there is potential that their repeated interactions will foster a deeper and more enduring partnership over time. Already, Russian and Chinese values and views of the way the world should be ordered are significantly aligned. Russia and China are likely to continue to work together, and potentially coordinate their efforts to create an environment that is conducive to both of their development goals.

4. Deepening relations between Russia and China will be among the most significant U.S. foreign policy challenges in the coming decade.

Russia and China are unlikely to forge a formal military alliance. But even short of such an alliance, their growing alignment and coordination will present a significant challenge for U.S. national security in the coming years. The Director of National Intelligence warned in his 2019 Annual Threat Assessment that strengthening ties between China and Russia will present a “wide variety of economic, political, counterintelligence, military, and diplomatic challenges to the United States and its allies.”⁵ If Russia-China relations continue to grow, it would harm U.S. interests by enhancing their mutual capabilities and stretching U.S. capabilities, complicating U.S. strategic planning by potentially dividing U.S. power, emboldening them to act knowing they will have each other’s support, enhancing the perceived legitimacy of the alternative they provide, and diluting U.S. leverage over countries willing to play the United States off Russia and China.⁶

Russia and China are also poised to challenge U.S. interests through the complementarity of their actions.⁷ Russia and China take different approaches to pursuing their foreign policy objectives. Russian foreign policy is confrontational and brazen. So far, China has used a subtler and more risk-averse strategy, preferring stability that is conducive to building economic ties and influence. Although their tactics are different, they have the potential to converge in synergistic ways such that the combined effects on U.S. interests is greater than the sum of their individual efforts. This dynamic is most evident in Europe, but there is potential for greater synergies between Russia and China to create new challenges for the United States.

Russian and Chinese Goals in the Middle East

Russia and China have both increased their attention to and activity in the Middle East. Although close cooperation or coordination is not yet evident, both countries are pursuing compatible goals and objectives. Russia and China share the following goals in the region:

⁵ Daniel R. Coats, “Statement for the Record: Worldwide Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community,” § Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (2019), <https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/2019-ATA-SFR---SSCI.pdf>.

⁶ James Steinberg, “China-Russia Cooperation: How Should the United States Respond?” in Richard J. Ellings and Robert Sutter, eds., *Axis of Authoritarians: Implications of China-Russia Cooperation* (Washington, D.C.: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2018).

⁷ Andrea Kendall-Taylor and David Shullman, “How Russia and China Undermine Democracy,” *Foreign Affairs*, October 2, 2018.

1. Demonstrating global power.

Russia and China see their presence in the Middle East as critical for projecting their great power status. Both countries view the Middle East as an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to play a pivotal role in important global affairs and project influence beyond their immediate neighborhoods. For Putin, returning Russia to the Middle East after Moscow's extended hiatus from the region is an important symbol of Russia's return as a great power. Russia was forced out of the Middle East in the 1990s, when Russia was weak. Now that Russia is back, Putin judges that Russia should have a seat at the table and be treated as a major player on par with the United States. Putin's return to the Middle East was largely driven by his desire to prevent the United States from turning Bashar al-Assad into another Qaddafi, and Putin views his presence in the region as critical for standing up to and countering what he sees as U.S. unilateralism.

Since Xi took power in 2012, China has adopted a more assertive foreign policy in the Middle East. China's goals are less about projecting power, and more about accumulating the influence that Beijing requires to protect its economic interests in the region. China seeks to bolster its reputation as a responsible great power by promoting peace and stability and playing an active role in international conflict resolution and reconstruction.

Where they differ. Russia's goals in the Middle East are shaped by security considerations to a greater extent than are China's objectives. For Putin, establishing and maintaining bases, including an expanded naval base at Tartus and air base in Latakia, is a strategic priority allowing Russia to project force into the Middle East and Mediterranean. China's desire to demonstrate its global power in the Middle East is driven largely by economic interests and the influence needed to protect those interests, as discussed at greater length below.

Russia and China also hold slightly different views of the United States in the region. Both countries oppose U.S. unilateralism and uphold the principle of non-intervention. China judges it has benefited from U.S. involvement in regional crises that have distracted Washington from trying to counter China's rise. However, China does not seek to antagonize the U.S. in the Middle East. China views the United States as a key guarantor of Middle East security, critical to maintaining the stability Beijing requires to reap benefits from the region. Russia, in contrast, more directly seeks to disrupt and undermine (although not displace) the U.S. in the Middle East.

