

Conference: “Russia and the West”

A Strategic Reset? How to deal with an increasingly repressive and confrontational Russia

24 March 2022

Berlin (venue tbd) & ZOOM

The Putin System has shifted more and more towards dictatorship over the past years, barely disguised behind a pseudo-democratic facade. The most obvious manifestation of this transformation are the ongoing repressions that stifle civil society, independent media outlets and the democratic opposition.

Russia's confrontational foreign policy is the other side of the same coin. Concerted attempts to destabilize open societies, the ongoing war in the Donbas, military interventions in Syria, regular breaches of the Baltic airspace, the ongoing military threat against Ukraine and the deployment of irregular forces in several countries all show that the regime's aggressive turn is not just taking place in the domestic sphere. Moscow's assistance in suppressing the recent mass protests in Kazakhstan is part of the authoritarian consolidation in the post-Soviet space.

How should the West deal with these new realities? The Kremlin's ultimate demands for a fundamental revision of the European order are confronting the West with a strategic choice: Should the EU and the US pursue a grand bargain with Russia, or do we need more readiness for deterrence and containment? What are opportunities for balancing interests and where do we need a policy of strength vis-à-vis the Kremlin?

Conference languages: English and German.

Preliminary Program

9:30 – 10:00

Registration. Coffee, Snacks

10:00-10:15

Opening / Welcome

10:15 – 11:45

Session One: How to Deal with the Military Challenge?

- *Assessment of the Russian military build-up*
- *Security with or against Russia?*
- *Do we have to go back to deterrence?*
- *How can the West back Ukraine's security?*
- *Strategies for the Black Sea Region?*

- *A New Arms Control Initiative for Europe?*

Input:

- **Christian Mölling**, German Council on Foreign Relations
- **Amb. Julianne Smith**, U.S. Ambassador to NATO (tbc)
- **Dmytro Kuleba**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine (tbc)
- **Carlo Masala**, Bundeswehr University, Munich

Moderation: **Constanze Stelzenmüller**, Brookings Institution

11:45-12:00 - *Coffee break* -

12:00 – 13:00

Flashlight Session (optional): Topic to be defined

13:00 – 14:00 - *Lunch break* -

14:00 – 15:15

Session Two: Boosting Democratic Resilience

- *How can liberal democracies become more resilient to destabilizing attempts such as hybrid warfare and disinformation?*
- *How to counter corruption and money laundering by Russian elites?*

Input:

- **Edward Lucas**, Center for European Policy Analysis, London
- **Daniela Schwarzer**, Open Society Foundations, Berlin
- **Dmitri Teperik**, International Center for Defence and Security, Tallinn
- **Nicolas Tenzer**, Paris School of International Affairs at SciencesPo, and Desk Russie

15:15 – 15:30 - *Coffee break* -

15:30 – 16:45 CET

Session Three: Potential Trouble Spots and Scenarios of Change in Russia

Input:

- **Mikhail Khodorkovski**, Open Russia (tbc)

Comment:

- **Nikolai Petrov**, Russia and Eurasia Programme, Chatham House, London (tbc)
- **Larry Diamond**, Hoover Institution and Freeman Spogli Institute at Stanford University (tbc)

16:45 – 17:00 CET

Closing remarks

Evening Public Event

19:00 – 20:30

Beyond Appeasement and Military Confrontation: Cornerstones of a Realistic Russia Policy

- *Where do we need more willingness to engage in conflict with the Kremlin?*
- *The scope and design of sanctions.*
- *How do we avoid sliding into a spiral of military escalation?*
- *What are areas of potential cooperation with Russia?*

- *How can we support democratic civil society in Russia despite growing repression?*

Keynote:

- **Annalena Baerbock**, Federal Foreign Minister (tbc)

Input:

- **Michael Roth**, Member of Parliament, Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee, SPD (tbc)
- **Roderich Kiesewetter**, Member of Parliament, Spokesman for Crisis Prevention, CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group
- **Marie-Agnes Strack-Zimmermann**, Member of Parliament, Chair of the Defense Committee, FDP
- **Agnieszka Brugger**, Member of Parliament, Deputy Chairwoman of the "Alliance 90/ the Greens" Parliamentary Group (tbc)
- **Daniel Fried**, Former US Ambassador to Poland, Atlantic Council (tbc)