

**SECRETARY OF STATE HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY ON THE NEW START TREATY
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
JUNE 17, 2010**

Chairman Levin, Senator McCain, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you. It is a pleasure to be back here, and a pleasure to testify with Secretary Gates, Secretary Chu and Admiral Mullen. We share a strong belief that the New START Treaty will make our country more secure, and we urge the Senate to ratify it.

I know that some argue we don't need the New START Treaty. But let's be clear about the choice before us. It is between this treaty and no legal obligation for Russia to keep its strategic nuclear forces below an agreed level, and between this treaty and no on-the-ground verification of Russia's strategic forces.

As Secretary Gates has pointed out, every previous President who faced this choice has found that the United States is better off with a treaty than without one. And the U.S. Senate has always agreed. The 2002 Moscow Treaty was approved by a vote of 95 to 0. The vote on the 1991 START Treaty was 93 to 6.

More than two years ago, President Bush began the process that led to the treaty we are discussing today. And the New START Treaty has already received broad bipartisan endorsement. As James Schlesinger, the Secretary of Defense for Presidents Nixon and Ford and Secretary of Energy for President Carter, declared recently in Congressional testimony, "It is obligatory for the United States to ratify."

Today, I'd like to discuss what the New START Treaty is, and what it isn't.

This is a treaty that, if ratified, will provide stability, transparency, and predictability for the two countries with more than 90 percent of the world's nuclear weapons.

It is a treaty that will reduce the permissible number of Russian and U.S. deployed strategic warheads to 1,550 – a level not seen since the 1950s. In addition, each country will be limited to 700 deployed strategic delivery

vehicles and 800 deployed and non-deployed strategic missile launchers and heavy bombers. These limits will help the United States and Russia bring our deployed strategic arsenals, which were sized for the Cold War, to levels that are more appropriate to today's threats.

It is a treaty that will help us track remaining weapons with an extensive verification regime. This regime draws upon our experience over the last 15 years in implementing the original START Treaty. The verification provisions reflect today's realities, including the smaller number of facilities in Russia compared with former Soviet Union. And for the first time, we will be monitoring the actual numbers of warheads on deployed strategic missiles.

By bringing the New START Treaty into force, we will strengthen our national security more broadly, including by creating greater leverage to tackle a core national security challenge: nuclear proliferation.

It will demonstrate our leadership and strengthen our hand as we work with our partners to hold irresponsible governments accountable – whether in further isolating Iran and enforcing the rules against violators or in persuading other countries to implement better controls on their own nuclear materials. And it makes clear that we are committed to real reductions, and to upholding our end of the bargain under the Non-Proliferation Treaty – which has already brought important benefits in my discussions with foreign leaders, about strengthening the nonproliferation regime and a range of other topics. In my recent meetings with other NATO officials, they expressed an overwhelmingly positive and supportive view of the New START Treaty.

There are also things that this treaty will not do.

As Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen will discuss more fully, the New START Treaty does not compromise the nuclear force levels we need to protect ourselves and our allies.

It does not infringe upon the flexibility we need to maintain our forces, including bombers, submarines, and missiles, in the way that best serves our national security interests.

The treaty does not constrain our missile defense efforts. Those of you who worked with me on this committee know my strong support of missile defense, so I want to make this point very clearly.

Russia has issued a unilateral statement expressing its view. But we have not agreed to this view, and we are not bound by it. In fact, we've issued our own statement making clear that the United States intends to continue improving and deploying effective missile defense systems.

The treaty's preamble does include language acknowledging the relationship between strategic offensive and defensive forces. But this is simply a statement of fact. It does not constrain our missile defense programs in any way.

The treaty also includes language prohibiting the conversion or use of offensive missile launchers for missile defense interceptors, and vice versa. But as General O'Reilly, our Missile Defense Director, has said, it is actually cheaper to build smaller, tailor-made missile defense silos than to convert offensive launchers. And the treaty does not restrict us from building new missile defense launchers, 14 of which are currently being constructed in Alaska.

The Obama Administration has requested \$9.9 billion for missile defense in FY11, almost \$700 million more than Congress provided in FY10.

Finally, the New START Treaty does not restrict our ability to modernize our nuclear weapons complex to maintain a safe, secure, and effective deterrent. As Secretary Chu will discuss, this Administration has called for a 10-percent increase in FY 11 for overall weapons and infrastructure activities, and a 25-percent increase in direct stockpile work. During the next ten years, this Administration proposes investing \$80 billion in our nuclear weapons complex.

I want to conclude by taking a step back and putting the New START Treaty into a larger context. This treaty is one part of a broader effort to reduce the threat posed by the deadliest weapons the world has ever known – especially the potential intersection of violent extremism and nuclear proliferation.

We have several coordinated efforts – including our new Nuclear Posture Review, the recently concluded Nuclear Security Summit and Non-

Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, and extensive bilateral engagements. While a ratified New START Treaty stands on its own in terms of the national security benefits it brings to our country, it is also part of this broader strategy.

Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain, and members of the Committee, thank you again for having us here today. We stand ready to work with you as you undertake your constitutional responsibilities, and to answer all your questions today and in the coming weeks.

We are confident that at the end of this process, you will come to the same conclusion that we and many others have reached – that the New START Treaty makes our country more secure and merits the Senate’s consent to ratification.

Thank you.