

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 18, 2010

The Honorable Hillary Clinton
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton:

We are writing to request information pertaining to press reports suggesting the imminent conclusion of a missile defense agreement between Russia and the United States. First Deputy Chief of the Russian General Staff, Lieutenant General Alexander Burutin, is reported to have told *Moscow Interfax* on July 8, 2010 that “the Russian Defense and Foreign Ministries are drafting a new missile defense treaty with the United States.”ⁱ Then, in an October 1, 2010 *Bloomberg* report, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said the U.S. and Russia are close to reaching an agreement on missile defense.ⁱⁱ

In answers to questions for the record, you have commented on the missile defense discussions being held within the Arms Control and International Security Working Group, which was established by the July 6 Joint Statement between Presidents Obama and Medvedev as a “diplomatic channel to discuss the mutual benefits of BMD cooperation, BMD confidence building and transparency measures.”ⁱⁱⁱ This working group, co-chaired by Under Secretary of State Ellen Tauscher and Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Rybakov, was intentionally established to discuss U.S. missile defenses outside of New START and has been the forum for the U.S. and Russia to make a series of proposals about missile defenses – reportedly related to research and development, testing, modeling and simulation, exercises, and “alternative U.S. – Russian missile defense architectures.”^{iv}

State Department officials have said that the United States is working with Russia on a joint threat assessment and “have proposed a number of other initiatives with the Russians.”^v Yet, this general level of discussion suggested by the State Department seems at odds with senior Russian officials’ descriptions of these meetings and the forthcoming missile defense agreement. Notably, General Burutin is reported to have said, “In our opinion, missile defense is a strategic matter, which must be linked to strategic offensive armaments. The area needs to be regulated by a separate treaty.” He goes on to say that work on the treaty is in progress.^{vi}

Russian Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov is reported to have said that Russia has handed its assessment of potential missile threats to the United States.^{vii} Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov has noted that a joint threat document will soon be ready, and also seems to think that this is just the initial step toward further actions, which are not clearly defined.^{viii}

Given what appears to be disparate views among U.S. and Russian officials regarding missile defense cooperation and potential missile defense agreements, we believe it would be important for the Administration to provide to Senators a copy of all documents (including the aforementioned Russian missile threat analysis) exchanged with the Russian Federation incident to the Tauscher-Rybakov discussions, or any other venue, concerning U.S. missile defenses before the full Senate begins its consideration of the New START Treaty. We would also like to see all cable reporting on these discussions and any others involving U.S. missile defenses.

Senators must be assured that these talks and potential missile defense agreements will not limit U.S. and allied missile defense development and deployment in any fashion whatsoever. As you know, the Administration cannot agree to limitations on U.S. missile defenses with the Russian Federation without resort to the treaty process under section 33 of the Arms Control and Disarmament Act.

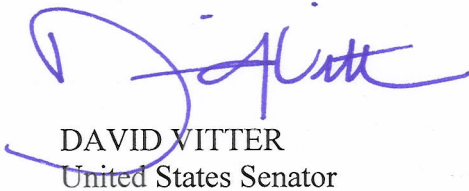
Sincerely,




JEFF SESSIONS
United States Senator



JAMES M. INHOFE
United States Senator



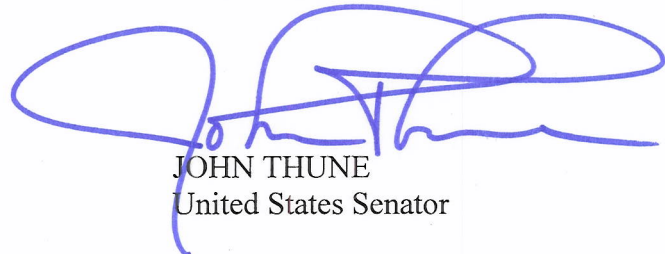
DAVID VITTER
United States Senator



JOHN CORNYN
United States Senator



ROGER WICKER
United States Senator



JOHN THUNE
United States Senator

ⁱ "Russia Working on New Missile Defense Treaty," *Moscow Interfax-AVN*, 1100 GMT, July 8, 2010.

ⁱⁱ U.S.-Russia Accord on Missile Defense Almost Ready, Lavrov says," *Bloomberg*, October 1, 2010.

ⁱⁱⁱ Secretary Clinton, QFR response to Senator Thune (#165), June 17, 2010.

^{iv} Frank A. Rose, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Verification, Compliance, and Implementation. Remarks at the 11th Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies (RUSI) Missile Defence Conference. London, United Kingdom. May 27, 2010.

^v Frank A. Rose, "Remarks to 2010 Multinational BMD Conference," Kyoto, Japan, September 27, 2010.

^{vi} "Russia Working on New Missile Defense Treaty," *Moscow Interfax-AVN*, 1100 GMT, July 8, 2010.

^{vii} Russian Assessment of Missile Threats Handed to U.S., *Moscow Interfax-AVN online*, October 5, 2010.

^{viii} Russia, US, will soon complete Joint Analyses of Current Threats," *TASS*, October 1, 2010.