

The International Sakharov Conference -- Panel 6

A Harvard University Conference celebrating the 40th anniversary of Andrei Sakharov's 1968 essay *Reflections on Progress, Peaceful Coexistence, and Intellectual Freedom*¹ was held on October 24-25, 2008, at the Norton's Woods Conference Center, Cambridge, Mass. The Conference was organized by the Davis Center's Sakharov Program on Human Rights, the Physics Department, and the Andrei Sakharov Foundation (USA).

The Conference's final panel, "Russia and the West: Improving Relations," featured diplomats from America and Russia. They agreed that America and Russia need to find a way back from their current confrontation, which is unnecessary and harmful for both countries. They urged the new American President to sit down soon after his inauguration with President Medvedev and discuss: a) reducing stocks of nuclear weapons and preventing their proliferation to non-nuclear states; b) a new framework for European security that would include Russia; c) ending the expansion of NATO; d) energy security; e) safeguarding human rights; f) protection of the environment.

Panel 6 -- Russia and the West: Improving Relations²

The panelists and their topics were:

Jack F. Matlock, Jr. – Issues in Russian-Western Relations: the end of the Cold War

Vladimir Pechatnov – Russian-Western Relations: a Russian perspective

William Green Miller – How to improve Russian-Western relations

Svetlana Savranskaya – Russian-Western negotiations

Jack F. Matlock, Jr. - *Ambassador to Czechoslovakia (1981-83); Director for European and Soviet Affairs, National Security Council (1983-86); Ambassador to the Soviet Union (1987-1991); Professor Emeritus, Institute for Advance Study at Princeton.*

I had the pleasure of knowing Andrei Sakharov, although not as intimately as others here. I learned to have the greatest respect for him, not only as a thinker and a great scientist,

¹ The essay was published in its entirety in *The New York Times* on July 22, 1968, and can be found at <http://physics.harvard.edu/%7Ewilson/sakharovconference/76953998.pdf>

² The transcript has been slightly edited to enhance readability and clarity.

but as a great human being. I must say, it is humbling to be able to come and talk at this symposium in his honor.

I think we're very lucky in having the people who will be discussing our topic this morning. Vladimir Pechatnov will be able to give us a Russian view of the relationship. He is chair of the American and European Studies Department at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations. He has published a number of articles and at least two important books on American politics and its relationship to Russia. Ambassador Miller has a long history of involvement in U.S.-Soviet and U.S.-Russian relations. He was our ambassador to Ukraine from 1993 to 1998. And Svetlana Savranskaya, who came to intellectual and political maturity as the changes were occurring in the Soviet Union. She told me once that she was in the student body at Moscow University when Ronald Reagan gave a speech there, which was really a paean to freedom, and one which made a deep impression on those who heard it. She is currently a Research Fellow at George Washington University's National Security Archive.

Thinking about the problems in U.S.-Russian relationships today makes me look back with some degree of nostalgia. Not at the years of the height of the Cold War, when we had a very dangerous, but seemingly understandable rift between the two great powers. But during those years when the Soviet Union was changing, those years after Andrei Sakharov returned from his exile in Gorky and began to play a prominent political role on the Soviet political stage. They were exciting years. They were years I had the privilege to witness, more or less from the inside, both governments, because we were able, by 1989, 1990, 1991, to develop the sort of personal contacts and personal intimacy between our senior political leaders and Gorbachev and the people around him that find few precedents in international relations. And the developing trust was really a precondition for many of the agreements we were able to make.

Thinking about our problems with Russia today, I also think about some of the misconceptions that are very common both in Russia and in the United States about what happened during that earlier period. How many people have heard the phrase, "*We won the Cold War!*"? Is there anybody who *hasn't*? That's a misleading phrase! We *negotiated* an end to the Cold War, and that end suited both countries. How many believe the headline in the *Economist* when President Reagan died which said "The Man Who Defeated Communism!"? *No!* The man who was most active in removing the Communist Party from power in the Soviet Union was Mikhail Gorbachev, and he was able to do so only because the Cold War had ended and those pressures were off. How many people, in Russia, in Europe, in the United States, believe today that United States military power and economic pressure brought down the Soviet Union? Not true! The Soviet Union fell apart because of *internal* pressures. Not because they were pressured by a superior

military or because the external economic situation demanded it. Part of the reason we were able to end the Cold War was that we gave assurances to the Soviet leaders in addition to the concrete agreements we signed that the United States and its Western allies would not take advantage of the Soviet leaders if they allowed democracy to sweep the dominions which they controlled.

Now, these were not formal agreements. But they were part of the process of understanding each other, and understanding the political imperatives on both sides. And they may have been summarized in a fairly direct way, when President Bush the elder met Gorbachev in Malta, in December 1989, and they began a debate over “Western values” and Gorbachev kept saying “Don’t use the term ‘Western values’.” This followed a discussion about Eastern Europe during which Bush made it clear that he was not going to dance on the rubble of the Berlin Wall that had just come down, he was not going to take advantage of the Soviet Union if it left East Europe and allowed it to go democratic. Then they began to talk about how they could speak of their common values, and at one point, Baker, who sensed before Bush what Gorbachev’s objection was about, asked “How about democratic values?” And Gorbachev said, “Fine. We’re not talking about Western values. We’re talking about democratic values.”

Then, the next year, as they were negotiating German reunification, it was made very clear, but informally, that if Germany was allowed to unite, with Soviet support, and if all claims stemming from World War II were relinquished, and if that united Germany was allowed to join NATO, there would be no movement of NATO to the East – not one inch.

Well, what happened in the 1990s? A different U.S. government actually refused even to acknowledge these assurances had been given. They were not legal assurances but when I and others testified about them to Congress, they insisted that even if assurances had been given, they were no longer relevant. But it was clear to us at the time, that if we started using the instrument of the Cold War – that is NATO – and expanding it – it was going to be seen inevitably by many Russians as aimed at them, as excluding them from becoming part of Europe and that it would undermine the democratic forces in that country at a very crucial time. I won’t go on except to say that the policy of expanding NATO’s membership, which has been continued - and continued with almost a vengeance - has become one of the most important reasons for the tensions existing now between the United States and Russia.

