



“Reality vs. Rhetoric: Assessing the Trump Administration’s Russia Policy”: AFPC President Herman Pirchner, Jr. briefs Helsinki Commission

June 15, 2018

Related Categories: Cybersecurity and Cyberwarfare; Democracy and Governance; Economic Sanctions; Human Rights and Humanitarian Issues; Intelligence and Counterintelligence

Related Expert: Herman Pirchner, Jr.

On June 15, AFPC President Herman Pirchner, Jr. joined Russian Journalist Yulia Latynina, and Brookings Institution Scholar Alina Polyakova to address a U.S. Helsinki Commission briefing entitled, “Reality vs. Rhetoric: Assessing the Trump Administration’s Russia Policy.”

The hour-and-a-half-session was held in Dirksen Senate Office Building and attended by Congressional staff and assorted Washington foreign policy experts and members of the media. Pirchner outlined the rather tough anti-Moscow actions taken by the Trump Administration. More than 20 of such actions included economic sanctions on Putin’s inner circle, sales of defensive military equipment to Ukraine, and the large-scale expulsion of Russian spies from the United States. However, Pirchner noted that President Trump avoids directly criticizing Moscow and often hints at policies friendly to Moscow—policies that might excuse Russia’s bad behavior.

Are the President’s words simply a negotiating tactic or do they reflect a real divide between his current thoughts and the past actions of his administration, Pirchner asked? Only time will tell.

|