2. Increasing economic opportunities.

Russia and China both seek economic opportunities in the Middle East. For China, ensuring access to energy and other economic resources is the single most important goal in the region. Middle Eastern producers together provide China's second largest supply of crude oil (after Russia), Beijing is the largest investor in and exporter of goods to the region, and thousands of Chinese workers work across the Middle East. The Middle East is also of geostrategic importance for the advancement of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Reflecting the centrality of the Middle East to BRI designs, Beijing identified the Middle East a "neighbor" region in 2013, signaling the region's

growing geostrategic importance.⁸ China's significant economic interests mean that China aims to promote the stability that is needed to protect its investments and maintain access to energy resources in the region. Xi's public statements also indicate that he views development as key to resolving security problems in the Middle East, much as China views development in other regions and at home in Xinjiang.

Economic factors are secondary for Russia, but the economic incentives for Moscow to pursue a larger role in the Middle East grew after 2014 when the United States and Europe levied sanctions on Russia for its illegal annexation of Crimea. Energy deals and military sales enable Putin to offset some of the economic pressure Russia has faced especially since 2014. Russia has coordinated closely with Saudi Arabia to limit oil production to buoy oil prices, which both countries rely on to sustain the patronage on which their authoritarian systems depend. Russia also views the region as an alternative source of funds to service short-term debt, and an additional source of investment. In 2016, for example, the Qatar Investment Agency acquired a 19.5 percent stake in Rosneft, a state-controlled oil company. Nuclear energy and arms sales also provide Moscow with important sources of revenue.

Where they differ. Economic motivations are a far more important driver of China's approach to the Middle East relative to Russia. The magnitude of China's economic interests in the region lead Beijing to prioritize stability – a necessary precondition for the success of its economic projects.

3. **Countering terrorism.**

Russia and China share concerns about the thousands of Russian and Chinese citizens who have travelled to Syria to fight with various terrorist organizations. Putin sees his efforts to fight terrorism in the Middle East, especially ISIS, as critical for preventing the influx of terrorists into Central Asia and Russia. China, for its part, believes there is a link between stability in the Middle East and stability at home. In particular, Beijing worries about extremist elements in the Middle East providing training and inspiration to radicalized Uighur Muslims who might return to western China.⁹

4. **Maintaining public support.**

In addition to the economic benefits that help Putin and Xi domestically, both leaders also use their actions in the region to enhance their domestic standing. Putin has sought to increase diplomatic ties to the region and uses a steady stream of diplomatic engagements with Middle Eastern leaders to offset any perceptions of isolation in the aftermath of Crimea. In China, there are also rising domestic expectations among the Chinese people for Beijing to play a more assertive and engaged role on key international issues and in international hot spots. Given China's growing economic interests in the Middle East, including the large presence of Chinese nationals, Xi could face domestic pressure to defend China's interests in the region.

⁸ Nicholas Lyall, "China in the Middle East: Past, Present, and Future," *The Diplomat*, February 16, 2019, <https://thediplomat.com/2019/02/china-in-the-middle-east-past-present-and-future/>.

⁹ Ilan Goldenberg and Ely Ratner, "China's Middle East Tightrope," *Foreign Policy*, April 20, 2015, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/04/20/china-middle-east-saudi-arabia-iran-oil-nuclear-deal/>.

Russian and Chinese Lines of Effort:

The growing importance that Russia and China assign to the Middle East has led both countries to increase their activity in the region. Because Moscow and Beijing prioritize their foreign policy goals differently, some of their approaches and tactics in the region diverge. Broadly speaking, Russia has played a more significant role in the region and leads from the front, while China plays a more passive role, seeking to avoid actions that would antagonize the U.S.

Russia and China pursue the following tactics and approaches to advance their goals in the Middle East:

Russia. Russia pursues a transactional approach to the Middle East. Moscow is willing to cooperate with other countries where their interests overlap with Moscow's and seeks to avoid allowing disagreements in one part of the relationship to stymie prospects for cooperation in another. Moscow has also skillfully navigated between regional powers with opposing interests, including Israel and Iran, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, or Iran and Saudi Arabia. Moscow prides itself as being the only country able to consult with all parties to a conflict, and its agile diplomacy, backed by credible force, has made Russia an indispensable power in the region.

