



**Statement of Lead Republican Michael McCaul (R-TX)
House Committee on Foreign Affairs**

“Countering a Resurgent Russia”
May 1, 2019

Remarks as Delivered

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

As General Keane said, if a politician loses his voice it’s like losing a weapon. So I’ve sort of lost a little bit of my voice, but I’m going to try to get through this very briefly.

Russia has been a threat for a long time. It’s why NATO was formed. Russia did interfere with our elections. I was part of the 2016 Gang of Eight briefing on their attempt to meddle in our elections, and I’ve always stood firmly against that. I asked the prior administration to stand up against that publicly and condemn it, and I think we should still condemn it.

I did a lot as Chairman of Homeland Security to enhance our cybersecurity apparatus to protect Americans and the American electoral system, and I’m proud of that work.

I don’t think this is a partisan issue. As you and I had breakfast with the Secretary of State today, it’s no question, no doubt in my mind that Secretary Pompeo looks at Russia as a great threat to the United States. And one only need look at Ukraine and what they’ve done in Ukraine and in Crimea. They’ve been bold in their aggression.

And now looking today at Venezuela, the fact that Russians are in our own hemisphere, posing a threat, putting military assets in our Western Hemisphere the likes of which we



haven't seen since the Cuban Missile Crisis. The fact that President Maduro was on an airplane just yesterday, to fly to Havana, and the Russians talked him out of it.

What is going on in our hemisphere? They would love nothing more than to poke us in the eye in our own hemisphere.

They moved into Syria. They took over the ports in Syria. They saw a power grab because we did nothing. We did nothing in Syria. And inaction is a decision in and of itself, and the Russians exploited that. Mr. Chairman, as the Prime Minister of Turkey told us, that is precisely why the Russians were there, because we were not.

We have to be a world leader. We can't lead from behind anymore. We have to be a leader. Otherwise the Russians, and the Chinese for that matter, will fill that vacuum. So I commend you for having this hearing.

There was no collusion in this last election. But did they try to meddle in the elections? Absolutely. And the intelligence shows that, the intelligence community shows that.

There is no doubt in my mind – they are not our friend. And if anybody thinks Putin is our friend, they're wrong. I met with two Russian opposition leaders yesterday, and they view Putin as a threat to the world. In my view, once KGB always KGB.

So I think this should not be a partisan exercise here. This should be an American people – as you mentioned, Mr. Chairman, I look forward to working with you on issues related to this matter.



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And I hope we can pass legislation out of this committee, because I think I speak for most of my members on my side of the aisle that we don't view Russia as our friend. We're not complicit with Russia.

Russia has been a Cold War enemy, they're an enemy of NATO, and they're an enemy of the United States today

And with that I yield back the balance of my time.

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