Most recently, we have the reactions to the war in Georgia, and this is one matter in which I find Russian behavior unacceptable because of its brutality and the unnecessary deaths it has caused. But as an American, I must recognize that, in Russian eyes, they were doing essentially what NATO did in Kosovo and Serbia, up to the point of even

recognizing independence of an enclave, contrary to the principles of the Helsinki Final Act. There seems to be a difficulty right now in the United States in recognizing that general principles, valid as they may be, sometimes can be in conflict with other valid general principles. What we have in Kosovo and in the enclaves in Georgia, and in several other places in the world, is a conflict between the principle of self-determination and the principle of territorial integrity. Each of these conflicts differs in some particulars. But to treat them as if one principle completely overrules the other has led us to confrontations we don't need, and in the Georgian case, the Georgians are going to pay a large price. And yet, the Georgians, too, are part of the problem. Because the first thing they did, when they began to get their independence from the Soviet Union, was to go after the South Ossetians – militarily, in the middle of the winter. I was in Moscow then, we were horrified by that! And at that point, because we considered the Gamsakhurdia government – a government elected by Georgians, not imposed by the Soviet leaders – was displaying a very dysfunctional attitude toward their minorities, George Bush the elder, speaking on August 1, 1991, in Kiev endorsed a voluntary federation of all the Soviet Republics other than the three Baltic states (whose independence we had always favored). But President Bush also explained to the Soviet Republics, “Freedom and independence are not synonymous – chose freedom, and above all, avoid suicidal nationalism.” That was aimed particularly at Gamsakhurdia's Georgia.

I think every authority involved in the recent events in Georgia bears some of the blame. The Georgians were trying to do to their minorities what they didn't want done to them. The Americans and other NATO allies built up Georgia's military forces to the point that Georgia's President sought to solve some of his country's problems by starting a war with Russia. The Russians overreacted in a gross and brutal way, which, however, in their eyes, was following precedents that had been set by the United States.

We need to find a way back from this confrontation, totally unnecessary, not in anybody's interest. And it should not be done by abandoning other countries but rather by setting standards for behavior that apply to everybody. And one of these standards really has to be that democratic governments respect the rights of their minorities. This is one of the most difficult problems we still have.

Vladimir Pechatnov -- *Chairman of the American and European Studies Department at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.*

It's a humbling experience for me to be at this conference. I first read Sakharov's essay *Reflections on Progress, Peaceful Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom* in the late

1960s. I was a student then, it was either an English or Russian *samizdat* version. I never thought that there would be an international conference on Sakharov 40 years later, and that I would be invited to speak at it. I still have a guilty conscience for not speaking up against the official policy on Sakharov back in those days. Very few people would have noticed my protest; nevertheless, I still have an uneasy feeling about the past.

But let me start with one of the central ideas of Sakharov's essay, and that is the one of convergence between socialism and capitalism, and also between Russia and the West. It was not a novel idea, of course. To the best of my knowledge, it first surfaced during World War II, when Russia and America were allies, and there was a sense of common destiny, fighting fascism and reforming capitalism under the New Deal. Russian émigré sociologist Pitirim Sorokin here at Harvard was an active proponent of the convergence thesis. Of course, it died for a while during the Cold War and then resurfaced again in the 1960s, among Western liberals and some Soviet liberals, although the theory of convergence was criticized in Soviet propaganda as something subversive and unnatural. It was supposed that capitalism would destroy itself and socialism would triumph, so there would be no convergence. But what supported the resurgence of the convergence thesis in the 1960s was a renewed sense of something common between the two countries. Both were mature industrial social welfare states which had demonstrated their capacity for economic and social progress, both were leading nuclear powers with a special responsibility for world security, both seemed to be learning from each other and even converging, with the post-Stalinist liberalization of the Soviet Union and the 1960s social reforms in the United States.

I would remind you that Sakharov's essay was completed before the Prague Spring was crushed, so hopes for "socialism with a human face" were still alive in Moscow. As a student, I recall those days and that mood in our circles. Sakharov himself in his essay spoke of a "draw" in the Cold-War competition. He even offered a plan and schedule for different phases of convergence, foreseeing the completion of the process by the year 2000.

The convergence process was badly hurt by the end of the Czech reform experiment and the decline of Soviet domestic reform. It gained new ground in the détente years for a short while as the ideological underpinning of peaceful co-existence. Then of course the collapse of the Soviet system and the end of the Soviet Union dealt a mortal blow to that idea, and instead of convergence, we now had conversion of the former "real socialism," so to speak, into a not-very-real capitalism with a not-very-human face on it. And that conversion was supposed to close the value gap, in favor of the Western values of markets and democracy. But the transition process turned out to be so difficult and painful that many Russians soon became disappointed with the Western model without

really returning to their former Soviet beliefs. So instead of the triumph of Western ideas, we had a situation of a vacuum of ideas and disorientation. At the same time, of course, the West was launching its own crusade, spreading democratic values in the post-Soviet space.

There was a similar evolution in our relations with the West during that period. After a short period of pro-Western orientation in the early Yeltsin era, Russian foreign policy makers developed a more independent and increasingly assertive policy. Real problems began to emerge in our relations concerning NATO expansion, the bombing of Yugoslavia, the abrogation of the ABM treaty, the war in Iraq, American support for color revolutions, and most recently, of course, the war in the Caucasus.

There is mutual disappointment. Russians blame Americans who, in their view, instead of assisting them in their reforms gave a lot of bad advice and tried to exploit Russian weaknesses, locking in Cold-War gains and trying to diminish Russia's influence among her neighbors. Ordinary Russians find it particularly difficult to understand what Americans are doing in the Crimea or why the Caucasus has become a region of such vital national security interest for the United States. And Americans -- you know it all, of course, but let me say it -- Americans are increasingly seen as bullies, throwing their weight around, with little regard for other countries' interests or international law.

