Arms Control in Europe After the Russo-Ukrainian War, Really?

Speakers

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Judy Dempsey: Of knowledge and of a very special view of the world we live in and how the whole nuclear issue and arms control may or may not be initiated again. I'm not going to delay because actually, the time is short. Thank you for bearing with this virtual medium, for many reasons I couldn't travel. Without further ado, I'm going to ask Dr. Smith from NATO whom I haven't had the honor actually yet to meet, but you should read her biography. It's exhausting and it's awesome, and it really is very impressive.

It's very reassuring because as a very young reporter and Dr. Smith, don't fall off the chair, I actually covered the MBFR talks, the Mutual Balance Force Reduction talks in the Schönbrunn palace in Vienna way back in the late 1980s, and we know what happened to them. Actually, to go into something good. In any case and just very briefly, we also have Sergey Rogov, we go back a long time as well, Institute for the US and Canadian Studies, and we also have, I don't know if I've met Mr. Feruță from the Romanian Foreign Ministry, but I know your colleagues very well. Welcome, all of you. Now comes the hard part after this easy introduction.

Dr. Smith, I'm not so sure if I'm convinced, but I shall throw you out this question. NATO has long-expressed the willingness to engage with Russia on arms control and Russia's invasion of Ukraine has obviously eliminated any possibility of progress in the near term. Given your experience in wearing the hat you have, and I think anybody who deals with nuclear issues has to be optimistic, has it also changed thinking within the alliance about the desirability of trying to build common security? It's a very tough question and I would really appreciate your views on this. Might I just add to all our participants, brevity would be a great asset because we want to throw this whole discussion out to the audience. Thank you.
Wendin Smith: Thank you. Again echo the thanks that all of the speakers have shared to Carnegie, all of you for making the time. I can't help but do a call out to the diversity of generations and backgrounds that are here, a huge fan of making sure we’re bringing up the next generation. Marie Curie, non-proliferation graduate fellows from DOE, just a huge welcome and thank you all. A tough question, for sure. I think I would start by parsing the question, so if you pull it apart a bit, you're asking about has the alliances' thinking changed about the desirability of achieving common security with Russia and the current environment. If you take that apart a little bit, has the thinking changed in the alliance? Yes, absolutely.

We are an adaptive alliance and that should and will continue to happen regardless of the situation. No change though in the desire to have common security. That is a shared premise. It's a principle and there's no change to that. Today, when we think about common security and in NATO terms, that phrase has changed over time as well. In our 2010 concept, we refer to it as common space of peace, stability, and security with Russia. At this point, no, we aren't at a place where we can achieve, I think, common security with Russia, but I'll pull that apart a bit. First, just to start, I think it's important to say that for decades, and this community knows that well, NATO has strived to foster a better relationship with Russia. NATO and allies have tried to create a common space for peace and stability, predictability, and security with Russia and independently as well. In the current environment, though, I think it's clear that Russia has demonstrated that it doesn't have an interest or its interests are different in what that common security looks like. Its war against Ukraine has shattered peace. It's challenged the international order, and it's certainly exacerbated the fragile arms control infrastructure. Just a few more thoughts on context and I will be quick, I promise, because I know we want to get to our panelists as well.

I want to be clear that NATO seeks no confrontation with Russia. I think that's been very clear. It's a defensive alliance and we will remain focused on being transparent and predictable and managing escalation in a way that supports that. Because of the hostile actions with Russia, now we don't consider Russia to be a partner, and that's been clear in our 2022 strategic concept where we do call out Russia as the most direct significant threat to the alliance.

That said, we're remain willing and eager, I would say, to keep open channels of communication with Moscow if and when it can present as a credible partner. I would actually quote Secretary-General who's had some very clear words about this recently, which is that if Russia stops fighting, there's an opportunity for peace. If Ukraine stops fighting, it might cease to exist. This is a pretty pointed world that we're in. As a result, and again, I think you all are tracking this clearly, and I'm happy to take, take questions, but NATO has made decisions at the Madrid Summit in 2022 to significantly strengthen our deterrence and defense. We're seeking, again, stability, predictability with NATO, Russia, and other elements of the Euro-Atlantic area.

Foremost, that means that for the 30 allies, hopefully soon plus 2 with Finland and Sweden, that we have taken some decisions that are quite important. Again, the details I'm happy to go into, but increasing our numbers of high readiness forces, forward deploying pre-positioning equipment, working on other aspects of the
alliance that, again, are adaptive and will support our defensive posture. To this community, though, I think I want to close with what that all means for the arms control space. As we heard in the panel yesterday, and I think in all of the communications I’ve had in coffee and meals, what does that mean for arms control?

The key point here, and the shift, again, in our strategic concept of 2022, is the importance of embedding and integrating arms control, disarmament, and nonproliferation with deterrents and defense. In NATO’s three core tasks, now arms control is embedded in our first core task, which is deterrents and defense. The other two being crisis management and cooperative security. That’s not to say that there isn’t a role for arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation across those tasks, but the core footprint and the core mission that we have is in that arms control space. We look forward to working to continue to integrate that effort and look at it holistically, but I think have to be clear-eyed in the current environment.

Dempsey: Yes, I agree with you and you’ve packed an awful lot in there. Thank you very much, Dr. Smith. Also, I will ask questions to Sergey Rogov in a moment, but the big issue here is the complete breakdown of trust. This is even before the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The whole collapse of the CFE, the Conventional Forces in Europe, the ABM, and so many other things, and the whole institutional memory of arms control which is so dangerous. It worries me given the importance of the CFE, which might have been very good now and beneficial to understand Russian movements in Ukraine.

Sergey Rogov, Sergey, and I go back quite a long time, so I’m going to use as Sergey. I have a similar question to you, but it’s not as easy as that. Russia it’s offered United States and NATO some draft and security treaties which it wasn’t rejected, they weren’t looked at, they didn’t go far enough, and there was a war going on. Is there any interest? What’s your feeling sitting in Moscow? Is there any feeling or interest today in Moscow and building on a common ground of security issues, of a way back to negotiating after this war or even during this war? What do you think?

