

The Russian Terrorism (SMART) Act: Who are the State Sponsors of Terrorism?

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According to proposed Senate legislation, the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism USA wants leading advocate of global peace and stability Russia labeled with this designation.

The measure also calls for Donbass freedom fighters in Donetsk and Lugansk, unwilling to accept fascist rule by Kiev, designated foreign terrorist organizations.

The legislation has nothing to do with preserving and protecting US national security, everything to do with its imperial interests, its endless wars, economic terrorism, and other hostile actions aimed at advancing hegemonic control over planet earth, its resources and populations.

The so-called SMART Act (S.1189) was introduced last April by hardline Senator Cory Gardner. Earlier he said:

“The State Department should consider adding (Russia) to its list of state sponsors of terrorism, alongside its close allies Iran and Syria.”

“The moral case for such a designation is sound (sic). Russia has invaded its neighbors Georgia and Ukraine (sic).”

“It supports...Bashar al-Assad and our enemies in Afghanistan, and it is engaged in active information warfare against Western democracies (sic), including meddling in the 2016 United States elections (sic).”

Hardline US Senators Mike Coffman, Robert Menendez, Marco Rubio and Ben Sasse also called for designating Russia a state sponsor of terrorism.

In August 2018, Gardner, Lindsey Graham, Menendez, Ben Cardin, John McCain (on his death bed), and Jeanne Shaheen introduced the Defending American Security from Kremlin Aggression Act of 2018.

It called for “increas(ing) economic, political, and diplomatic pressure on the Russian Federation in response to Russia’s continued interference in our elections (sic), malign influence in Syria (sic), aggression in Crimea (sic), and other activities.”

No action was taken on the measure. Nor did followup Defending American Security from (Nonexistent) Kremlin Aggression Act of 2019 advance so far.

On Wednesday, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee approved the SMART Act. If passed

by the full House and Senate and signed into law by Trump, it calls for the State Department to enforce the measure within 90 days.

Iran, North Korea, Syria, and Sudan alone are falsely declared state sponsors of terrorism by the State Department — defining the designation as follows:

“Countries determined by the Secretary of State to have repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism are designated pursuant to three laws: section 6(j) of the Export Administration Act, section 40 of the Arms Export Control Act, and section 620A of the Foreign Assistance Act.”

“Taken together, the four main categories of sanctions resulting from designation under these authorities include restrictions on US foreign assistance; a ban on defense exports and sales; certain controls over exports of dual use items; and miscellaneous financial and other restrictions.”

“Designation under the above-referenced authorities also implicates other sanctions laws that penalize persons and countries engaging in certain trade with state sponsors.”

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee advanced SMART legislation a day after Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov met with Trump and Pompeo in Washington.

Asked about the timing of his visit during a joint press conference, Lavrov said

“regardless of the day you choose to visit Washington, it will surely coincide with either sanctions or impeachment or something else.”

Separately on Wednesday, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee approved a measure to sanction Turkey for buying Russian S-400 air defense missiles, calling its legitimate purchase unacceptable.

The so-called “Promoting American National Security and Preventing the Resurgence of ISIS Act (sic) also imposes sanctions on Russia for helping Syria buy weapons for self-defense.

House members passed a similar bill earlier, the full Senate likely to follow suit.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee also approved four energy bills, including the “Energy Security Cooperation with Allied Partners in Europe Act of 2019.”

It opposes Russia’s Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline to Europe, encourages NATO countries not to buy Russian gas, and calls increased US liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports.

A provision initially included in the bill to sanction companies involved in constructing Russia’s Nord Stream 2 was removed as the action is part of the FY 2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

Approved by the House on Wednesday, Senate passage to follow this month, Trump certain to sign the measure into law.

Nord Stream 2 construction is nearly completed. The NDAA provision won’t stop it becoming

operational early next year.

Congressional legislation is all about furthering exports of expensive US LNG at the expense of much cheaper/readily accessible Russian natural gas.

It's also part of longstanding US war on Russia by other means, a failed strategy.

US sanctions war encouraged greater self-sufficiency. In 2018, Russia's economy grew 2.3%, currently growing at a 1.7% pace, further growth expected in 2020.

Note: Last week, US Under Secretary of State David Hale said the State Department does not consider Russia a state sponsor of terrorism.

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