There are clearly emotional and irrational elements in the Soviet and Russian reaction and the negative feelings today. America and the West in general are made scapegoats for our own faults. There is our jealousy and fear of hegemonic power and a mounting concern to save traditional Russian identity and culture from the uniformity of globalization which is seen as basically an Americanization. If Sakharov were alive, I wonder whether he would share some of these concerns. As a man of high culture, even in *Reflections* he expressed concern about what he called the danger of the "stupefaction" or "infantilization" of the mass public through cheap and vulgar culture which would degrade civil society and impede an active citizenry.

Americans, too, have gone through their own disenchantment with Russia. At first, there was a romance with Russian reform. Remember the Charter of Russian-American Partnership from the early Clinton years? Who remembers it these days? The unrealistic expectations were cut short. They were followed by frustration and blaming Russia for taking a wrong direction. And by the way, this is not the first time that Americans are going through this cycle, first idealizing Russia and then demonizing it for taking the wrong course. Rutgers historian David Fogelson's recent book *The American Crusade and the "Evil Empire"* about America's attempts to remake Russia in its own image contains very good illustrations of this dynamic.

So, on the surface, Russia and America seem to be diverging again, in their attitudes and even in their values. And there's a lot of noise on both sides, especially in the mass media, about the new, emerging Cold War.

But the real situation, I would argue, is more complex and less threatening. In Russia, political stability and some rise in living standards in recent years are eroding the bitterness and frustrations which fed anti-Western feelings. There are less feelings of victimization and more self-reliance, more respect for, and enjoyment of, private property. People, especially the younger generation, are adjusting to new challenges and the uncertainties of the market economy. With the growth of the middle class and economic independence from the state, the pressure for greater freedoms and civil liberties will likely increase. As President Medvedev himself said in one of his recent meetings with intellectuals, "People want to live a normal life. They want to have their own houses, they want to go abroad and see the world, and it's impossible to take it back from them, even if one wanted to."

So as these trends continue, Russians will be moving closer – somewhat closer – to liberal values despite the current often excessive Russian pride and assertiveness. I, for one, find it rather unpleasant to see rock stars and soccer fans wrapping themselves in the Russian flag, or to hear politicians indulging in super-patriotic rhetoric. But, in essence, I think this new mood should be seen in context, as an inevitable reaction to the years of degradation, self-criticism, and deprivation. We should take account of this and be more empathetic with Russians' current mood.

On the American side, there are also important changes going on. Burned by the Iraq experience and the rise of global anti-Americanism, Americans are becoming more wary of exporting democracy, of unilateral action and of excessive reliance on military force. Unfolding financial meltdown and the prospect of global recession are damping enthusiasm for market fundamentalism, and people are calling for greater social control and regulation of the economy and finance. If Alan Greenspan himself admits serious flaws in his ideology of unregulated markets, then it says a lot to all of us.

In short, Americans are moving closer to a more social-oriented version of capitalism and a less hegemonic foreign policy, which in sum should diminish the value gap between us. Diminish, but not close it, and that's OK with me because the world would be a dull place if all of us had the same values. Instead of trying to make the world safe for the American -- or the Russian, for that matter, -- version of democracy, we should be striving for what John F. Kennedy recommended in one of his speeches: we should try to make the world safe for diversity. That, I think, sounds very fresh these days.

So, convergence or world government are not on the agenda in the near future. What is on the agenda for today and tomorrow, and here I fully agree with Ambassador Matlock, is an improvement of Russian-Western relations that have deteriorated in recent months. There is a dangerous dynamic of escalation at work, a tit-for-tat game between Moscow and Washington which begins to resemble the zero-sum game of the Cold War years. Kosovo and Ossetia. Americans arming Georgia and Russians sending a naval squadron to Venezuela. Here, again, I think we should listen to Sakharov's warning in *Reflections*, where he urged reconsideration of the traditional method of negotiations which seeks to secure "maximum possible enhancement of one's own positions" and to cause "maximum possible damage to the other party with no regard for common good or common interests."

I think at this point both sides should step back, take a deep breath, stop this tit-for-tat game, and start a serious dialogue on problems of mutual concern. The recent change of the guard in the Kremlin, and the forthcoming one in Washington create good opportunities for such a fresh start. I don't want to interfere in the American elections, but I think Obama and Medvedev will make a good tandem to work together. They have a lot in common in their backgrounds and age and other things, even without looking into each others' souls.

There are at least 4 clusters of problems to be discussed in their dialogue, in my view:

- European security
- Nuclear security
- Energy security
- and what might be called a decontamination of competition over the post-Soviet space, particularly in Ukraine, Caucasus, and Central Asia.

Among those four, I would put European security on top, although it is also related to problems in the post-Soviet space. The new European system of collective security which Medvedev has talked about -- and I think it's a good idea in principle -- should include Russia necessarily and its European neighbors as well. The current NATO-tended European security system is too exclusive and doesn't solve all the problems; it even creates some new ones by establishing new demarcation zones, and creating this grey zone between Russia and NATO, for which there is an intense competition going on between our two sides. Inclusion of Ukraine in NATO would be very dangerous, and almost the point of no return. So we should think about a new European collective security system which would guarantee Ukrainian, Moldovan and Georgian independence and security without excluding Russia, and without taking them under the NATO umbrella. It will not be easy, but I think it's possible to achieve. The nuclear

dialogue is very important even though Evgeny Myasnikov yesterday reminded us how difficult it too will be. Both sides, however, have an interest in stopping the dangerous drift toward dismantling the arms control regime which has been built over decades.