Sergey Rogov: Thank you, Judy. It’s a pleasure and honor for me to be here. I want to start by saying that I challenge the perception that because there’s military fighting going on, we cannot negotiate arms control arrangements and let us remember history. The treaty banning nuclear testing in these years was signed when the United States was getting engaged in the war in Vietnam. [unintelligible 00:09:49] and ABM Treaty were signed when the United States was still engaged in the war in Vietnam. Then [unintelligible 00:09:58] was signed when the Soviet Union was engaged in the war in Afghanistan. While you don’t need much arms control between parties, you need arms control between opponents and even enemies. That’s point number one.

The second point is that we cannot imagine that we can restore the CFE Treaty because it was based on the parity between the Warsaw Pact and NATO and today, of course, there could be no parity between Russia and NATO. Besides six new members of NATO who are formerly members of the Warsaw Treaty Pact and nine new members of NATO never belonged to the CFE Treaty. The treaty limited equipment, tanks, artillery, et cetera, which were limited by the CFE Treaty, and not the most important weaponry for the present military fighting were drones, tactical
missiles, heavy bombers, air defense and missile defense, and cyber or radio-electronic weapons.

The third point is that the Russian proposal last December had three components. The suggestions to sign a new European security treaty, a suggestion that the United States and other NATO candidates roll back their forces from Eastern Europe, and ban on NATO membership for Ukraine. That was rejected 10 months ago by the United States and NATO. I see no chance that the Western countries would agree to that, which creates a very limited opportunity to launch arms control, but intermediate range missiles which were banned by the INF Treaty, is an area where we can negotiate despite fighting.

Russian proposal is not to deploy all types of intermediate range missiles, both conventional and nuclear. For American position when it responded was limited with only nuclear weapons. There are other elements which I would like to mention, but I can sense that-

Dempsey: We can do this later.

Rogov: -you are getting nervous [unintelligible 00:13:00].

Dempsey: Not, I'm getting nervous. We've got a lot to pack in. We don't want to go to the past. You have to address the question actually and you have your proposals and we have the European position, arms control in Europe. We're talking about Europe and the rhetoric coming out of Russia using this language of nuclear weapons and threats and so on, but very briefly, Sergey, arms control in Europe after the Russia, Ukrainian war, brevity counts, yes or no?

Rogov: It's difficult to be optimistic, but we should try. We have to stick to the facts and when you speak, for instance, about nuclear threats that you have to read what Russian president and high officials say. Just yesterday, President Putin said that Russia is not, and has not planned to use technical nuclear weapons in Ukraine like it was claimed falsely because there are no political or military goals which can be achieved by employment of the Russian technical nuclear weapons in Ukraine. Nevertheless, for weeks, Russia is being accused of this sinister plan.

Dempsey: Thanks, Sergey. I think language and rhetoric do matter when it comes to war and how one side sees the whole perception of the nuclear threat. I'd like to go to Romania, to Cornell Feruţă. Actually, I'm not going to Romania, I'm going to Washington. Good afternoon, Ambassador. You have a long experience and you've been working with the IEA for some time. Now you're very much involved in security issues and now you're the State Secretary for Global Affairs and Diplomatic Strategies.

I don't envy this job, but I suppose my question to you, given where Romania comes from and you're heavily involved in this, and now Romania hosts some of the United States missile defense sites, could you give us some idea if at all Romania, what verifiable arms control could actually complement deterrence? It's a very complicated question, but we can't not do anything. We cannot remain in this rut forever because the idea of proliferation and the deepening of distrust actually gets worse and worse.
Cornel Feruță: Thank you very much. I will definitely address that. I have to make an addition. In the meantime, I switched jobs and I'm now based in New York as a permanent resident for the United Nations, but of course, I'm very pleased to be here, anyway. I want before addressing the key question that you asked, I want to address one of the comment that Sergey Rogov made. As tempting as it may be to be attracted and absorbed by the idea that it's doable, it's easy to project a new arms control arrangement, I think the circumstances are completely different. The arms control arrangements at the end of the Cold War were possible because they were driven by a political will to create a predictable future. While now we are in a situation where there is an attempt to rewrite history, and that's the big problem. The first point.

The second point, trust, and you mentioned it at the beginning as well, is trust before 24th of February and trust after the 24th of February. For any arms control arrangement, we need trust and trust doesn't exist. In order to create trust, you need to have a dialogue. That's the biggest challenge that I think we can identify nowadays. The question that you asked can be asked exactly in the same logic, which is Russia's aggression led to a strengthening of the NATO's deterrence and defense posture. It's a fact. It happened, it was confirmed at the Madrid Summit, the NATO's strategy concept. It's a reality that I think not only acknowledges the new parameters but also projects expectations for the future.

Normally I don't do that, but the NATO strategy concepts clearly says the strategic stability delivered through effective deterrence and defense, arms control and disarmament, and meaningful and reciprocal political dialogue remains essential to our security. That's the key notion that I think is guiding the action by allies and Romanians as well. The option of strengthening NATO's posture was there simply because Russia has identified NATO as adversary. Not only this particular issue, but as Sergey Rogov also mentioned, the way different decisions by different countries to adhere to NATO was perceived in Moscow. You want to interject here?

Dempsey: First of all, congratulations on your job. I'll have to update your CV, which is you still haven't answered the question, actually.

Feruță: I was about to.

Dempsey: This is very high arms control compliment. It's all very well having deterrence on what NATO is doing now, but you can't continue this in a vacuum. In some ways, can it be complimented with some reciprocal verifiable arms control? I know it's very, very difficult, but very briefly, do you think it's possible in some way?

