

**Questions for the Record  
Senator Dianne Feinstein**

**Crime and Terrorism Subcommittee Hearing On:  
“The Modus Operandi and Toolbox of Russia and other Autocracies  
for Undermining Democracies Throughout the World”  
March 15, 2017**

**Question for President Ilves**

1. In Estonia, Russia used “distributed denial-of-service attacks,” where hackers overloaded servers until they shut down. More recently, in the Netherlands, Russia used a disinformation campaign to impact that country’s election. In Georgia, Russia coordinated cyberattacks with military attacks. Our Intelligence Community has assessed that Russia’s interference in our election was its boldest effort yet and that Russia will use the lessons learned here to conduct future attacks.

**a. What do you view as the gravest threats to the United States by Russia?**

Ultimately it is to distort the electoral process. A military attack would be met with a crushing response; distorting the electoral process to get policies amenable to you is far cheaper and far less dangerous to the perpetrator. The benefits to be reaped from manipulating the political process are enormous.

**b. What should the United States be doing to address these actions by Russia?**

1. Fully investigate how it happened, when it started, who benefited. Without a clear understanding of how the electoral process was manipulated through hacking, doxing, trolling and dissemination of fake news, this will, as Director Comey said in his testimony on 20 March, simply be repeated in future elections. The future of U.S. democracy depends on solving this problem, something never faced in the pre-digital era.
2. Invest in developing basic cyber-hygiene for all those who might be targets: members of Congress, political parties, political NGOs. I would start with something as basic as two-factor authentication for all those accessing sensitive servers. This is fairly elementary but even such a step would raise the threshold for hacking considerably.
3. Take far more decisive action on money laundering. The Russians’ asymmetric actions are possible because the U.S. is a rule of law democracy and they are not. But Russians want to park their money in the U.S. and other liberal democracies precisely because they are rule of law based.

**c. How important is U.S. leadership to the international community on this issue?**

When it comes to security issues, it has always been the U.S. that has taken the lead, at least since the end of World War II. When the U.S. starts to act, others in the liberal democratic world follow. As I said in my written testimony, this needs to be beyond just NATO allies: all liberal democracies can fall victim to these tactics and attacks. Authoritarian regimes, on the other hand, are immune, as they control their press, they ultimately count the votes.