

Statement before the Senate Armed Services Committee

***New START and
U.S. National Security***

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Introduction

Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain, distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear today to testify on the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) and why I believe its ratification and entry-into-force are in the national interest of the United States.

New START will strengthen U.S. national security in several ways. The treaty will:

- limit Russian strategic nuclear forces in a verifiable manner;
- provide greater transparency regarding Russian strategic systems, allowing us to make better-informed decisions regarding our own strategic forces;
- permit the United States to maintain a robust nuclear deterrent capable of protecting the United States and our allies;
- strengthen the U.S. position in the international community in seeking to curb the proliferation of nuclear weapons; and
- contribute to a more positive U.S.-Russia relationship.

At the same time, the treaty does not affect our ability to develop and deploy missile defenses to protect the United States and our allies.

The arguments in favor of ratification of New START are compelling. The United States will be better off with the treaty than without it. A number of concerns have been raised about the treaty since Presidents Obama and Medvedev signed it on April 8. When those issues are examined, they do not make a case for withholding consent to ratification. Moreover, a failure to ratify the treaty would have significant costs for the United States.

Why New START is in the U.S. National Interest

There are five principal reasons why New START strengthens U.S. national security.

First, New START will limit the number of Russian strategic nuclear warheads that could strike the United States. New START's limits of 1,550 warheads and 700 deployed strategic delivery vehicles constitute significant reductions compared to the limits in the 1991 START I Treaty: 6,000 warheads and 1,600 strategic nuclear delivery vehicles.¹ New START represents a more modest reduction compared to the 2002 Strategic Offensive

¹ Due to differences in counting rules between START I and New START, these limits are not exactly comparable.

Reductions Treaty (SORT), which limited each side to no more than 1,700-2,200 strategic nuclear warheads by the year 2012.² New START, however, includes agreed counting rules, while SORT had none; it is not clear that the sides shared the same view of how to count warheads under SORT.

Given the changes in political relations between Washington and Moscow since the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, it is difficult to conceive of circumstances in which there would be a nuclear exchange between the United States and Russia. Nevertheless, reducing the strategic nuclear potential on the Russian side and reestablishing an effective verification regime will make the United States safer and more secure.

Some question the need for treaty-based limits on strategic nuclear forces given that the Russian strategic missile force has been shrinking. This results from the aging of their current intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and ballistic missile submarines, and their relatively modest procurement rate of new ICBMs, which is reportedly less than ten per year. Moscow thus far has made a policy choice to allow that shrinkage. It should not be assumed that Russia would choose to continue to reduce its nuclear forces in the absence of New START. The Russians could, if they felt it necessary, change their policy and build more strategic ballistic missiles and continue to deploy an arsenal of deployed strategic warheads well in excess of the New START ceiling of 1,550 warheads. While Russia's economic situation is not as strong as it was prior to the global financial crisis, recovering energy prices ensure a steady stream of revenue to the Russian government that could be used to fund expanded production of new missiles.

Second, New START's verification and transparency measures will provide significant information regarding Russian strategic systems that we will not have without the treaty. With the expiration of START I and its verification regime on December 5, 2009, there is currently no system of on-site inspections or data exchanges to augment our understanding of Russia's strategic nuclear forces. Absent the new treaty's extensive verification provisions, the United States will have to rely solely on national technical means of verification and will steadily lose clarity on the status of Russia's strategic nuclear arsenal.

New START's data exchange, for example, will require that the Russians provide the location of every one of their deployed and non-deployed ICBMs and submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) as well as the number of warheads on each of their deployed missiles. The inspection regime will allow U.S. inspectors to choose individual Russian ICBMs and SLBMs and check the number of warheads on those missiles, to be sure that they conform to the number in the Russian data declaration. U.S. national technical means of verification, such as imagery satellites, are by all accounts very capable, but they cannot on their own provide information such as the number of warheads on individual Russian strategic ballistic missiles.

The aggregate of New START's verification provisions—exchanges, data updates, unique identifiers, notifications and inspections—will have a synergistic effect. For example,

² SORT did not limit strategic nuclear delivery vehicles. As SORT had no counting rules or verification measures, it provided no way for the sides to verify the number of warheads deployed by the other.

notifications of changes in data, of the exit of solid-fueled ICBMs or SLBMs from a production facility, or of movement of ICBMs to a test range will allow us to cue our national technical means and use them more effectively to monitor Russian forces.