Feruță: I think it is possible, and there is no contradiction between promoting a strong deterrence and at the same time pursuing arms control. In many instances, I think a strong deterrence is a prerequisite for efficient and effective arms control arrangements. The simple answer, and that's how we see it in Bucharest, that's what the NATO strategy concept as well is hinting to. It is doable, it's feasible. Are we there? Well, we're going to discuss in this session. We are going to discuss after that as well. Probably we're not there. The conditions are not ripe to create the dialogue and the trust that would lead to meaningful outcomes.
Dempsey: I'm glad you bring up this point because this brings me very nicely to Dr. Notte. Good afternoon, Dr. Notte. It's very nice to have you on the panel. We haven't had the opportunity to meet yet. You've spoken at length to both Europeans and Russians about arms control and I just look at your biography and your CV and all the articles you've written on this. Do you really see any prospects for progress, either as part of an agreement to end the war or afterwards? If you don't want to answer this question, can you give us at least some idea how we're going to kick start arms control? Thank you.

Hanna Notte: Thank you very much, Judy. It's an honor to be on such an esteemed panel. I'm happy to answer your question. The first thing I want to say is, if we talk about arms control as part of an agreement that ends this war, we should note that Russia had an opportunity for serious arms control measures to avert this war. If we look at the US responses to the draft treaties that were on the table, there were Russian analysts writing in January and February that Russia should pocket those gains and move on.

Russia had another chance in March, April in the Istanbul process. If we look at the plan that was on the table then, again, serious conventional arms control measures on the table, Russia chose further escalation. I do want to note that it doesn't appear to be the case at the moment that Russia is ready to take that path. I believe there's a calculation in Moscow that the further trajectory of this war will put Russia into an advantageous position.

In terms of going forward, let me answer your question. I think if we want to ask, is arms control possible? It's good to differentiate between nuclear arms control and attendant issues that the United States wants to address in a follow on framework to the New START treaty. That's something mostly to be negotiated between the US and Russia, and then conventional arms control in Europe and some of the issues that Russia has raised in its draft treaties. As the Russian Deputy Foreign Minister, Lavrov, noted earlier this year, there's some issues that are part of the fabric of both pots, for instance, missile deployments, but that the agendas are not completely identical concentric circles. In terms of how Russians and Europeans look at both of those pieces, let me briefly address that.

I think the greater prospect here is on nuclear arms control. The US has professed readiness to go back into those talks if Russia shows "good faith", which to my reading assumes at a minimum a resumption of onsite inspections under the current New START treaty. The United States does somewhat imply that it's possible to have those talks even if the war is still ongoing, if the window to 2026 is closing.

I do think that doing that would also not be seen as a problem from the European point of view to have a conversation that is, I think, predominantly focused on at a minimum, preserving the current limits under the New START treaty. I think that should be the absolute priority because doing more would be a harder lift. There's other issues that the United States and Russia had hoped to address in the strategic stability dialogue, non-strategic nuclear weapons, missile defenses, I would say it's incredibly hard to negotiate those issues while the war is ongoing, because the position on those items will change with the trajectory of the war.
Russian analysts are already reflecting on how Russia's own position in those negotiations might change because of the war. One final word on conventional arms control in Europe. Now, I do think it's premature to engage Russia on conventional arms control at this time. Even if this war ends with Russia, we can conventionally, which will likely be the case. I think getting the Europeans comfortable with this idea of conventional arms control will be really hard. Ambassador Feruță mentioned the complete leg of trust.

We can also have a conversation whether there might be some discrepancies between the Eastern European and the Baltic States and perhaps Germany and France. I think the nervousness in Warsaw is perhaps even much greater than in Berlin. I do think once we get to that point after the war, to have a conversation on conventional arms control in Europe, it's absolutely vital that the United States makes it clear to Russia that it will not have a conversation with Moscow over the heads of the Europeans.

That the Europeans have to be at the table for those conversations and that Moscow cannot shun platforms like the OSCE, for instance. The toolkit to do conventional arms control, buffer zones, limits ceilings, notifications, I guess is there. Judy, I really think the key question will not be, do we have ideas? The key question will be political will on the Russian side, first and foremost. Then we in Europe have to ask ourselves a really hard question. Do we think that after everything that's happened, we can just build a wall, keep Russia out, deter and defend that's the only game in town? Or do we think that arms control would have a role to play? I think that's an incredibly hard question to answer at this point because we're still in this war.

Dempsey: What the war does to the mentality certainly of many of the members states of NATO. Hanna, I want to pick up very quickly before I go back to the participants on the panelists. Given the hat you wear, and Dr. Smith may come in this later, the European are particularly united over this whole question of arms control or how to deal with Russia or conventional forces in Europe discussions. You touched on the Baltic States and Poland. There's a quite a substantial divide now between Western Europeans and the East Europeans. What would bring them together with United States to have a common negotiating posture?

Notte: I think it's a difficult question. It's true that there is this divergence. I think it shouldn't be overexaggerated and the divergent has existed before this war. I think probably the Eastern European states and the Baltic States were always more skeptical towards the notion of doing arms control with Russia in previous years compared to perhaps Berlin or Paris. Now, the Germans have also become more skeptical, but the polls even more skeptical. The spectrum has moved further to the skepticism, I would say. I was at a conference in Berlin last week where someone evoked a really powerful image. The idea that we need to have shared nightmares in Europe and the problem that when we go to bed to sleep in Madrid or in Warsaw, or in Berlin, we don't have the same nightmares. There's other nightmares in Poland than in Berlin.

This notion that we really need to have common threat perceptions. Of course, I think threat perceptions vis-a-vis Russia have certainly changed with this war in Ukraine. If you look at the latest poll numbers, the Korba Foundation released the Berlin Pulse a few weeks ago. I think 22% of Germans say that they see Russia as a
major military threat to Germany, which means that almost 80% see it as a minor threat or not threat at all. I would assume that those numbers look quite different if you look towards the Baltic States and the Eastern European states. I think how do you forge unity? I think it's really critical that the United States in particular engages even more as it did in the past with all allies to make sure that they stay on the same page in whatever is being pursued with Russia going forward.

