

Understanding Russian “Hybrid Warfare”

And What Can Be Done About It

Addendum

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Understanding Russian “Hybrid Warfare” and What Can be Done About It

Testimony of Christopher S. Chivvis¹
The RAND Corporation²

Before the Committee on Armed Services
United States House of Representatives

March 22, 2017

Question for the record from Doug Lamborn: Does the Department of Defense (DoD) have the resources and capabilities needed to confront the hybrid threat? How well does the DoD prioritize responding to this threat?

Christopher S. Chivvis: This is an important question. Although RAND has extensive analytical experience in assessing the cost implications of challenges like Russia’s use of hybrid warfare, we have not yet been asked to do so. Here are a few initial thoughts, building on my written testimony.

Allocation of resources for countering Russian hybrid war strategies should naturally flow from the strategy for countering Russian hybrid war. I have outlined the elements of such a strategy in my written testimony, including:

1. strong interagency coordination
2. appropriate resource allocation for analysis and collection of intelligence in the European area of responsibility (AOR)
3. support for transparency and anticorruption efforts in Europe
4. strategies to push back against Russian influence operations
5. effective use of U.S. special operations forces
6. support for European efforts to combat Russian hybrid warfare.

Of these dimensions, the DoD has the lead in effective use of U.S. special operations forces and some elements of support to European efforts to combat Russian hybrid warfare. It has a role

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in interagency coordination and allocation of resources for intelligence collection—for example, through Defense Intelligence Agency programs.

This being the case, the key to ensuring adequate DoD funding for countering Russian hybrid war will be adequate funding for U.S. special operations forces in the European AOR, DoD intelligence activities in the AOR, and necessary funding for building partner capacity (although much of the relevant funding in this category is under State Department authorities). I note that support to North Atlantic Treaty Organization special operations forces could also be valuable in this regard.

Investments in DoD-related programs needed to counter hybrid warfare in Europe should not come at the expense of relevant State Department and other civilian programs, and it is important to recall that Russian military leaders consider the relevant ratio of civilian to military activity to be 4:1 when it comes to hybrid warfare. Similarly, funding for hybrid warfare does not obviate the need for funding conventional forces in Europe, which are needed to reduce the risk of Russian conventional war.