

“Transatlantic Security Issues from the Cold War to the 21st Century”

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PANEL 6: TRANSATLANTIC SECURITY AND THE LEGACY OF THE COLD WAR

Transatlantic Security and ‘the New Russian Threat’: Is a New Cold War Emerging?

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By the end of the Bush administration, U.S.-Russia relations were at their lowest point of the post-Cold War era. A few weeks after taking office, Vice President Joe Biden declared that it was time to push the “reset” button. While the Obama administration’s engagement with Russia starts a hopeful new chapter, overcoming the fundamental difference in worldview between the United States and Russia will lead to continuing challenges. For the United States, building a missile defense against Iran or assisting Ukraine and Georgia with political and economic reform are efforts at increasing stability and security. For Russia, they are nefarious efforts by the West to expand into Moscow’s traditional sphere of influence. One thinks about the world of the 21st century; the other dreams of the 19th century. The Cold War is gone, never to return, but the idealism of the early 1990s is a distant memory as well.