Dempsey: Thanks, Hanna. I'm not so sure they're on the same page at all, frankly, given the debate among the social Democrats who are the main partners in the coalition here in Germany, they're completely divided over how to deal with Russia, over how to deal with Ukraine, over arms deliveries, over arms control. The discussion-- It's very confused and it's not at all constructive when you're actually dealing with NATO, when you're actually dealing with this Russia war and Ukraine. Before I go to Dr. Smith, Sergey, I want to ask you something. How do you see the European situation now visibly Russia and Ukraine in terms of where it's going especially with the arms control issue?

Rogov: Oh, as I said, it's very difficult to expect arms control negotiations between Russia and European countries. One reason that I already mentioned that the [coughs] conditions of the CFE Treaty, eligible CFE Treaty and expanded CFE treaty, cannot be applied to the new situation.

Dempsey: I know we've discussed that before, but let's move on.

Rogov: The second question is we don't know what will be the outcome of the present military conference. There could be at least [unintelligible 00:28:31]. Russian defeat, which many people in the West believe, and I think it's totally unlikely. It's a Ukrainian defeat which is more likely. The ceasefire agreement like it was signed in Korea, in Vietnam, in Afghanistan, in previous wars by [unintelligible 00:29:01]. Finally, the scenario which when western countries, when NATO countries move their forces into Ukraine. That, as Putin said, would lead to a global catastrophe. What is perceived as Russian nuclear threats in the West is a message, a deterrent message against the direct western conventional involvement in the fighting in Ukraine.

Dempsey: What would you like to see?

Rogov: Excuse me.

Dempsey: What would you like to see in all these options? What's your desired option, briefly?

Rogov: My personal desired option is ceasefire. It's not an ideal solution, but it will stop the tremendous destruction and blood letting, it will create possibility to resume serious negotiations. I hope I will have a chance to speak what kind of negotiations would be conducted in this [unintelligible 00:30:18].

Dempsey: Thanks, Sergey. I have really noted this down. Dr. Smith over to NATO. NATO is sometimes, as you know, ambiguous or cautious about discussing nuclear issues and arms control, and so on. I know this is a very difficult question given the kind of hat you're wearing and your position inside NATO. What's the feeling inside
NATO now about the idea of arms control, if and when it could resume? On what basis could it? Is there a consensus among all the members now that arms control is just so important to start again as soon as possible?

Smith: Thanks, Judy. I think you gave me the opportunity, and I do want to come back quickly to one of the earlier points, and then I will come to your question-

Dempsey: Please.

Smith: -that's fundamental. I want to push back a little bit. I think on even where you were-- Of course, we each are a democracy as members of NATO there are divergent views and parties and publics and legislators and so on but what has been forged and is fully forged to borrow some words from Hanna, is the unity and the resolve that we have come together. Again, unfortunately, as a result of the war, meaning it's an unfortunate reason for that resolve to be further strengthened, but it is fundamental. The shared nightmare, I think has been realized and we are resolved.

The discussion is healthy because it's under that rubric of resolve and a commitment to our strategic concept and to our change in posture. I think, at least within the house of NATO and in the engagements, I've had with capitals and with the allies and future allies, there's no question. I think it's important to take that away, like healthy dialogue, but we're moving forward. To your question, it is a tough question, but again, and I don't mean to be cliche, to point back to the strategic concept, but it is the foundational document of how we think. It takes a lot of work to come to it and to the agreements that are made at the Madrid Summit that surrounded it.

That resolved the question that you asked, which is the way to ensure that we remain effective and adaptive as a defensive alliance within the arms control space is through deterrence and defense. Let's make sure that our arms-control disarmament and non-proliferation policies and approaches and practices compliment deterrents and defense and deterrents and defense, in turn, compliments that portfolio. You read it out. Thank you, Cornel. That's been agreed and it was agreed purposefully and with strong resolve. Of course, the nuance as you call out is in a post-conflict, whatever that looks like. What is the future?

I'll just close with I think there's basically a short, mid, and long-term future for NATO in answering that question. In the short term, it's uphold the current regimes and treaties and keep this fragile architecture as sustained as we can, as an alliance. Again, NATO not as a signatory to anything. In the midterm, it's assessed how some of those are working, and again, across the spectrum as has been called out from conventional to nuclear and non-proliferation and beyond, and then in the longer term to continue to adapt and then change if needed. That I think has to be a very measured process through however we come out of this war.

Dempsey: Hanna, do you want to come in here? What I find very-- I don't want to get emotional about it, but intellectually upsetting is the perceptions inside Europeans and how they see the war in Ukraine on the one hand. On the other hand, and I was listening to Rafael Grossi very carefully, the breakdown of institutional memory when it comes to arms control, that you need the memory, you need the personnel, you need the instruments, you need the know-how, you need
the older generation officials and younger ones, which Carnegie is clearly trying to attract into the whole role of disarmament.

What's the crux here? Is it Russia's war in Ukraine or is something deeply more worrying about the whole breakdown of arms control, which gives other countries who have ambitions for nuclear proliferation to capitalize on this breakdown? If anybody wants to come in here, I'd be delight, but I think it's a big question that has to be answered.

Feruță: Well, if I may venture into that, but before, I also want to encourage ourselves not to be too hard on ourselves. I would say that after the 24th of February, there was an impressive show of unity of purpose, commonality of purpose, in the Euro-Atlantic space and within European Union as well. Hanna’s point on our nightmares, nightmares that we have within this space, maybe this is probably a flow of the system and that also dovetails with the question that you are asking about the institutional memory, about the knowledge, about the real risks we're facing. Probably we have to do more ourselves.

We have to take it upon ourselves that people actually don't get a clear idea about the very dangerous situation we are in. We are now probably at the lowest point of our security environment. The unspeakable has been spoken, and that's the problem. The unthinkable became a possible scenario. I'm personally puzzled by the casualty with which a number of commentators are looking at the use of a tactical nuclear weapon. That brings, again, to this issue of trust. Trust is not only about what has happened and linked to the emotional aspects of what has happened from the 24th of February. Is trust linked to our ability to implement responsibilities and commitments and arms control regime?