So this is an agenda for the future. I know that there are attempts on both sides to come up with new ideas. There is an American one. There are even joint groups thinking together, the so-called “Wise Men” group headed by Kissinger and Primakov. There is a group of former ambassadors. The problem is one of focus. We don’t have much time left for bringing the ideas together and putting them on the table of our new leaders. It’s going to be difficult, if only because they are going to be distracted by other problems, the financial crisis, the economic recession and so on, but it has to be done if you want to preserve our relationship, and if we want to be true to Sakharov’s ideal of a peaceful world.

William G. Miller -- *Ambassador Miller spent fourteen years on Capitol Hill, where he was staff director for three Senate Committees, including the Select Committee on Intelligence. He was president of the American Committee on U.S.-Soviet Relations (1986-1992), Ambassador to Ukraine (1993-98), and is currently Senior Policy Scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center in Washington.*

It’s such a pleasure to follow my long-time friend Vladimir Pechatnov. In many ways we grew up together on the question of how the United States, and now Russia, can live together in peace and in a civilized way. And it’s a very special pleasure to be on a panel with my great good friend Jack Matlock, one of our very best ambassadors over the last many years whose knowledge of the Soviet Union and Russia brought sense to our government when it was desperately needed. A skillful negotiator, he brought about agreements that were critically important.

We’re at a time in the Russian-American relationship that a lot of repairs have to be made. There has to be considerable rethinking of the fundamentals of our relationship. Many of these fundamentals go back over the long history of the relations between us, but at the heart is mutual respect, an understanding of the nature of our respective civilizations, and how we can have agreements that meet the highest motivations and values of our two peoples. On this subject, Andrei Sakharov really pointed the way, in insisting that we go back to the roots of understanding, back to the particle physics of political relationships, of personal relationships, and see what common particles we share.

Sakharov’s great essay *Reflections*, and his essays that followed it, are a summation of the way a physicist looks at the world of politics. In a very important sense, he was

someone who gave us, perhaps for the first time, a physics of politics. He enabled us to understand the relationship of all of our learning, all of our capabilities, and governance, from the smallest to the largest principles -- it is important to understand and to know.

We now have to remake the relationship. We have trashed the fabric of our treaty arrangements that were created so painfully by Jack and by others, the SALT agreements, the ABM treaty, this fabric of understanding between nations formalized by diplomacy and confidence-building measures. We have to work at it again; it is haunting to realize that the ghosts of the past are with us again. Can you imagine! Can scientists here imagine that deployment of ABM systems has returned as a real possibility? After the draw-down curves, after four or five years of testimony before Congress of the physics and technology of nuclear weapons systems? That's the reality. We have to go at it again. I would say there is a desperate need for our new government that comes into power -- I expect it will be Obama the way the polls are reading -- to meet with Medvedev and his people on these fundamental principles of arms control, what kind of network, what kind of fabric of diplomacy, what kind of technologies are we considering and what is needed to bring stability and sensitivity to these terrible problems that face us.

There is, of course, a continuing need for security structures. Jack earlier indicated the pressures he witnessed to expand NATO, and Vladimir spoke about the difficulties that expansion of NATO to Ukraine or to Georgia would impose on the leaders in Moscow. And I'm very sensitive to that, having been ambassador to Ukraine, which is caught in the middle of this dilemma and this struggle. When I first went to Ukraine, in 1993, the feeling that the Cold War was over, that the Warsaw Pact and NATO were no longer needed, was the dominant feeling. There was a search for a European security structure that would meet possible future problems, like ethnic conflict; there was a sensitivity to this possibility, even in those early peaceful and hopeful stages of new nations. In Ukraine, most of the leaders of Ukraine, including the democrats, were of the view that the OSCE model was the best, that something that was European could do away with the baggage of the Cold War, that would be a new construct, a new way of looking at keeping of the peace. Most believed police work, interaction on small conflicts, were the needed approaches. No one believed any longer that there was even the remotest possibility to be an invasion of the north German plain by Russia. No one believed that tank divisions would be necessary any longer. No one believed that ballistic missiles would be of use in the new era.

There was a search at that time to find a suitable framework for the new era. As we know, that search foundered, and so we have the phenomenon of NATO expansion from the capitals of Europe and what I would call "NATO resistance" on the part of Moscow. And we have seen several costly examples of ethnic conflict, and how difficult it is to find

appropriate, trained forces to deal with them in the former Yugoslavia, in Georgia, and of course, ethnic conflicts exist not just in Europe but in other parts of the world as well. So peace-keeping is a major question for both Russia and the United States. Can we jointly forge a way of keeping the peace that respects the legitimate interests of Russia, of the United States, of the European states, of the independent republics like Ukraine and Georgia? Can it be done through the UN? A peace brigade? Or several brigades? Are there other mechanisms that might work? It's time to think about alternatives in a serious way. The U.S. election offers an opportunity for all parties to think in new ways, in perhaps what some might consider radical directions, radical if you are a NATO proponent, but conservative and normal if you are looking for real workable solutions. I would say that finding an agreed security structure agreeable to all nations is number one on the agenda.

Number two is finding coordinated answers by the concerned nations to the financial meltdown. The great economies of the world have to work together to forge a new network of agreements and arrangements, what some have called a new Bretton Woods. Since 1945, many new nations of great economic strength have entered the scene, they have to be included, and this is the time to do it. It's a necessity because of the mess that we all face.

The third great issue before us is the environment. We have huge, compelling problems that cannot wait and that can only be solved if we address them jointly. This is an agenda item for the great nations of the world, particularly Russia and the United States, working together with Europe, China, India, Brazil.

We have much to do. There are other issues that have persisted and become part of a continuing national agenda even after many years of struggle: the rule of law; the integrity of human rights in all countries; the spread of culture and civilization between us.

These are the kinds of issues that should be considered in the first instance by Russia and the United States. Negotiations and agreements on these problems are desperately needed.

