Making the Case for Preserving the INF Treaty
A European Perspective

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Compliance problems

The significance of the INF Treaty:

- It erased the most dangerous weapons systems from the European theater (2,692 short-, medium-, and intermediate-range missiles)
- It created transparency and groundbreaking verification procedures

Compliance concerns:

- **US concerns:**
  - Theories:
    - RS-26 (Rubezh) “intermediate-range ICBM”
    - R-500 cruise missile (Iskander-K)
    - The testing of an intermediate-range SLCM (for example the SS-N-21)
  - 2014 Compliance Report: GLCM
  - Problems: we do not know which system, what kind of violation, or exactly when

- **Russian concerns:**
  - Certain U.S. ballistic target missiles
  - Armed, unmanned aerial vehicles
  - The launcher complex for the Aegis Ashore missile defense system
The mutual benefits of the INF Treaty

Benefits of arms control:
• Readiness to accept the status quo and agreeing to restraint → limited ambitions
• Reduce the cost of war and the amount of military spending
• Conditions to closely monitor potential adversaries, and measure their behavior
• Providing the necessary technical channels to address concerns

The INF was crucial for Europe because:
• It put an end to the Cold War arms race → stability in Europe
• Reduced tensions between the superpowers
• Created the conditions for further arms control agreements

Current situation:
• Tensions over Ukraine → arms control is in general distress
• Dangers of escalation + questionable future for arms control agreements
• Mistrust, misperceptions and deception

The continued benefits of the INF:
• Maintain a secure line of communication + stability and predictability (we already lost it in conventional) → few remaining tools to monitor (crucial times of modernization)
• Dangers: slip back into an arms race, destabilizing weapons, upset the military balance, trigger escalation + devastating effect on other arms control agreements
The relevance to the US and its allies

Why withdrawal is not a good solution:

- The US does not need these weapons to protect itself and to reassure its allies:
  - Little added value
  - Plenty of other options
- Devastating effect on other arms control agreements:
  - Current environment is not ideal for unilateral declarations
- A US withdrawal would be convenient for Moscow:
  - Right call:
    - To prevent Russia from deploying the new INF-missiles
    - To bring them back into compliance (Russia has only tested)
  - Cold War lesson: no major military gains to be achieved by the deployment of INF-weapons
The relevance to the US and its allies

Response strategy: silence is not an option

- Allies: direct exposure + increased blackmail potential for Russia → inconvenient questions about alliance cohesion
- Not a new type of threat, could not change the military balance
- Intention to decouple European allies from the US, testing NATO → only symbolic → the distress of arms control is more alarming, and maintaining it is more important

Political solution:
- Regular consultations and strong coordination between the US and its allies
- Increased reassurance measures
- Exploration of military responses that would minimize Russia’s potential gains

Military response:
- Proportionality(!)
- Take into account the roots of Russian paranoia
Recommendations

Modernizing the INF Treaty:

• It is imperative to save the few remaining arms control agreements
• **Use the momentum to modernize the Treaty:**
  – Clarify the range of cruise missiles
  – Include nuclear tipped SLCMs
  – Discuss combat drones
  – Verification and compliance – reinstate inspections, call for an SVC meeting
• Many options for both sides
• Key to success:
  – Reinstate communication
  – Reinforce commitment to the INF
  – Refrain from violation

∑:
  – Depoliticize the question and handle it where it belongs (SVC)
  – Dialogue, discourse and trust, instead of accusations, threats and military deployments
Thank you for the kind attention