Any arms control regime actually requires accessibilities and duties from all of us. That's what Russia actually has not fulfilled. We are not there simply, at this point, to create the conditions for an arms control discussion, simply because Russia is still aggressing Ukraine, is still violating international law. When this changes, of course, we'll be looking at how we can create more added value. One last point I want to make to just get a sense of how deteriorated the environment has become. The concept of nuclear deterrence is also very much abused and misused in a way that was not done before the 24th of February.

The scale of history, the eight-month that have passed probably will not be that long, but quite a lot has been happening. I'm sure that at the end of the day, what will form the basis of any future arms control arrangements will be massively influenced by the mental threshold that we have passed through, through this type of rhetoric. The rhetoric itself, the nuclear rhetoric, is very damaging and discouraging and that's why going back to Hanna's point, probably we should have all the same nightmares in this space and not only the Atlantic space, I think all over the world.

Notte: Judy, if I may come in-

Dempsey: Yes, please, Hanna [crosstalk]--

Notte: Just on passing mental thresholds and why perhaps we in Germany might not be where Poland or the Eastern European states are today. I also think one has to
see things somewhat in relation. Let's not forget that before this war, we had a very healthy debate in Germany about the future participation in nuclear sharing, a long and painful debate about the replacement of the tornadoes for Germany's participation in the dual-capable aircraft mission. We had pressure to join the TPNW as an observer. We had really a sizable part of German elites who wanted to see an end to Germany's participation in nuclear sharing, including parts of the Green party.

Where are we today? A lot has changed since February. We moved ahead with the procurement of the F35s pretty much straight away. The Green Party has done, I think, a 180 on a lot of issues. The base of the Green Party in Germany is now the most vocal in supporting armed supplies to Ukraine. I do think one also has to see the path that has already been taken and see where we came from with a legacy of decades of being very resistant to two things like arm supplies for instance.

Dempsey: I don't want to get into the nitty of German politics, Hanna, but you remember the Greens under [unintelligible 00:39:13] pushed for the coalition to support the war on Kosovo, the NATO bombing. The Greens have moved very far away from their pacifist to the more proactive and taking on responsibility towards defense and security but this is another issue, which is probably for another panel, but I would like to go back to where we are today. Here we are, as Hanna rightly pointed out, and there still isn't this common security threat, especially the South. There's migration in the Middle East more than what's happening in Ukraine and Russian war in Ukraine. I was wondering, we still have to get back to the nitty gritty.

Is there any scope to prepare the ground even now, although the war is continuing on a basis, is there any scope for NATO or for the European-- The nuclear powers, for instance, or Germany to try to work out some position if and when the day after comes? [crosstalk]

Smith: Judy, I'd be happy to come in on that first. [crosstalk]

Dempsey: Yes, please.

Smith: It is a tough question and that's also, I think, my job and my remit at NATO to drive that question. I will say, I think there's a very clear answer which is that now is not the time to be preparing the specifics of any replacement to the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty or the future, the list goes on, but now is the time to be doing the thinking and the homework about the technologies that are available, the types of frameworks that could be available. How the arms control disarmament community might adapt both as a result of the war, but just because we needed to do that already. Some of these agreements are very old, some of them, as I started by saying, are fragile.

If I could actually bring that then back to your prior question about the level of worry, there are areas to worry about and we've, I think, talked about them already. Some of those are also though that we, I think, haven't had an aggressive look at how to take technologies beyond just the nuclear verification side, but in other ways, open source intelligence, the role of information in the information environment, and both as a misdis information challenge, but how information can be used in future regimes, whatever they may look like, whether it's normative or an actual legal treaty.
Then on the not-worrying side, I think if you bucket the geopolitical environment of a future of arms control, that's different than the technical environment of arms control. I think there's a lot of work that we can and should be doing. Those of you who were here with administrator Ruby yesterday, heard her talk about that, like, let's be ready so that when the political environment is ready and those political negotiators come together, hopefully with the technical folks and say, "Here we are," then we actually have some capabilities to deliver for it.

**Dempsey**: Thank you very much. Yes, that's very important. The questions are coming in. I think we should go straight to the questions. I've got a couple of questions so far. The four of you will have to decide to jump in.

This is from Daryl Kimball. "Portus President of the United States and Russia Federation leadership agree and have made high profile statements that they're both interested in and ready to begin negotiations on a new nuclear arms-controlled framework to supersede a New START before 2026. The question is when and how they begin, and what their priority goals might be." This is another seminar. Whoever answer, this could you make it brief, because there's a lot of questions.

Sergey, I've got one separately for you in a minute, but whoever wants to jump in, please do, and Sergey, you too, of course.

**Rogov**: You want me to respond now or wait?

**Dempsey**: No, go ahead. When and how they begin, and their priority goals might be?

**Rogov**: As I already said, well, the problem is the refusal of the United States and NATO to maintain any serious dialogue with Russia. The resumption of the dialogue is conditioned by the demand that Russia should accept its defeat. That's not [crosstalk]--

**Dempsey**: Sergey, excuse me, that is not quite true, that the United States is saying that Russia should concede defeat. [crosstalk]

**Rogov**: I heard President Biden said yesterday that responding to President Putin's speech, that Russia should withdraw.

**Dempsey**: That's different from defeat. It really is. We don't want to get into the blame game, we're not going to get anywhere with this. We're talking about how to build up confidence and trust. [crosstalk]

**Rogov**: My point is that Russia is ready today to resume discussions, to resume serious negotiations. Here comes the question whether it's possible to resume the work of the Russian United Council.

**Dempsey**: Wow.

**Rogov**: Can we agree on establishment of solid regular meal-to-meal communication, not only on the central level but also at the regional local level? Can we try to explore whether it's possible to limit military exercise, their location, and the size of the participation?
Dempsey: Thanks, Sergey, for this. Well, we've been through the CFE over the years and I've covered it and it was so depressing how Russia walked away from it. I know all the reasons in any case. Can somebody else pop in here, just to deal with this, depending how it might begun, or is this too academic, what the priority should be, the goal should be, or should we leave this for another day which Wendin was saying, actually it's too early.