So I would say that we are at a point where inaction is a danger and action is required. I think there is a willingness to address these issues on the part of the coming new leadership of the United States and I think of Russia as well. With people like Jack and Vladimir and so many here, I think we can all contribute to making this necessary engagement happen, but I can't underline enough the necessity to work towards these

ends. The agenda is not a virtual one; it is a real one. And the necessities are not virtual, they are tangible, they affect all of us, and we have to get on with it.

Jack F. Matlock, Jr.

Thank you, Bill. And I also want to thank Mr. Pechatnov. You know sometimes it's more lively if the members of a panel disagree. So far, I haven't heard anything this morning which I would do anything but compliment. But I think it's time to hear from a person who represents a generation who reached their political maturity after we oldsters had done our work. Svetlana Savranskaya has been working for more than a decade in the National Security Archives with documents from both sides that deal with the negotiations towards the end of the Cold War. So she can give us a more contemporary view, not only of that time, but also of insights that the documents may provide for what to do today.

Svetlana Savranskaya – *Savranskaya graduated from Moscow State University and received a Ph.D. in political science from Emory University. She is currently Director of Russia Programs at the National Security Archive at George Washington University.*

Thank you, Mr. Ambassador. I would first of all like to thank the organizers for inviting me. It's a great honor for me to be on this panel with such distinguished thinkers about U.S.-Soviet and U.S.-Russian relations. I don't pretend to have some major wisdom or major insights concerning what has to be done, but what I would like to do is to share some thoughts from my experience working with the subject and the documents Ambassador Matlock mentioned. I have to apologize -- I don't disagree with you. In fact, I fully agree with your analysis of Russian-American relations.

When I re-read Sakharov's *Reflections* in preparation for this conference, I was struck by the relevance of that document, and by how many issues Sakharov raised in that essay that can inform and inspire us today. We still have the threat of nuclear war facing us, the threat of global hunger, poverty, and threats to the environment. Unfortunately, there is very little positive dialogue right now between the United States and Russia on these subjects. So I would like to focus on what Sakharov focused on in his essay -- on the basis for hope, and what we can learn from the recent past.

We were asked to look at Condoleeza Rice's September 18th address at the German Marshall Fund³ and Sergei Lavrov's September 24th speaking notes at the Council on

³ <http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2008/September/20080918155132eaifas0.4152033.html>

Foreign Relations⁴ – they both dealt with the issue of U.S.-Russian relations. When I read those two papers, the thought I had was that we won the Cold War. We all won it! But somehow we managed to lose the opportunities provided by the end of the Cold War.

In December 1991, Mikhail Gorbachev in his last month as President of the Soviet Union, in a meeting with John Major, said, “We have to do all it takes to integrate our great country irreversibly into the international community of nations. We don’t know what the cost of such integration will be, but we know that the cost of confrontation was too high.” It is probably even higher now. And yet what we see, especially in the papers by Rice and Lavrov, are a lot of mutual recriminations and a lot of bad images that could become self-fulfilling prophecies if we do not end this kind of rhetoric.

I would like us to think back to the most imaginative breakthrough in U.S.-Soviet relations in which Ambassador Matlock was very instrumental, and that was the breakthrough that occurred between President Reagan and President Gorbachev. It’s a very personal subject, because for me the Cold War ended on May 31, 1988, when President Reagan was speaking at Moscow State University. After I was there and heard that speech and talked with my classmates, I simply could not imagine, and still cannot imagine, that a new Cold War could begin.

There is no ideological conflict now between our two countries. Russia is much more integrated into the international system. It’s a slightly different form of integration, because the integration is primarily economic. Unfortunately the integration itself, the fact that Russia has integrated, has hurt a lot of the population, especially with the recent financial crisis and the outflow of capital from Russia, which, after the Georgian conflict, reached about sixteen billion dollars a week.

When Reagan and Gorbachev first met in Geneva, Reagan toasted Gorbachev with a very imaginative toast. He said, “If the people of the world were to find out that Haley’s Comet was approaching with some alien life form that was going to attack Earth, that knowledge would unite all the people of the world.” In Reagan’s view, nuclear weapons were that alien life form.

Those two leaders had enough political will and enough imagination to unite their forces and to make significant concessions on both sides to avert the nuclear threat which was capable of essentially annihilating civilization. Now, nuclear proliferation is the main challenge to our security, and the threat is increasing. This is an area where U.S.-Russian cooperation is badly needed and can be very successful. It is clear that this is a matter

⁴ http://www.cfr.org/publication/17335/prepared_remarks_a_conversation_with_servey_lavrov.html?breadcumb=%2Feducators%2Fmultimedia%3Fpage%3D4

regarding which our interests are completely shared, even as far as Iran is concerned. Despite Russia's support for Iran's peaceful nuclear energy program, Russia is not interested in Iran acquiring nuclear weapons. But Russia is absolutely against using force against Iran, and this is where a compromise should be found. If the United States were to pledge non-use of force against Iran, or at least did not continually raise the prospect of using force, Russia would probably be willing to moderate its support for the Iranian nuclear program.

The next big issue – and we heard about it repeatedly during this conference -- is the need to start negotiating a successor to the START treaty. Yesterday in the presentation by Evgeny Myasnikov, he made the point that the previous START treaties were negotiated and made so detailed with a transparent regime of verification because both countries understood that there were too many nuclear weapons, and that it was in their strong interest to significantly reduce or even eliminate them – President Reagan's dream shared by Mikhail Gorbachev. Now that perception no longer exists. Because Russia's nuclear weapons are old and in need of modernization, Russia might not be as interested as it was before in stringent controls. Therefore, the United States needs to be forceful in engaging Russia seriously on adopting a transparent regime of reducing and possibly eliminating nuclear weapons.

Going back to the Gorbachev-Reagan era, another major issue which caused heated emotions in Moscow was the issue of anti-ballistic missile control. It's an irony of history that this issue is again a cause of tension between Russia and the United States. Eastern Europe, now on the other side of the curtain but still in contention between the parties, is the locus of the argument. This is another matter on which the United States and Russia can cooperate productively.