The treaty's verification regime will provide the United States a far better picture of the development of Russian strategic forces over the next ten years than we would have with just national technical means alone. Greater predictability about Russian strategic forces bolsters strategic stability. It will allow the U.S. military to avoid having to make worse-case assumptions; it instead will be able to make better-informed and smarter decisions about how to equip and operate U.S. strategic nuclear forces. While not required for monitoring New START's limits, the treaty's telemetry provisions will provide transparency regarding the performance of Russian strategic ballistic missiles.

Third, while New START will reduce U.S. strategic nuclear forces, they will continue to provide a strong and effective deterrent. The Department of Defense has said that, under New START, it will maintain the strategic triad. It intends to deploy a force of up to 420 single-warhead Minuteman III ICBMs, up to 60 B-2 and B-52 heavy bombers equipped for nuclear armaments, and 240 Trident D-5 SLBMs.³ The force will be survivable, robust and agile—able to deter attack on the United States and extend deterrence to U.S. allies.

Compared to the current force structure, U.S. strategic forces following implementation of the New START reductions would present a potential attacker with the challenge of striking almost the same number of targets, less 30-50 ICBM silos. Today and for the foreseeable future, only Russia is capable of even contemplating such a strike. U.S.-Russian relations have changed dramatically since the Cold War, so such a strike is barely conceivable. Nevertheless, were the Russians to consider an attack, they would face significant and daunting challenges.

New START will have limited Russian strategic nuclear forces. Since each U.S. Minuteman III will carry only one warhead, and conservative attack scenarios normally postulate using two warheads against each ICBM silo, a Russian first strike attempting to disarm the United States would require that the Russians use well over half of their permitted weapons to destroy about one-fourth of permitted U.S. strategic warheads in fixed ICBM silos. This is hardly a good exchange ratio.

Assuming that the U.S. Navy keeps one-half of its Trident ballistic missile submarines not in long-term maintenance at sea—a conservative assumption⁴—even if all ICBMs,

³ As New START limits the United States to no more than 700 deployed ICBMs, SLBMs and heavy bombers equipped for nuclear armaments and the Department of Defense plans to deploy 240 SLBMs, the United States will be able to deploy a total of no more than 460 ICBMs and heavy bombers. This could be 400 Minuteman III ICBMs and 60 heavy bombers, or 420 Minuteman III ICBMs and 40 heavy bombers, or some combination in between.

⁴ According to the U.S. Navy Fact File, "The Ohio class design allows the submarines to operate for 15 or more years between major overhauls. On average, the submarines spend 77 days at sea followed by 35 days in-port for maintenance. Each SSBN [ballistic missile submarine] has two crews, Blue and Gold, which alternate manning the submarines while on patrol. This maximizes the SSBN's strategic availability while maintaining the crew's training readiness and morale at high levels." This suggests that closer to

bombers and submarines in port were destroyed, the United States would still retain some 540 nuclear warheads at sea under the New START limits.⁵ That force would give the president a range of response options. Moreover, this assumes a “bolt from the blue,” a surprise attack in which the United States has not generated its forces. In a crisis, the U.S. Navy would have the option of deploying more Trident submarines at sea, which would increase the number of surviving warheads, while the U.S. Air Force could place heavy bombers on alert, thereby increasing their survival prospects. The ability of a large portion of U.S. strategic nuclear forces to survive an attack would be a significant factor dissuading and deterring a potential aggressor from striking in the first place.

Fourth, ratification and entry-into-force of New START will strengthen the U.S. hand in pressing to constrain the proliferation of nuclear weapons. This will not reverse North Korea’s decision to acquire a nuclear capability or persuade Iran to halt its nuclear efforts; the United States and the international community will have to pursue other means to achieve those goals. But U.S. ratification and implementation of New START could help raise the bar to prevent other countries from proceeding down the path to acquiring nuclear weapons, including by strengthening our ability to secure the help of third countries in pressing future nuclear aspirants not to proceed.