Russia pursues the following lines of action to advance its interests in the region:

- **Using Syria as a springboard for expanding influence throughout the rest of the region.** Russia's military operation in Syria has boosted the prestige of Russian-made weapons and has been a compelling advertisement for the value of Moscow's politico-military backing.¹⁰ Russia has used its intervention in Syria to enhance relationships with many longtime U.S. partners, including Egypt and Saudi Arabia.
- **Capitalizing on frustration with Washington and U.S. "values laden" foreign policy to expand relations.** Russia seeks to amplify the view held by many regional leaders that the United States is less committed to the region and less interested in investing in partnerships. In Egypt, for example, Putin capitalized on the regime's anger towards Washington, following Mubarak's ouster and U.S. sanctions on arms sales, in order to deepen relations. Many countries are also receptive to Moscow's "no strings attached" investment and Moscow's shorter lead time on military sales.
- **Using military sales to tether capitals to Moscow.** Russia has boasted of a surge in arms sales, newly tried and tested on the Syrian battlefield. Russia has nearly doubled its weapons

¹⁰ Dmitri Trenin, *What Is Russia Up to In the Middle East?* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Polity, 2017).

exports to the region over the past five years, with \$24 billion worth of orders due to be fulfilled over the next decade.¹¹

- **Using relations with Iran as a force multiplier.** Russia and Iran have built on their shared opposition to the United States to work together to counter Washington in the Middle East. Their repeated interactions to implement the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and their cooperation on the battlefield in Syria have allowed Moscow and Tehran to overcome historic mistrust and increase cooperation.

China. Like Russia, China has pursued a pragmatic approach to the Middle East, navigating between regional powers with competing interests. Beijing has sought to avoid security commitments in the region, limiting its involvement in the political and security realms to the lowest levels required to protect and facilitate its economic interests and investments. China mostly defers to Washington as the primary security provider, allowing Beijing to uphold its principle of non-interventionism and to appear as a neutral arbiter in regional affairs. China pursues the following lines of efforts to advance its interests in the region:

- **Using economic ties to generate leverage and influence.** China pursues what it calls "win-win" economic partnerships to secure energy and economic resources, build influence with regional regimes, and bolster stability. Beijing has sought to use cooperation with the Gulf Cooperation Council, in particular, as a conduit for advancing the Belt and Road Initiative. Beijing expects that its economic ties will generate and maintain support for Chinese foreign policy priorities among Middle Eastern governments, including the One China Policy.
- **Supporting Russia's security goals, while avoiding confrontation with the U.S.** In Syria, China has supported Russia's call for the international community to respect Syria's territorial integrity. China has been particularly supportive of Russia in the UN Security Council, supporting six of seven Russian vetoes relating to Syria's use of chemical weapons. China also seeks to become part of the conflict resolution—promoting a political settlement to the conflict—and the reconstruction process to assert itself as a stabilizing and peaceful force in Syria.
- **Balancing relations with Iran and Saudi Arabia.** Iran is an important source of China's oil imports (China is the largest buyer of Iranian crude), and Beijing is Tehran's top importer. Iran is also a linchpin of China's Belt and Road Initiative with Chinese infrastructure investment in Iran totaling \$8.5 billion in loans from the Export-Import Bank of China through early 2018.¹² Similarly, Beijing's largest trading relationship in the Middle East is with Saudi Arabia (China overtook the United States as Saudi Arabia's largest trading partner in 2017), and Beijing has

¹¹ Liz Sly, "In the Middle East, Russia Is Back," Washington Post, December 5, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/in-the-middle-east-russia-is-back/2018/12/04/e899df30-aaf1-11e8-9a7d-cd30504ff902_story.html.

¹² Owen Daniels, "How China Is Trying to Dominate the Middle East," Text, The National Interest, August 28, 2018, <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/how-china-trying-dominate-middle-east-29922>.

sought to align Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman’s Vision 2030 plan with the Belt and Road Initiative.