In 1986 in Reykjavik, President Reagan proposed not just cooperation but complete sharing of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). To which Mr. Gorbachev replied, "Excuse me, Mr. President, but I do not take your idea of sharing SDI seriously. You don't even want to share petroleum equipment, automatic machine tools or equipment for dairies. Sharing SDI would be a second American Revolution."

Well, maybe it's time to engage in fully transparent cooperation to construct a global anti-missile defense in which the United States and Russia could be partners. China should also be engaged in that system because a unilateral system of defense will only provoke more missile-building from non-participating countries. It creates a security threat for them, and offensive missile-building is cheaper than trying to build a comparable defensive system.

I will not go through other possible issues for cooperation, as Ambassador Miller did that brilliantly before me, but I would like to recall an idea coming from that same period, the idea of a “common European home”. What Gorbachev had in mind is a restructuring of the international order in Europe that would put European common values at the forefront, and make it possible to replace the traditional balance of forces with a balance of interests. In Gorbachev’s 1989 Strasbourg speech to the Council of Europe’s Parliamentary Assembly, he listed four major elements of the common European home:

- collective security to replace deterrence
- full economic integration
- a regime of environmental protection
- the humanitarian dimension, with deep respect for human rights and values as the core of European identity.

The idea of a common European home is as relevant as ever, and we heard about it again just recently in President Medvedev’s recent speech at Evian⁵ which unfortunately was not positively received, or at least not seized upon, in the West. It was a completely different era, but just to provoke thinking, I would like to remind you that after 1968, the Soviet Union was actively pushing for a European security system, arguing that the international system needs new rules of the game and a new treaty regulating European security. Maybe today it is again a similar time of flexibility and fluidity of the international system when a new European security system could help resolve a lot of the tensions and problems that exist between the United States and Russia.

I would like to go back to Sakharov’s *Reflections* and his basis for hope. There are so many areas where cooperation is possible and the issues are resolvable as experience shows. What we lack is the political will and imaginative thinking on both sides, and we lack visionaries like Sakharov to help us engage with the difficult issues in a constructive way, without creating self-fulfilling obstacles, and without heated rhetoric.

Questions and Comments

Jack F. Matlock, Jr.

Thank you very much. I think it is wonderful to get some of these concrete ideas out on the table. I would like to use the prerogative of the chair to make a few specific comments, particularly on Svetlana Savranskaya’s talk. I think she has narrowed the vision down to what we need to do to get our relationship back on track.

⁵ http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2008/10/08/2159_type82912type82914_207457.shtml

Our next president must sit down very early on with President Medvedev -- and there is no reason not to have Prime Minister Putin present -- and discuss what is getting in the way of doing what both countries need to do in the interest of both countries. And that is to continue the process started by Reagan and Gorbachev of getting nuclear weapons under better control, getting the numbers down. And we're not going to be able to do that, until we put our defensive program into a multilateral context. I would propose initially a joint program with Russia, but it should be open to China and also to those countries in the European Union with space capability. We need a treaty to keep weapons out of space. Gorbachev was right about that. And Sakharov was right about that. We heard yesterday his views about SDI, and it does seem to me, as Svetlana put it, a unilateral defense is going to cause an arms race. It will do that even if the unilateral defense doesn't work, which it won't. I think we have enough scientists here to understand why.

We need to reach an understanding about NATO expansion and find a way to put behind us our disagreement on this subject. I think there are several options. One is we can do more to change NATO. Another is to have a clear understanding of what the rules of the road are going to be with neighboring states. We complain -- and I think rightly so -- about some of Russia's attitudes towards its neighbors -- but when I look at it as an American who is familiar with our own history, I don't see Russia doing things to the ex-Soviet states that the United States hasn't habitually done in its own hemisphere. Not to recognize that another large country is going to feel that it has to have a certain sphere of influence -- at least to keep other big powers that might be opposed to it from installing military bases there -- is a sign of blindness. And this sensitivity will exist no matter how democratic the government is in the other country.

So I think there are a lot of things we can talk about. But basically, what our next president has to do is to sit down with the Russians and reach some understanding. Because what our countries need most is very much central to both countries. What we *don't need* is confrontation over issues which shouldn't be real issues.

Richard Wilson: *Professor Emeritus of Physics, Harvard University*

I worry about one thing that I know was in Sakharov's mind, and go one step further back, and that's a statement of Einstein's in August 1945, I believe it was, that "everything has changed except our way of thinking". On August 6, 1945, at least scientists knew that the world was in a position to destroy itself and civilization. The rest of the world took a little longer to find out and I don't think we've *still* found out because there is one thing that, in my view, should be absolutely on top of the agenda -- making sure that we reduce nuclear weapons down to the maximum number needed. You don't need 50 or 100 nuclear weapons in any one country to deter. I'm scared stiff when the

other side has 50. Why should anyone want 5,000? We have 2,000 pointing at each other right now, that's what we've heard. Number one on the agenda should be how we get to a much reduced number.

On another issue, missile defense, let me cite my brother-in-law Wolfgang Panofsky's final words published two days after his death last year in the *San Francisco Chronicle*. "Missiles Are No Defense." No reasonable leader should ever take the possibility of a missile defense into account in defense of his country. If I disagree with the panel, I think it's that I think the number one issue must be that we make sure we don't destroy civilization. I don't care what kind of civilization. Communist, capitalist, whatever.

Number two, we must use the technical knowledge we have, and not fiddle around with things which are shams. Forty years ago, Panofsky gave testimony in the U.S. Senate that missile defense will not work.

Yury Orlov: *Corresponding Member, Armenian Academy of Sciences: First Chair of the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group (1976); Senior Scientist, Cornell University's Newman Laboratory of Nuclear Studies*

Maybe you remember the appeal written by Galina Starovoitova and me. The essence of our appeal was: either do not extend NATO, or extend it and include Russia. What is your thinking? I fear it is too late now, but the idea still exists: either invite Ukraine and Russia's other neighbors together with Russia, or do not invite any of them at all.

