

**Report to Congress**

**The Department of Defense Plan for Military  
Response Options to Russian Federation  
Violations of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear  
Forces Treaty**



**July 12, 2016**

## **A. Introduction**

This report is submitted in accordance with section 1243(c) and (d) of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 (Public Law 114-92), which provides that the Secretary of Defense shall submit this report to the appropriate congressional committees.

This report describes the plan for the development of military capabilities to counter and defend against intermediate-range missile attacks, in accordance with section 1243(d). This report also provides notification on the status and content of updates provided to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and allies of the United States in East Asia regarding the Russian Federation's flight-testing, operating capability, and deployment of a ground-launched cruise missile in violation of the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, in accordance with section 1243(c).

The INF Treaty is of unlimited duration and bans the possession, production, and flight-testing of ground-launched ballistic missiles (GLBM) and ground-launched cruise missiles (GLCM) with a range capability equal to or in excess of 500 kilometers (km), but not in excess of 5,500 km. The Treaty also bans the possession and production of launchers and associated support equipment and structures for such missiles. The Treaty required the complete elimination of all the approximately 800 U.S. and approximately 1,800 former Soviet ground-launched ballistic missiles (GLBMs) and ground-launched cruise missiles (GLCMs) with a range capability between 500 and 5,500 km, as well as their launchers and associated support equipment and structures.

## **B. Russian Federation's Violation of the INF Treaty**

In July 2014, the United States announced its determination that the Russian Federation violated its obligations under the INF Treaty not to possess, produce, or flight-test a GLCM with a range capability between 500 and 5,500 km or to possess or produce launchers of such missiles. Specifically, Russia has produced and flight-tested a ground-launched cruise missile system with a range well within the ranges prohibited by the INF Treaty.

As of the date of this report, the United States has no indication that the Russian Federation has begun taking measures to return to compliance with the INF Treaty.

## **C. Keeping NATO and Allies Informed**

The Administration has kept NATO and Asian allies informed of the status of the missile system that Russia has flight-tested, produced, and possesses in violation of its obligations under the INF Treaty. A more detailed accounting of these discussions with allies is contained in the classified Annex A to this report.

## **D. Military Assessment**

The Russian Federation's violation of the INF Treaty is a serious challenge to the security of the United States and its allies and partners; however, the development of this INF Treaty-violating

system is only part of an overall pattern of Russia's recent coercive and aggressive behavior. As a result of Russia's actions, the Joint Staff in 2014 conducted a military assessment of the threat posed by Russia if it were to deploy an INF Treaty-prohibited GLCM in Europe or the Asia-Pacific region. The assessment concluded that the deployment of such a system by the Russian Federation would increase Russian military capabilities against U.S. deployed forces and allies and poses an indirect threat to the continental United States.

The Joint Staff assessment led the Department of Defense (DoD) to review a range of military response options and the effect each option could have on convincing Russian leadership to return to compliance with the INF Treaty and on countering the capability of the prohibited GLCM system if Russia does not return to compliance. This assessment was conducted while the United States began confronting new strategic realities in Europe, including: a Russia that is destabilizing the European security order with its occupation and attempted annexation of Crimea and ongoing aggressive actions in eastern Ukraine; supporting separatists in Moldova and Georgia; actively seeking to divide NATO; and modernizing its military capabilities across a range of systems, including its nuclear weapons capabilities.

## **E. Responding to Russian Actions**

Russia's return to compliance with its obligations under the INF Treaty remains the preferable outcome, which argues against unilateral U.S. withdrawal from or abrogation of the INF Treaty at this time. However, given broader Russian aggressive actions and recognizing that Russia's return to compliance is unlikely without U.S. action, the Administration has decided to take a multi-pronged approach that seeks to reassure allies and partners, deter Russian coercive behavior, and ensure and enhance U.S. and allied ability to deny Russia any significant advantage—militarily or politically—that it could gain by fielding capabilities that violate the INF Treaty.

### *Comprehensive Strategy*

DoD identified a range of potential military responses to Russia's intermediate-range capabilities, including Russia's prohibited GLCM. The responses included active defenses to counter intermediate-range strike systems, counterforce capabilities to prevent Russian intermediate-range strikes, and countervailing strike capabilities to enhance U.S. or allied forces.<sup>1</sup> In considering these military options and other non-military options, the Administration determined that the best approach would be to consider Russian actions with regard to the INF Treaty in the context of Russia's overall aggressive and bellicose behavior. In other words, the Administration concluded responses should not focus on Russia's INF Treaty violation alone, given Russia is violating the INF Treaty while it is also flouting other international legal norms and generally destabilizing the European security order.

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<sup>1</sup> Defense options are designed to deny Russia offensive military capabilities a significant military advantage from employing intermediate-range strike systems by destroying them after launch. Counterforce options refer to the employment of air and missile forces in an effort to destroy, or render impotent, selected Russian military capabilities. Countervailing options refer to countering the effect of Russian capabilities with military responses of equal force during a time of crisis or war.