- **Underlining principles of sovereignty and noninterference in domestic affairs.** China emphasizes the principle of non-interventionism in the Middle East so that Middle Eastern countries choose not to meddle in Chinese domestic politics with respect to issues like Taiwan and the Uighurs. In particular, Beijing seeks to highlight that Chinese investment and assistance comes without the political reforms that Western countries require.
- **Increasing role in Middle East peace initiatives and diplomacy to demonstrate leadership.** Beijing aims to bolster its legitimacy by promoting peace and stability and playing an active role in international conflict resolution and reconstruction. China has, for example, sent a Special Envoy to Syria and created new initiatives on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

Implications for U.S. Interests in the Middle East

The bilateral relationship between Russia and China is strengthening, but the frequency, breadth and intensity of their engagement and cooperation in the Middle East is less than in other regions, especially Europe. So far, the separate challenges that Russia and China pose to U.S. interests in the Middle East are more significant than the challenges arising from their collaboration or coordination. The challenges for the United States in the Middle East resulting from the deepening relationship between Russia and China include:

- **Diluting U.S. leverage and influence in the Middle East.** Russia and China’s increased activity and interest in the Middle East has enhanced regional perceptions that Moscow and Beijing are viable alternatives to the United States. Even if these leaders prefer to work with Washington, Russia and China’s growing role in the region allows leaders to credibly threaten to move closer to Moscow and Beijing to dilute U.S. requirements for good governance, democracy, and other reforms.
- **Amplifying the appeal of the strongman authoritarian model, which is likely to create a foundation for their influence to rise in the region.** Middle Eastern regimes view China as an attractive model of authoritarian development. Many leaders also look favorably on Russia’s willingness and capacity to stand up to the U.S. in Syria. Moreover, the strongman model of governance—Putin, Assad and el-Sisi have highly personalized regimes, while Xi and Mohammad bin Salman continue to move in that direction—is likely to provide a shared foundation for future cooperation.
- **Using multilateral institutions to challenge U.S. regional interests.** Russia and China are using the UN as a platform to emphasize sovereignty narratives that reflect their interests and redirect discussions away from human rights, democracy, and good governance.¹³ They are coordinating their efforts to block U.S.-backed efforts and shape regional political issues

¹³ Daniel R. Coats, “Statement for the Record: Worldwide Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community.”

including Libya, Yemen, Syria, and ISIS. China is also using its economic leverage to garner the support of Arab nations for China's positions in the UN and WTO.

Recommendations for Congress

The current trajectory of Russia-China relations and the significant implications that a more robust Sino-Russian partnership would pose to U.S. interests suggest that Washington should not discount the possibility that a more meaningful and enduring partnership could develop. Moreover, even if China ultimately jettisons its relationship with Moscow in the long term, they could still collaborate and coordinate their actions in the near term (i.e., the next 15-25 years) in ways that would significantly complicate Washington's ability to advance U.S. interests. The U.S., therefore, discounts strengthening Russia-China relations to its own peril. In developing its response to great power competition in the Middle East, Congress should consider the following:

Congress should enable the U.S. government to consider China and Russia together as well as separately.¹⁴

The U.S. government is not institutionally configured to deal with the challenge posed by greater collaboration and coordination between Russia and China. There is expertise on Russia and China, but there are few if any efforts that analyze and address the nexus of the combined challenges and threats.

U.S. efforts to drive a wedge between Russia and China are unlikely to be successful but Washington should still seek to drive “mini-wedges” where possible.

It is highly unlikely that Putin would jeopardize his relationship with Beijing by joining the United States to pressure China. From the Kremlin's perspective, the United States is a far less predictable partner than is China, and Putin's anti-Western views are deeply held. Xi, for his part, seeks to encourage Russia to lean towards China to divide U.S. strategic attention.¹⁵ Although driving a wedge between them is unlikely to be successful, efforts to highlight and amplify tensions in their relationship as it plays out in the Middle East could help constrain the depth of the partnership.

The U.S. should seek to highlight for the Kremlin Chinese efforts to expand its economic interests in areas of the most importance to Russia, including arms sales and nuclear energy projects. The U.S. should also seek to highlight the implications for Moscow of China's growing security presence, where Russia has played a more significant role. China is likely to increase its role in regional security—for example, its military base in Djibouti—to protect its economic interests and Chinese nationals in the region.

In communicating with Beijing, Washington should underscore Russian efforts that threaten to destabilize the region. The Kremlin's close partnership with Iran for example, has the potential to

¹⁴ Robert Sutter, “U.S. Policy Opportunities and Options.” in Richard J. Ellings and Robert Sutter, eds., *Axis of Authoritarians: Implications of China-Russia Cooperation* (Washington, D.C.: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2018)

¹⁵ Angela Stent, “Foreword” to Richard J. Ellings and Robert Sutter, eds., *Axis of Authoritarians: Implications of China-Russia Cooperation* (Washington, D.C.: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2018)

embolden Iranian regional aggression. Beijing is likely to be sensitive to actions that threaten its access to energy in the region given the negative impact that such disruptions would have on China's economy.