I think about the Ukrainian problem all the time, and I think the only acceptable solution is a declaration by Ukraine of neutrality together with negotiations between Russia and the U.S. about Ukraine's status. Ukraine is a key country, and it's neutrality would make a great contribution to establishing a peaceful situation in Europe. What is your opinion about the possibility? I know the pros and cons, but what is your opinion?

William G. Miller

That's a very profound question. The best way to answer it is to say that both Russia and Ukraine have to be part of a European security system. I don't think there can be neutrals in the task of maintaining peace. So we have to construct a way in which all of the nations can participate in the mutual responsibility of keeping the peace. It's for this reason that I think our new leaders in the United States and Russia need face to face and soon to talk very seriously with each other and also with the leaders of Ukraine and the other interested parties about the best way to frame the security structure that is needed for Europe. It's not an impossible task.

As Andrei Sakharov quite rightly pointed out, one of the greatest enemies of human progress is bureaucracy. There are entrenched bureaucracies in the security field, as we all know. Unfortunately, the existing structure of security is what we have. It will be very difficult to construct something else, because of the desire of those who are invested in that existing structure. They want it to continue. They think it works. They don't see, or want to see, any alternative. But there's a chance, now, with new governmental leadership in our country, to reexamine the question, and maybe we can come up with a sensible answer.

The requirements are quite evident. It's to be able to consult quickly, to be able to come to joint decisions about what is to be done, and to have the means to carry out the tasks at hand. We know what means are needed. They range from police to small mobile units to assist in situations of crisis or violence or catastrophe such as flood or disease. I think it can be done. But I don't think we can minimize the resistance that has to be expected from established organizations. Nevertheless, there's a chance, and we should pursue it.

Jack F. Matlock, Jr.

I would simply add that even putting aside Russian opposition and the impact on Russia, further expansion of NATO is not in the American interest. It exposes us to more and more risk, and in terms of helping us carry out our foreign policy, NATO is becoming a less and less efficient organization. Last spring, our Secretary of Defense was trying to get an extra 1,000 to 2,000 troops for Afghanistan, and his request was turned down. We've got to recognize that NATO is no longer an instrument of American foreign policy. The idea that expanding it makes it more powerful – which is at the root of some of the problems we have with Russia – is simply not true. Nor can the United States in the future spend the sort of money – most of which it has borrowed recently from other people, including the Russians – needed to maintain these structures.

We are suffering from the collapse of a housing bubble that started as a financial bubble, which has brought us a recession and close to a depression. We have also had a bubble of American power in the world, beyond our capacity to maintain. We have to wake up to that, draw the necessary conclusions, and take appropriate actions. Our next President will have to reduce some of our exposure. To accomplish that task, he must be able to negotiate the sort of changes that will make Russia more comfortable.

The bottom line is that Russia and Ukraine -- and I would add Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and the countries of Central Asia that were part of the Soviet Union -- need to be included in an overall security structure. And it can't be a structure imposed by NATO. If it's done by building a structure around NATO, we won't be able to turn the clock back and take countries that are already members out of NATO. American bases can be removed from some countries. The military element of the alliance can be

reduced, bringing other elements to the fore. Russia can be given a veto. The Russia-NATO agreement does not give them a veto now; for certain issues Russia probably should have a veto in order for them to feel they are really part of a European security structure. If we accept the basic fact that we must bring all these countries voluntarily into a single structure which has serious responsibilities but does not threaten any of them, then it can be done. But it will take diplomacy which shows some understanding and empathy for the political problems of other countries. This is something that Reagan and Gorbachev were able to do, coming from quite different points of view. And what our leaders today, even though they have looked into each others' souls, have not been able to do.

Alex Goldfarb: *Executive Director, Foundation for Civil Liberties*

I would like to take issue with some things that have been said here. The problem of Russia is not the expansion of NATO. The problem of Russia is and has always been the suppression of human rights, civil liberties and basic freedoms. And the legacy of Sakharov is not only his essay *Reflections*, but also his linkage of human rights and international security in the early 1970s. He believed certain things had to happen before détente would have any meaning. He supported the Jackson-Vanik amendment. He wanted the human rights provisions of the Helsinki Final Act implemented. What is happening today gives me a strong sense of déjà vu. There is a Republican administration which has been abandoning the cause of democracy in Russia for the sake of security arrangements and spheres of influence, just like in the Nixon years. Is the next administration likely to return to the Carter-Reagan emphasis on linkage?

Jack F. Matlock, Jr.

What I said should not be interpreted to mean that the problem of Russia is the expansion of NATO. But the way it was done did have the political effect of empowering forces in Russia that oppose the democratic forces that you want to support. An important question is how one deals with a country which historically has had problems when direct influence has been brought to bear on it by a foreign country. Two factors enabled us to support human rights in the Soviet Union and to convince Gorbachev that it was in his interest, and in his government's interest, to support them: number one, we had the Helsinki Final Act, which the Soviets had signed; and number two, we gave him to believe by our actions at the time that if he democratized, we would not play geopolitical games and try to pick up any remnants that might fall off from the Soviet Union. But America seemed to do the opposite to his successors.

William G. Miller

I'd like to make a comment here. You used the term "linkage" in your question. I would say there are values that should be common to all states included in a security structure.

Respecting human rights standards should be a criterion for a civilized relationship, including a security relationship. I don't see an either/or situation at all. It seems to me that part of the bargain that mutual security includes is full respect for the values that Sakharov spoke of, and that you championed in your own person -- that has to be part of the equation. That is why we want to preserve something. It's values of this kind that make a difference.

Frantisek Janouch: *Czech physicist; Founder and Chair of Charter 77 Foundation*

A question for Ambassador Matlock. One of the most controversial projects for the Czech Republic -- and you know the situation there, you served there for many years -- is the possible construction of a U.S. radar base. More than 70% of the population opposes it. The government supports it, but the parliament is almost evenly split. One reason for the opposition is that it is not a NATO base but rather is a private American base in Europe. Do you think a new administration might reconsider this? What is your opinion?