Smith: I'm happy to come in from a NATO perspective. I recognize [clears throat] I am an American by background, but here I'm wearing a NATO hat and I speak not as an American. From a NATO perspective, there is a strong commitment and it's been vocally and publicly put forward too, of our strong support for the US to continue its strategic stability dialogue with Russia, when it determines the time is right.

To get at Daryl's question, I think a bit, everyone I think is very conscious of. In diplomatic negotiating time scales, 2026 is tomorrow. We have to start now. We again, being not me, but so I think there will be-- It's maybe a poor answer, but a true answer, which is that all parties are very conscious of that time scale, and all doors are open to coming responsibly to the table. I think that will be the driver ultimately, is a time pressure because it is in the interest of both parties, both meaning the US and Russia

Dempsey: Yes, Hanna.

Notte: If I may come in on this question that Daryl asked specifically. I think Russian officials have engaged in somewhat conflicting messages in terms of when to resume the strategic stability dialogue. Some Russian officials said it's when the purposes of the goals of the special military operation "have been met," but Dmitry Peskov in the summer said, for instance, "We should work on a framework to supersede New START as soon as possible."

The United States, I think is very clearly keeping the door open for those talks. It talks about Russia showing some good faith, which as I said earlier in my remarks, requires at a minimum that Russia resumes onsite inspections under the current treaty so that the two sites can show that the current treaty does work. Once they go back, I think the priorities should very clearly be at a minimum to maintain the current ceilings that exist under the New START Treaty.

Again, this might already be a heavy lift because also of some resistance perhaps in the US system. I think that would be absolutely vital, and then if it's possible, to go towards lower ceilings. As I said, to tackle some of those other issues in the strategic stability dialogue that both sides rightly want to tackle, I just think it's very difficult to do that while the war is ongoing, to talk about non-strategic nuclear weapons or missile defenses because negotiating positions will be affected by the war.

Dempsey: Of course. Sergey, in principle, you would agree to some of these ideas that Hanna raises, given that 2026 is around [unintelligible 00:48:14] [crosstalk]--

Rogov: Russia's position is that we are ready to resume negotiations if the United States agrees to remove those obstacles today and inspections, as she mentions. [crosstalk]
Dempsey: Sergey, a very quick question and I'm sure all of you could answer this, too. Yes or no. Do American Pentagon or White House or NATO talk to your colleagues in Moscow?

Rogov: No, -[crosstalk]

Dempsey: The experts.

Rogov: -and vice versa.

Dempsey: No, you said.

Rogov: The Russian Embassy is in fact blockaded in Washington.

Dempsey: I'm not talking about the embassy. You don't need an embassy. I'm talking about the hotlines, too. [crosstalk]

Rogov: The military people at the embassy, the military attache, the same as in Moscow. There was recently, a telephone call between Russian and American defense ministers and the chief of the general staff, and the chairman of the joint chiefs. For more than six months there were no such discussions. Of course, well, there are plenty of questions which have to be discussed at the mid-level, not at the top level, in [unintelligible 00:49:41]. [crosstalk]

Dempsey: Yes, indeed.

Rogov: The resumption of the negotiations, might help us to get a new agreement between Russia and the United States. It's something which probably will not be a legal blinding treaty since their Senate in its present move will never again ratify an arms control treaty. It could be an executive agreement [coughs] like [unintelligible 00:50:18]

Dempsey: I think we should just leave out the word never. Time is moving on and I've got a question [unintelligible 00:50:28] [crosstalk]-

Rogov: Do you believe that the Democrats will get two-thirds of the Senate and the House a week from now?

Dempsey: I am an Irish citizen.

[audience laughing]

Dempsey: We just have to get on to another question. John Souter. "Everyone knows the existential position of Ukraine in this war. Is it possible that Russia also sees this as existential, too?" Sergey, I think I'll let Hannah and the others and my Romanian colleague answer this, then you can pop in, but we have to make the answers rather brief. Do you want me to repeat the question? Is it possible that Russia also sees this as an existential war, too?

Rogov: There is a perception in Russia today that there is a war between Russia and what is called the collective West. It is the United States and NATO who are using Ukraine as an instrument against Russia. It's sufficient to watch Russian TV to
hear all kinds of propaganda elaborating on these ideas, but the same is true about
the mass media in the United States and Europe, which is promoting all kinds of
nonsense concerning Russia.

Let me go back to the nuclear agreement. It should probably cover not only strategic
but non-strategic nuclear weapons. That is going to be difficult but possible. It should
be the agreement which would provide maybe for 10% no more reduction of the
number [unintelligible 00:52:17] workers and delivery vehicles.

**Smith:** Judy, I'm happy to-

**Dempsey:** Please.

**Smith:** -come in. I think Sergey was hoping to come to you maybe as well. I think I'll
be a bit personal for a moment and say that I had the opportunity to sit in the last
NATO-Russia Council in January, where the Russian delegation clearly expressed
their views. It was during the period where we were exchanging treaties and
responses. I do think and I think that, again, it goes to the strategic concept. There
was a clear point from Russia that, to the overall question you started me with as
well, common security may mean something different to Russia right now than our
sense of common security or common peace and stability.

That's why dialogue is needed with a productive credible partner so that we can
understand if there is a difference, and at that point, we were not having a productive
conversation. Yes, maybe and let's explore that if there is a difference in how that
perception may drive action.

**Feruță:** If I may-

**Dempsey:** Yes.

**Feruță:** -if I may step in. I would say that there is a strong record of a reasonable,
responsible engagement by NATO countries, and what we are seeking in general, in
Romania as well, is predictability of our security environment, and a good
relationship from this point of view with Russia as well. In order to be able to project
the future, you need first and foremost, to de-escalate. Again, I come to the point we
are not there yet to simply say that conditions can be created.

In general, I think, the level of engagement that we have shown so far including
before the 24th of February, and you mentioned NATO Russia Council, Wendin, I
think shows exactly that we take that into account, and missile defense was part of
the conversation. We've been explaining quite clearly that the missile defense
system that we host in Romania can be definitely part of the conversation that we
have with Russia and reciprocal measures of transparency.

