



EXTENDING RUSSIA

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Objective

To examine nonviolent, cost imposing options that the United States and its allies could pursue across economic, political, and military areas to stress—overextend and unbalance—Russia's economy and armed forces and the regime's political standing at home and abroad.



Approach and methodology

Scene Setter

Examination of Russia's
vulnerabilities & anxieties



Analysis of the possible ways of
“extending Russia” across
diplomatic, information, military,
and economic elements

Based on:

- *Benefits of pursuing the strategy*
- *Risks of pursuing the strategy*
- *Likelihood of the strategy's success*

Russian vulnerabilities

- **Russia has deep-seated anxieties about its domestic stability and its place in the world that could potentially be exploited by U.S. strategies.**
- **Many of the most promising ways to “extend Russia” are not strictly military in nature, but include economic, geopolitical, ideological, and informational measures.**
- **Many of the potential strategies to “extend Russia” come with serious risks both versus Russia and second-order consequences against other potential adversaries, particularly China.**

Geopolitical measures

POLICY	BENEFITS	COSTS AND RISKS	LIKELIHOOD OF SUCCESS
Provide lethal aid to Ukraine	High	High	Moderate
Increase support to the Syrian rebels	Moderate	High	Low
Promote liberalization in Belarus	High	High	Low
Expand ties in the South Caucasus	Low	Moderate	Low
Reduce Russian influence in Central Asia	Low	Moderate	Low
Flip Moldova and Transnistria	Low	Moderate	Low



MOST PROMISING

Increasing lethal aid to Ukraine (although this risks escalating the conflict)

Ideological measures

POLICY	BENEFITS	COSTS AND RISKS	LIKELIHOOD OF SUCCESS
Diminish faith in the Russian electoral system	Moderate	High	Low
Create perception that the regime is not pursuing the public interest	Moderate	High	Moderate
Encourage protests and other non-violent resistance	Moderate	High	Low
Undermine Russian image abroad	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate

MOST PROMISING

Further undermining Russia's international standing

Economic measures

POLICY	BENEFITS	COSTS AND RISKS	LIKELIHOOD OF SUCCESS
Expand U.S. energy production	High	Low	High
Increase Europe's LNG import capacity	High	Moderate	Moderate
Deepen sanctions	High	High	High
Enhance Russian brain drain	Low	Low	Low

MOST PROMISING

- Increasing American energy exports
- Multilateral sanctions

Air measures

POLICY	BENEFITS	COSTS AND RISKS	LIKELIHOOD OF SUCCESS
Reposture bombers	Moderate	Low	High
Reposture fighters	Moderate	High	Low
More low-observable aircraft	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
More autonomous/remotely piloted aircraft	Moderate	Moderate	High
More longer-range cruise missiles	High	Moderate	High
More longer-range HARMs	Moderate	Moderate	High
More sophisticated Electronic Warfare	Moderate	Low	Moderate
Focus on long-range, precision-guided conventional missiles (e.g., CPGS)	Moderate	High	Moderate



MOST PROMISING

Advances in high-speed anti-radiation missile (HARM), RPAs and long range cruise missiles to challenge Russia's A2/AD envelope

Space and nuclear measures

POLICY	BENEFITS	COSTS AND RISKS	LIKELIHOOD OF SUCCESS
Deploy additional tactical nuclear weapons in Europe	Low	High	High
Reorient BMD	Low	Moderate	Low
Focus on space-based weapons	Moderate	High	Low
Focus on “spaceplanes”	Moderate	High	Low/Moderate
Focus on small satellites	Moderate	High	Low
Break out of nuclear arms control regime	Moderate	High	Low

MOST PROMISING

Deploying tactical nuclear weapons would likely prompt a Russian reaction, but with substantial risk and may run into political challenges in where to base them.

Maritime measures

POLICY	BENEFITS	COSTS AND RISKS	LIKELIHOOD OF SUCCESS
Increase U.S. and allied naval force posture and presence	Moderate	Low	Moderate
Increase naval research and development	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Shift nuclear posture toward SSBNs	Low	Low	Low
Check the Black Sea buildup	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate



MOST PROMISING

- Increase U.S. and allied naval force posture and presence
- Stationing land and air launched anti-ship missiles in Romania

Land measures

POLICY	BENEFITS	COSTS AND RISKS	LIKELIHOOD OF SUCCESS
Increase U.S. and NATO Land Forces in Europe			
Increase U.S. forces in Europe	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Increase European NATO member ground capabilities	High	Low	Low
Deploy large NATO forces on Russia's borders	Moderate	High	Moderate
Increase NATO Exercises in Europe			
Increase U.S. participation	Moderate	Moderate	Low
Generate mass mobilization of European NATO member forces	High	Moderate	Low
Hold exercises on Russia's borders	Moderate	High	Moderate
Hold exercises practice counter-attack or offensive scenarios	Moderate	High	Moderate

MOST PROMISING

Practicing counter-attack or offensive against Russian incursion will likely provoke a Russian reaction, although with potentially destabilizing effects.

Multi domain measures

POLICY

BENEFITS

COSTS AND RISKS

LIKELIHOOD OF SUCCESS

U.S. Withdrawal from the INF Treaty

Fund missile development program without withdrawing	Low	Moderate	Moderate
Withdraw and build missiles, but do not deploy to Europe	Low	Moderate	High
Withdraw, build missiles, and deploy them to Europe	Moderate	High	High

U.S. Investments in New Capabilities to Manipulate Russian Risk Perceptions

Incremental improvements in counter A2/AD capabilities (e.g., enhanced ATACMS/AARGM/ IFPC2)	Moderate	Moderate	High
Invest in revolutionary, swarm counter A2/AD capabilities	High	High	High
Invest in incremental improvements in counter-ground forces/fires (e.g. enhanced Javelin)	Low	Low	Low
Invest in revolutionary, unmanned ground forces/fires capabilities	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Invest in weapons based on “new physical principles” (e.g., directed energy counter air-defense weapons)	High	High	Moderate

MOST PROMISING

Improve counter Russia A2/AD, investments in “new physical principles” and unmanned ground fires.

Overall conclusions



Economic measures (specifically boosting U.S. energy production and sanctions) offer highest benefit, at the lowest risk, with the greatest likelihood of success.



Geopolitical, ideological & nuclear changes measures to extend Russia tend to come with the highest risks of unwanted second-order effects.



Selected military measures may prompt additional Russian investments (e.g., those that threaten its A2/AD capabilities), but many other measures are limited by the fact that Russia is not seeking military parity with the United States.

