



Written by on February 5, 2010

U.S. to Develop Missile Shield in Romania

Romanian President Traian Basescu announced on February 4 that Romania's Supreme Defense Council had approved a U.S. proposal to include Romania in a missile defense system against "potential attacks with ballistic missiles or medium-range rockets."

"Terrestrial interceptors will be located inside the national territory," Reuters quoted Basescu saying.

The announcement is an indication that the Obama administration — in an apparent attempt to mollify Russian objections to having such a system based in the Czech Republic or Poland — is taking an alternate approach to implementing a European missile shield.



Basescu said participation of Romania, a European Union and NATO member, was not meant to threaten Russia. "The new system is not against Russia. I want to categorically stress this, Romania [will] not host a system against Russia, but against other threats," he said.

That position was seconded by State Department spokesman Philip Crowley, who stressed that the revised U.S. missile-shield plan, which would deploy medium-range ballistic missile interceptors in Romania, is not directed at Russia but against what he described as an "emerging" missile threat from Iran. "It is precisely what we have always said, which is we are going to protect our interests and those of our allies," Crowley said, in a statement quote by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. "We see this emerging threat coming, as we've said."

Crowley added that Washington's "revised approach is in fact tailored to address the emerging threat coming to the region from Iran."

He added: "Regarding Russia, as we have made clear over and over again, this is not a capability that's directed at Russia."

The only Russian notable reaction to the planned missile shield was published by the Chinese state-controlled Xinhua news service, which quoted Viktor Zavarzin, chairman of the Defense Committee of the State Duma, or lower house of the parliament, who told reporters on February 5 that the U.S. plans could affect "the European security architecture."

The major question was whether NATO would view security problems merely from its own perspective, or would take into account the "legitimate interests and concerns of all states in the Euro-Atlantic area," said Zavarzin as cited by the Russian RIA Novosti news agency.

Xinhua noted that President Obama announced on September 17, 2009 that the United States would abandon its Bush-era missile defense shield program while initiating a "phased, adaptive approach" of the plan in Eastern Europe.



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Of course, all of the controversy over where U.S. and NATO-developed defense systems should be implemented would not be an issue of U.S. foreign policy were simply based on the U.S. Constitution. That document does charge the federal government with protecting the *U.S. states* against invasion, but says nothing about protecting the rest of the world from their mutual or collective enemies.

Photo of Romanian President Traian Basescu: AP Image????



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