



Mueller Hearings: Policy Recommendations on Combatting Foreign Interference

Alliance for Securing Democracy
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In his testimony yesterday, former Special Counsel Robert Mueller III reiterated that foreign interference is “among the most serious” challenges to democracy, and that it “deserves the attention of every American.” The Alliance for Securing Democracy (ASD) published detailed recommendations to counter this threat in its [Policy Blueprint for Countering Authoritarian Interference in Democracies](#), several of which address specific challenges Mueller highlighted.

Mueller Statements of Note & Policy Recommendations

Former Special Counsel Mueller:

“The first line of defense is the ability of the various agencies who have some piece of this to not only share information, but share expertise, share targets, and use the full resources that we have to address this problem.”

Recommendation:

Appoint a senior-level Counter-Foreign Interference Coordinator to the National Security Council at the level of Deputy Assistant to the President. This position would coordinate among government agencies to respond to these threats more effectively.

Former Special Counsel Mueller:

“The ability of our intelligence agencies to work together in this arena is perhaps more important than that. And adopting... whatever legislation will encourage us working together — by us, I mean the FBI, CIA, NSA, and the rest — it should be pursued aggressively, early.”

Recommendation:

Establish a Hybrid Threat Center at the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. This threat center would convene experts from across the intelligence community in cyber,



finance, economics, disinformation, leadership, and regional affairs to work together to assess influence operations against the United States and its interests overseas.

Former Special Counsel Mueller:

“It wasn’t a single attempt. They’re [the Russian government] doing it as we sit here and they expect to do it during the next campaign.”

Recommendations:

Enact legislation that will make our elections more secure ahead of 2020, recognizing that the steps we take now are a long-term investment that improve our resilience for elections to come. Build a more constructive public-private partnership to identify and address emerging tech threats.

Former Special Counsel Mueller:

“Many more countries are developing capability to replicate what the Russians have done.”

Recommendation:

Articulate a declaratory policy at the highest level that it considers malign foreign influence operations a national security threat and will respond to them accordingly, regardless of the actor responsible. The administration should strategically deploy instruments of national power that will serve as the most effective deterrent.

Former Special Counsel Mueller:

“We spent substantial time assuring the integrity of the report understanding that it would be our living record for those who would come after us. But it also is a signal, a flag, for those of us who have some responsibility in this area to exercise that responsibility swiftly and not let this problem linger as it has for a number of years.”

Recommendation:

All pillars of democracy – from the government to private companies and the media – should take part in the effort to build a society more resilient to foreign attacks on our democracy. Among the most pressing goals are to:

- Raise the cost of conducting interference operations against the U.S. and allies
- Close vulnerabilities that adversaries exploit to undermine democratic institutions
- Separate politics from efforts to respond to foreign operations against elections
- Improve coordination with allies and partners to respond to this transnational threat
- Make transparency the norm in the technology sector



- Exhibit caution when reporting on leaked information and using social media accounts as journalism sources.

About Us

The Alliance for Securing Democracy, a bipartisan, transatlantic initiative housed at The German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF), develops comprehensive strategies to defend against, deter, and raise the costs on Russian and other state actors' efforts to undermine democracy and democratic institutions. The Alliance works to publicly document and expose the ongoing efforts by Vladimir Putin and other authoritarian regimes to subvert democracy in the United States, in Europe, and globally.