I think the offer is there. It's just a matter of to decide when exactly the conditions are
created, but creating predictability for our security environment is essential.

**Dempsey:** Ambassador Feruță, I want to jump in here. You mentioned this issue,
but we have a very different element now entering this Russian war in Ukraine, and
this role of Iran providing drones. This is not only escalation, it's actually widening it.
It's bringing in different so-called allies for Moscow, and one wonders what
Turkey is going to do to mediate this. This is a very different dimension now bringing in Iranian drones. Sergey, how do you justify bringing in Iranian drones?

Rogov: What about Turkish drones? What about all American weapons which are provided to Ukraine? It's not something which is exceptional, although

Dempsey: There's actually a big difference. One is the idea of the Iranian drones and bringing in different allies, but secondly, the extraordinary destruction on the civilian infrastructure that these drones are doing. Do you know what I mean?

Rogov: You have to remember that most of the destruction was done not by drones, but by Russian missiles, and this change in the tactics of Russian forces attacking economic infrastructure, and it happened after two events which took place a month ago.

First of all, the explosion of Russian gas pipelines. In Russia, everybody believes it was done by the West, by the United States, the UK, or Poland, and somehow Russia is not permitted to participate in the investigation, and then attack on the Crimean Bridge, which was done by Ukraine, while Russia responded by attacking the economic infrastructure of Ukraine-- I'm not justifying this section, I'm reminding you about the chain of events.

Dempsey: Thanks, Sergey, for reminding us. about the whole details of this [unintelligible 00:57:17] [crosstalk]--

Rogov: May I ask one question. What if it is proven that the pipelines got blown up by NATO countries? What response could be? [crosstalk]

Dempsey: Sergey, I think it's very important to say this because what we're getting into now is a completely different perception and dialogue on how we perceive each other, and it's an endless conspiratorial blame game, and we're never going to get security in Europe if we don't rise above this. [crosstalk]

Rogov: Through this, [unintelligible 00:57:51] [crosstalk]--

Dempsey: I've got a question from Saheel Shah, [unintelligible 00:58:00] "Is NATO still prepared to pursue developing a crisis-proof technically resilient hotline?" Good question. "Hotline with Russia at the leadership level?"

Smith: I'm happy to take that first [unintelligible 00:58:15] [crosstalk].

Dempsey: Yes, please. Thank you.

Smith: I'll answer it more broadly, and then come specifically to that. In that open door to communication with Moscow, which remains open, all risk reduction, escalation reduction, any measures that will enhance predictability and stability are on the table. Certainly, a hotline, I think, is one of those. Is that the most effective at this moment? I think there are others as well, but absolutely.

Feruță: Judy, if I could make a--
Dempsey: Please.

Feruţă: Because that's important that you raise the key point about the Iranian drones. Beyond their political and the humanitarian damage that they are doing, I think, that creates also a very direct connection with the resolution 2231 of the Security Council, because Iran was not supposed, under that resolution, which actually is the resolution that endorsed the JCPOA, to provide those, and Russia was not entitled to accept the type of technology.

I think it goes beyond the symbolic nature and the humanitarian impact is very significant. I think it has already consequences, and of course, we should be looking at those very carefully.

Dempsey: Thanks for that, Ambassador. Hanna, I've got a question here, I think it's for you, and Sergey, I'm sure, would pop in as well, from Tim Tease, "How do you assess the prospects for a resumption of New START inspections?" Oh, we've touched on this before but if you could be a bit more concrete and brevity is always a plus. Sergey, you can pop in if you want to as well [unintelligible 00:59:53]. [crosstalk]

Notte: Sorry, Judy, I have to say I don't have any special insights. I'm at think tanker, I don't work for government. I do understand from our American interlocutors that they are working hard to make this work and to return to these inspections that the dialogue on this is ongoing with the Russian side, but clearly both sides are not there yet. What is exactly holding that up, I cannot speak to.

Dempsey: Sergey.

Rogov: There has been a trend to dismiss Russian complaints, and one of such complaint is related to [unintelligible 01:00:27] inspections and that's closing certain areas for Russia and denial of visas, et cetera. Russia is responding in the same way but let me mention another very important Russian claim which was dismissed, that the [coughs] the [unintelligible 01:00:51] launchers can launch not only interceptors but defensive missiles.

Today, it's a proven fact and Russia were proposed not to deploy the new offensive intermediate-range missiles, both conventional nuclear, suggest that on-site inspections, not only Romania and in Poland.

[unintelligible 01:01:18] just based in Poland will become operational [coughs] but also in Russia. In case of Poland, there would be Polish participation inspections in Kaliningrad, and in case of Romania, could be, in my view, Romanian participation in inspections in Crimea.

Dempsey: Okay, well, that sounds [chuckles] very interesting. I think the inspections of Crimea is around the corner. By the way, there's a question here about how do you [unintelligible 01:01:50] [crosstalk]--

Rogov: I thought our Romanian probably wants to [unintelligible 01:01:54] [crosstalk].

Feruţă: Yes, I simply wanted to interject briefly. [crosstalk]
Dempsey: Briefly. There'll be a couple more questions.

Feruță: Yes, because I think the missile defense in Romania, which is the NATO missile defense is purely defensive and of course, you know that we've been showing a maximum level of openness and transparency together with our NATO allies. That was also part of the conversation that we had back in January this year, in the context of the Russian proposals for security treaties.

All in all, I think we should not have vet from the original meaning of the system itself, which again is defensive, but that probably at some point will be part of our conversations together with allies and Russia.

Dempsey: At last, I think we're coming up towards the end. I've got a question here if I may read it out. Jest Rogers-- And by the way, it's very interesting this focus on START really preoccupies so many of the participants out there and 2026 is really around the corner. Here's the question, "The New START negotiations benefited heavily from the two presidents issuing joint statements that first laid out the subject and scope of the new agreement, and then contained limit ranges. Given Biden's and Putin's unwillingness to meet, how might we successfully propel the follow-on negotiations forward this time?" It's a really important question.