Jack F. Matlock, Jr.

I certainly hope that the next administration will take a look at that. My own opinion is that the interceptor missiles in Poland and the radar in the Czech Republic are totally unnecessary. The argument that they would protect Western Europe from some missile that might be developed in Iran 10 years from now is a pretty absurd argument. I can't think of any incentive Iran would have to launch a missile attack on countries in Western Europe. Frankly, the project is being pushed by special interests and by a group that has an almost religious commitment to anti-missile defenses. Some people feel that they make you invulnerable, so if we don't like a government, we can go in and change it by military force, because it can't retaliate. This, in turn, makes countries like Iran determined to get nuclear weapons because that's the only thing that keeps them from being attacked. I think it's absolutely absurd, and I'm disappointed that our NATO allies have been willing to go along with it so far. I know there's a certain number of Poles who will do anything to stick the Russians in the eye, and that may be the way they look at the interceptor missiles proposal. Czechs are normally more balanced, and I hope that even if we push it, the Czech parliament will turn the radar down. That's my personal view.

Theodore Postol: *Professor of Science, Technology, and International Security at MIT*

The radar equipment proposed for the base in the Czech Republic lacks sufficient power to do the job assigned to it.

Alexei Pankin: *Russian journalist, editor and media development specialist*

In international law there is a deadlock between territorial integrity and a people's right to self-determination. In practical terms, this means the Kosovars, the Ossetians, and the Armenians living in Nagorno-Karabakh would rather fight and die than go back to their

former status of subjects of Serbia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, etc. This suggests that either these conflicts will remain frozen forever or the territories will become independent states. What do you think is the solution for these conflicts?

William G. Miller

They're all very specific situations. With good will -- I put heavy emphasis on that -- and a political affirmation that action will be taken, I believe you can ameliorate difficult situations, you can create circumstances of local autonomy. It's not beyond our human ability to craft ways in which people can live in peace. In 1991, a number of us here were sent by the Sakharov Foundation to Nagorno-Karabakh, where we saw the tragedy of people who had been living together in peace for a long, long time in the same villages, who had inter-married, who were now at war, killing each other, desecrating each others' churches, mosques and graveyards, and suffering horribly. They earlier had lived in peace; it certainly is possible that they will live in peace again if we work at it. These are the kinds of problems that governments are constituted to solve. These are the sorts of issues that civilization addresses. And sometimes even successfully. So I think we have to make the effort, certainly. They are not doomed to be in a frozen condition forever. They're frozen because we haven't acted. And we certainly can do that.

Jack F. Matlock, Jr.

There are a number of other such frozen conflicts in many parts of the world, frozen in the sense that they've not been settled. The main thing is to make sure they don't go violent. And that may require pressure on people who in their own eyes are exercising their right of self-determination. But if they go violent, they're going to lose, and everyone's going to lose. They will be defeated. They should be advised to look at how Finland at the end of the Second World War, after two wars with the Soviet Union, managed that relationship. They kept their freedom but they were very careful not to do anything that would disturb the Russians, and not to make any irredentist claims on Vyborg or other parts of Karelia that were historically part of Finnish lands. They also took care of their Swedish minority by giving them full rights, and not saying "everybody must speak Finnish only". They allowed their Communist Party to operate freely, even though they were a disloyal party. The threat was diminished because the Communists were divided.

When I was ambassador to the Soviet Union, representatives of the Baltic states came to me from 1989 on, saying they were determined to push for a restoration of their independence. Their question was: "If we declare independence, you'll support us, won't you? Because you have never recognized that we were part of the Soviet Union." No matter how difficult it was to get it across to them, my answer had to be: "No, until you

actually control your countries, we cannot recognize you as independent. If we were to recognize you as independent, you would be crushed. Crushed utterly. And there's not a thing we could do. We can't fight a nuclear war for your freedom." And their answer was: "So we're on our own." And I said, "Yes, you are. You have our moral support. But let me warn you. Never let a Lithuanian, or Latvian, or Estonian -- they all came separately -- fire a single shot even in defense. There will be provocations, but you have to keep it peaceful." And they did. There were provocations. The attack on the Vilnius television tower. What was the reaction? They didn't fight back. The Lithuanians surrounded their parliament and protected it with their bodies. They won.

When you look at places like Chechnya seeking independence, or Georgia going after its minorities, the first thing they do is start using violence. For those of us committed to human rights, we've got to get the message across that you won't win a struggle for self-determination if you use violent methods. Even to resist violent methods against you.

I could go on and on. The point is, there are conflicting principles -- self-determination and territorial integrity -- and that means that peace-keeping will remain a big issue. I think we need new structures for that. My own favorite would be a small force committed to the UN -- maybe 20,000 or 30,000 soldiers -- to which other countries could send pre-trained troops, also volunteers, for peace-keeping missions. Leave the bigger powers out of it, except for financial, logistic, and other support. If we can develop structures so that no one country, especially the United States or Russia, is supposed to do all the peace-keeping or take the lead in it, I think that's the only thing that's going to work. Otherwise we're going to end up with more situations of near genocide like Darfur, and nobody will be able to do anything about it. We've got to de-politicize and restructure peace-keeping.

Edward Kline: *President, Andrei Sakharov Foundation*

Would you include America in the new European security structure?

Jack F. Matlock, Jr.

I would include America, but in a different role than the one we have now. I think for NATO to work and become an acceptable European security organization, the United States mustn't take a role of absolute leadership. We should step back. We should provide support when needed, if things seem to be getting seriously out of balance within Europe. I think one of the mistakes of the 1990s was keeping too much American control of NATO, and discouraging the development of a European defense organization. Now that's something that could develop in cooperation with NATO and bring in other countries. Maybe we should look at ideas along those lines.