DoD is committing to a number of investments that, taken together, form a comprehensive response to the broader strategic environment, including Russian military actions, Russia's aggressive behavior, and its violation of the INF Treaty. This includes a range of efforts pursued unilaterally, bilaterally with allies and partners, and collectively with the NATO Alliance. A more detailed description of plans and budget information related to specific military response efforts is provided in the classified Annex B to this report.

### *Posture and Presence*

DoD will continue the President's European Reassurance Initiative (ERI), with \$3.4 billion requested in FY 2017. Leveraging ERI funding, the United States has maintained a persistent, rotational air, land, and sea presence in the Baltics and in Central Europe to reassure Allies, to build up capacity, and to reassert a credible conventional deterrent vis-à-vis Russia. ERI also enables the United States to expand bilateral and multilateral exercises in Europe to improve interoperability and to strengthen U.S. warfighting capability in the face of newer threats from Russia. Funding in FY 2018 and beyond will remain crucial as long as Russia's belligerent activities and INF Treaty violation continue.

ERI funding has enabled DoD, in coordination with our NATO Allies, to deploy tanks, Bradley Fighting Vehicles, self-propelled howitzers, and associated armored brigade combat team equipment in Baltic and Central European countries to support training and exercises by rotational units deployed to Europe. These deployments under Operation Atlantic Resolve consist of company-to-battalion-size units operating within the territory of several NATO Allies, including Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Bulgaria, Romania, and Poland. DoD plans to establish Army Prepositioned Stocks, to include an Armored Brigade Combat Team, Division Headquarters, and Fires Brigade equipment, which U.S.-based units can draw from when deploying to Europe in times of crisis.

Additionally, ERI funding has enabled the Navy to support multi-national exercises and information sharing in the Black and Baltic Seas. The Department plans for further investments in Theater Anti-Submarine Warfare, Keflavik Airfield Facilities Modification for P-8A aircraft, and Navy ISR capabilities to address current capability gaps.

### *Improving Defensive Measures*

DoD is working to improve defensive measures to blunt Russia's offensive capabilities, including its INF Treaty-prohibited GLCM, by modifying and expanding air defense systems, including addressing the difficult challenge posed by cruise missiles. DoD is also addressing this challenge through a series of formal studies designed to identify specific U.S. capability shortfalls and propose potential solutions to the Russian cruise missile threat.

### *Planning and Shaping Future Military Activities in Europe*

With the advent of ERI and NATO's Readiness Action Plan, both the United States and NATO are focusing on planning and shaping future military activities in response to the changed security environment in and around Europe.

Nuclear weapons remain a core component of NATO's deterrence and defense posture, along with conventional and missile defense forces. In this context, DoD, through NATO's Nuclear Planning Group's High Level Group (HLG) continues to examine options to ensure NATO's nuclear posture remains credible and survivable through the full spectrum of possible conflict.

The United States is leading the NATO Alliance in preparing for the new challenges posed by Russia. DoD is working to implement decisions made at the Wales and Warsaw Summits. NATO has enhanced the NATO Response Force, set up new command centers, and established the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force. As noted in the Warsaw Summit communiqué, NATO announced a decision to establish an enhanced forward presence in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland to unambiguously demonstrate, as part of our overall posture, the Alliance's solidarity, determination, and ability to act to triggering an immediate response to any aggression. Beginning in early 2017, enhanced forward presence will comprise multinational forces provided by framework nations and other contributing Allies on a voluntary, sustainable, and rotational basis. DoD is also asking NATO Allies to fulfill the commitment made at the Wales Summit to invest more in defense, with a particular focus on new capabilities.

DoD continues to look for ways to improve Alliance capabilities and decision-making. With regard to NATO's nuclear deterrence mission, Allies remain strongly committed to burden sharing as a foundational element of NATO's deterrence and defense posture. The dual-capable F-35A is on track and should complete nuclear operational certification by 2025. The B61-12 nuclear gravity bomb Life-Extension Program, a critical element of both our NATO commitment and our strategic forces, is on schedule and on budget to meet a March 2020 First Production Unit goal. DoD is also focusing on new threats to the Alliance, including cyberattacks, hybrid warfare, and the type of propaganda campaigns that we have seen emanating from Russia.

#### *Countering Russian Intermediate-Range Capabilities*

DoD is investing in a broad range of capabilities that could respond to the challenges created by Russia's intermediate-range systems. For specific information, please see the classified annex.

#### **F. Deployment of Military Response Measures**

At this time DoD has not identified the need for deployment locations in East Asia and Eastern Europe for any of the capabilities described in this plan.

#### **G. Conclusion**

DoD is taking necessary steps to build United States and NATO capabilities and develop plans to deter Russia's destabilizing influence, coercion, and aggressive actions, all while the United States maintains diplomatic pressure on Russia to return to compliance with the INF Treaty. DoD is taking a strong and balanced approach - a smaller footprint, high-impact rotational presence, building partner capacity, and cohesive planning across the spectrum of capabilities.