

**Statement by Under Secretary of State Ellen O. Tauscher
House Armed Services Committee
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces**

December 1, 2010

Chairman Langevin, Ranking Member Turner, and members of the Strategic Forces Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement as part of the hearing record. I regret that I could not appear in person. As you know, this is an issue that I care about deeply and have been intensely involved in throughout my career, including when I was privileged to serve with many of you as the Chair of this important Subcommittee.

The Subcommittee on Strategic Forces plays an invaluable bipartisan role in ensuring that the missile defenses we deploy are operationally effective and provide the best protection to our homeland, our military forces, our allies, and our friends.

When I testified last year before the House Armed Services Committee, President Obama had just set forth his plan, the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA), to significantly improve our ability to protect the United States and our European NATO Allies from ballistic missile threats. Any concern at that time that this new approach might upset Allies has proved to be unfounded.

Indeed, at the NATO Summit in Lisbon on November 20, our NATO allies made a momentous decision to pursue a missile defense capability for the Alliance, to protect their populations, territories, and forces against ballistic missile threats. The United States has been encouraging its NATO Allies to take up this vital mission for almost ten years. In addition, NATO Allies welcomed the EPAA as an important voluntary U.S. national contribution to that mission.

The EPAA will deploy defenses for our NATO European Allies against the existing short- and medium-range ballistic missile threat, while also enhancing the U.S. capability to defend against long-range missile threats. Over time, we will expand the EPAA to counter any emerging longer-range missile threats to the United States and our Allies. In short, the EPAA provides greater coverage sooner to all of our European Allies than the previous plan, which is why NATO has unanimously welcomed it. The EPAA also will increase opportunities for greater cooperation and burden-sharing among our NATO Allies.

As we look to 2011, the United States is preparing to implement Phase 1 of the EPAA. The State Department, in close coordination with the Defense Department and other interagency colleagues, is working to ensure that all the necessary legal agreements are in place in time to support the deployment of the EPAA. Phase 1 is important because the AN/TPY-2 will be used to provide early tracking information to deployed missile defense systems as part of the EPAA. As mentioned above, Phase 1 also will strengthen our ability to defend the United States by enhancing our existing capability to track and intercept long-range ballistic missiles. To continue building on that capability for us and our Allies, the Obama Administration is committed to carrying out Phases 2, 3, and 4.

In addition, the Obama Administration, just like the previous Bush Administration, is seeking missile defense cooperation with Russia because it is in the U.S. national security interest. We believe cooperation can demonstrate that U.S. and NATO plans and programs are not a threat to Russia and its strategic forces. Such strong cooperation might also dissuade other states from developing ballistic missiles capable of targeting our countries.

We have a real opportunity at this time to begin missile defense cooperation—both bilaterally with Russia and within the NATO-Russia Council—that will greatly improve regional and international security. In Lisbon, NATO and Russia agreed on missile defense cooperation activities, including resuming theater missile defense exercises. As President Obama stated, “by moving ahead with cooperation on missile defense, we can turn a source of past tension into a source of cooperation against a shared threat.”

As we move forward, the United States will not accept—and has not accepted or participated in negotiations to accept—any limitations on our missile defense capabilities. We have repeatedly communicated our commitment to developing the most effective missile defenses possible and our opposition to any limits on those defenses to the Russian Government at the highest levels.

Chairman Langevin and Ranking Member Turner, I want to thank you and the rest of the Subcommittee for your efforts on missile defense and your contributions to U.S. national security. I look forward to continuing to work closely with you over the coming years on this and many other issues.