The United States should accept that China or Russia (or both) are likely to gain more of a footing in the Middle East and seek to work with Moscow and Beijing where possible.¹⁶

Russia and China are likely to play a greater role in the Middle East as the United States seeks to moderate its presence in the region. Russia and China's greater presence will dilute U.S. influence as Middle Eastern leaders can push back on democracy, human rights, and other conditionalities by more credibly threatening to move closer to Moscow and Beijing. Nonetheless, Middle Eastern leaders still vastly prefer to work with the United States than either Russia or China and are unlikely to view either country as a sufficient substitute for the protection, arms, and intelligence that Washington provides. Washington therefore should seek to leverage Russia and China's growing presence to offload some of the responsibility in the region. Doing so would enable Washington to find a more sustainable posture in the Middle East.

U.S. officials should identify efforts to reassure regional leaders of Washington's commitment, while highlighting shortcomings of partnering more closely with Moscow and Beijing.

Moscow and Beijing seek to feed the narrative that the United States is no longer committed to the Middle East and are taking actions to fill the perceived vacuum. The U.S. should identify opportunities to reinforce for regional leaders the U.S. commitment to the region. Such efforts to enhance the desirability of working with the U.S. should include increasing funding to enhance America's diplomatic capability in the Middle East as well as produce tangible benefits for regional partners. To this end, the U.S. should strategically allocate infrastructure and development finance in the region, including by working with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to launch a new infrastructure initiative for the Middle East.¹⁷ This and other efforts will be required to reduce China's overwhelming advantage in infrastructure financing, which allows China to compete effectively in the region.

Concurrently, U.S. officials should seek to amplify the shortcomings of working with Russia and China. For example, Moscow frequently fails to deliver on its promises for aid and investment. Similarly, the U.S. should be prepared to capitalize on moments of disillusionment with Belt and Road projects.¹⁸ The U.S. should also seek to highlight China's treatment of its Uighur Muslim population.

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¹⁶ Mara Karlin and Tamara Cofman Wittes, "America's Middle East Purgatory," *Foreign Affairs*, December 11, 2018, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/middle-east/2018-12-11/americas-middle-east-purgatory>.

¹⁷ This recommendation comes from Daniel Kliman and Abigail Grace, "Power Play: Addressing China's Belt and Road Strategy" (Washington, D.C.: Center for a New American Security, September 2018).

¹⁸ Daniel Kliman and Abigail Grace, "Power Play: Addressing China's Belt and Road Strategy" (Washington, D.C.: Center for a New American Security, September 2018).

Russia-China relations are likely to continue to deepen. Each country will continue to present their own challenges to the United States, including in the Middle East, but Washington should also be prepared for growing synergy and coordination between them. In a world with three dominant countries, the United States will not want to be alone on the side with one. The U.S. should work now to strengthen relations with Allies and partners who can support U.S. efforts to compete with Russia and China, and take proactive steps to limit the depth of the Russia-China partnership.

Biography

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Andrea Kendall-Taylor is a Senior Fellow and Director of the Transatlantic Security Program at the Center for a New American Security (CNAS). She works on national security challenges facing the United States and Europe, focusing on Russia, populism and threats to democracy, and the state of the Transatlantic alliance.

Prior to joining CNAS, Andrea served for eight years as a senior intelligence officer. From 2015 to 2018, she was Deputy National Intelligence Officer for Russia and Eurasia at the National Intelligence Council (NIC) in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (DNI). In this role Andrea led the U.S. intelligence community's strategic analysis on Russia, represented the IC in interagency policy meetings, provided analysis to the National Security Council, and briefed the DNI and other senior staff for White House and international meetings. Prior to joining the NIC, Andrea was a senior analyst at the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) where she worked on Russia and Eurasia, the political dynamics of autocracies, and democratic decline.

Andrea is an adjunct professor at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service. Her work has been published in numerous political science and policy journals, including the *Journal of Peace Research*, *Democratization*, *Journal of Democracy*, *Foreign Affairs*, the *Washington Post*, the *Washington Quarterly*, and *Foreign Policy*.

Andrea received her B.A. in politics from Princeton University and her Ph.D. in political science from the University of California, Los Angeles. She was a Fulbright scholar in Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, where she conducted dissertation research on oil and autocracy.