Rogov: Well, I might tell you that Putin never felt he does not want to meet Biden. Just recently, he hinted that he would like to see Biden at the G20 Summit. It's American position, it's Biden who refuses to meet Putin and some other Western leaders. First of all, what's required is the political will of the two presidents to launch [unintelligible 01:04:00]

Dempsey: Thanks, Sergey, for this. Hanna or Wendin, would you like to pop in here? [unintelligible 01:04:08] [crosstalk]

Notte: It is a good question enough. We had the summit last summer in Geneva between the president that gave new impetus to the strategic stability dialogue. Subsequently, the working groups were put in place and started working so there is, I think, something to be said for very high-level diplomacy to set these things into motion and it's hard to see at present how such a meeting could be possible.

I do think it's more difficult but not impossible to still continue the dialogue on these issues given that the two sides that are negotiating those also know each other fairly well, and there's some groundwork has already been laid, even though they remained conceptually fairly apart in that strategic stability dialogue thus far.

Rogov: Remember what happened to such a progressive democratic member of the [unintelligible 01:05:01], who signed the letter while supporting Ukraine also, calling for negotiations. How much pressure then was put on them and what accusations forced them to withdraw that [unintelligible 01:05:18].

Dempsey: Thanks for this answer and there's one more. We really are getting towards the end. It's from Oliver Meyer and I think this is for our NATO colleague. "Bonnie Jenkins, yesterday confirmed that the Biden administration wants to include non-strategic nuclear weapons in a follow on to New START agreement. Is [unintelligible 01:05:45] prepared to bring the nuclear weapons deployed under
nuclear sharing into such an agreement and how is it preparing the ground for such talks?" I bet you're not going to answer this.

**Smith:** Thanks, John. It's going to sound like a cop-out and I don't mean it to be but I'll go back to the way I answered before, which is that NATO is prepared to support the United States in its negotiations, as those environments become possible. Certainly, non-strategic nuclear weapons have been on the radar of many individual allies, and NATO at a leadership level as well. I think our Secretary-General is committed to disarmament, probably more than many others in the building even. Certainly, there's an option to entertain, but it has to be through the United States in that dialogue.

**Dempsey:** Okay and we have NATO on the panel, we've got Hanna on the panel, we have Romania, and we have Russia. I've got a very short question for all of you and the answer is going to be short. It's very complicated, because interesting this discussion, was about START, about lack of trust, about lack of a common set perception.

My question is this, living in the middle of Europe, I am living in Berlin, and there's an awful lot of ambiguities here in Berlin and multilateralism, and disarmament, and so on, and Ukraine is a two-hour plane ride. Given what's happening in the Middle East and Iran, given what's happening with the whole breakdown of non-proliferation, when we're sitting here and discussing these issues, whether or not arms control can really start after the war ends in Ukraine, what is at stake? Hanna, could you tell me what is at stake here?

**Notte:** Well, I think if you link it back to the New Start negotiations, if we enter an environment after 2026, where we have no constraints on the strategic arsenal, both sides will enter a whole different ballgame. I'm not sure we're prepared for it intellectually and we'll have less of a stable context in Europe to also try to pursue conventional arms control and risk reduction and transparency and other things. I think a lot is at stake, also for Europeans.

**Dempsey:** Indeed, an office representative to other players outside Europe. Wendin, can I talk to you, please, a question what's at stake?

**Smith:** I'll give you two words and then let me say one sentence after them.

**Dempsey:** Of course.

**Smith:** Strategic predictability is at stake, and why I say I want a sentence after that is I think, where we all need to think about and this community is the one to do it is, do we even talk about arms control disarmament, non-proliferation, security? Should we be talking about those in the same words that we have for decades? I don't think so.

This is now a personal view. I think those words are antiquated, and they're not the right ones anymore. I think it's what's at stake is strategic stability and predictability but for those in the nuclear community, that doesn't mean just nuclear anymore. That means climate, and cyber and hybrid, and all of these things.
Dempsey: That's very interesting how the whole panoply of issues have to be changed. Sergey, before I go to Ambassador Feruță. [crosstalk]

Rogov: [unintelligible 01:09:20] normalization of Russian, Western political and economic relations in my lifetime.

Dempsey: You can't.

Rogov: No, I cannot. Unfortunately, we are in the Second Cold War, Cold War 2.0 and it will continue for years and if not decades. That's a dangerous situation since its confrontation, which today has no rules. I see my task is to help to prevent a direct clash, which will lead to a nuclear war. Prevention of a nuclear war between Russia and the United States, and Russia and the West that requires negotiation of certain rules of competition like [unintelligible 01:10:16] during the First World War.

Dempsey: Thanks, Sergey for this and I hope the rest will just change little on your side-- Not your side personally, but Moscow. That's to Feruță and where you're sitting in Bucharest, in New York, Bucharest, what's at stake for you, after this long discussion?

Feruță: Well, I'm more inclusive, but not simply because it is not a semantic choice. I think it's a reality. Everything is at stake, where generations in this room and outside that have not been faced with, I would say such an unprecedented distortion of the security concepts after the Second World War. I think everything is at stake simply because, and where I'm sitting, and I was sitting in Bucharest, less than probably one hour before reaching the Ukrainian territory, I would simply say that more responsibility should be exercised along the way in the process.

I'm saying this even non-nuclear weapon states, simply to overcome the level of recklessness and the rhetoric that has been used in the past eight months. I would say everything is at stake and from this point of view, I could confess the time I'm quite alarmed.

Dempsey: Well, very few positive takeaways from this. I've got to really thank Dr. Smith from NATO and Dr. Rogov and Ambassador Feruță and Dr. Notte, first of all. I've got to thank the great organizers of this event, and the nuclear program team, James Acton and Toby Dalton and the great logistics people behind this, and then anybody back me up here, I want to really thank you. Thank you for inviting me.

[01:12:50] [END OF AUDIO]