The United States and Russia together have some 95 percent of the world’s nuclear weapons; if we are not reducing those arsenals, what does that do to our credibility in asking other countries to forgo nuclear programs? If New START is rejected or its entry-into-force substantially delayed, U.S. non-proliferation efforts would suffer. The ability of the United States to press other states to endorse, implement and help to enforce additional counter-proliferation and non-proliferation initiatives—such as universal adherence to the IAEA additional protocol—would, in all likelihood, be severely weakened.

Fifth, New START contributes to improved U.S.-Russian relations. Relations between Washington and Moscow in 2008 fell to their lowest point since the collapse of the USSR in 1991. The relationship has improved substantially since then, and New START has been a major driver of that improvement. While the Russians do not regard the treaty as ideal, they recognize that Washington took account of some of their key views.

A primary Russian concern regarding a successor to START I was that it contain limits on strategic delivery vehicles. In 2008, the Bush administration proposed to replace START I with a follow-on agreement that would have limited deployed strategic nuclear warheads but not strategic delivery vehicles. This was unacceptable to the Russians. They believed that, with no limits on strategic delivery vehicles and no limits on non-deployed strategic nuclear warheads, the United States would have a major breakout capability, that is, the ability to quickly deploy strategic warheads beyond the limits in a follow-on agreement.

two-thirds of the submarines are at sea at any particular time. Of the 14 Trident ballistic missile submarines, two usually are in long-term maintenance, leaving 12 for normal operations. A two-thirds deployment rate would mean eight at sea.

⁵ The Department of Defense plans for the strategic triad under New START suggest the 240 deployed Trident D-5 SLBMs will carry a total of 1,090 warheads. Thus, half of the Trident submarines at sea would mean some 540 warheads at sea. If eight submarines were at sea, that would mean some 720 warheads.

The Russians thus appreciated the readiness of the Obama administration to return to the traditional approach to constraining strategic offensive forces and limit strategic delivery vehicles as well as strategic warheads. That facilitated conclusion of New START and also demonstrated Washington's broader willingness to take into account Russian concerns. The Obama administration is finding, like the administrations of President Reagan, President George H. W. Bush, and President Clinton before it, that progress on arms control can have a positive impact on the overall relationship.

The Russians now permit overflights by U.S. military aircraft to move personnel and lethal military equipment to support U.S. and NATO operations in Afghanistan. This, plus Moscow's allowance of land transit of other materiel through Russia, has helped diversify supply routes to Afghanistan. On another priority issue for Washington, Moscow has over the past ten months adopted a tougher stance toward Iran's nuclear ambitions, delaying delivery of the S-300 surface-to-air missile system and supporting a June UN Security Council resolution imposing new sanctions on Iran, including an embargo on most types of arms. The latter point is notable in that Russia has long viewed Iran as a market for conventional weapons sales.

This does not mean that Moscow sees eye-to-eye with us on Iran; indeed, the Russians have a different set of interests with Tehran and view the prospect of an Iranian nuclear weapon with a lesser sense of urgency than does Washington. The Russians have, however, over the past ten months adopted a tougher position toward Tehran than in the past. That coincided with progress on and conclusion of New START.

All is not going well in U.S.-Russian relations. There are serious grounds for concern over political freedom within Russia. In addition, Washington and Moscow continue to differ sharply on questions regarding the post-Soviet space, such as Georgia and the breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. But the overall relationship is by any measure in better shape than it was two years ago, and New START has made an important contribution to that. Rejection or substantial delay of New START entry-into-force would damage the broader relationship and make it more difficult to secure Russian support on issues of concern to Washington, such as Iran.

Responding to Concerns about New START

In the time since New START's signature, a number of concerns have arisen about the treaty, its terms and its impact on U.S. security. When examined, those concerns have no substantive basis or are over-stated relative to the benefits of the treaty.

First, some worry that New START will limit missile defense and/or weaken the American commitment to missile defense. The New START Treaty does not constrain the planned U.S. missile defense program and has only one limit on missile defense. That limit prevents the United States from doing something it would not in any case want to do.

The treaty's preamble recognizes "the existence of the interrelationship between strategic offensive arms and strategic defensive arms." This reflects a strategic reality that has been acknowledged for more than 40 years: if one side deploys a strategic missile defense system, that could have an impact on the other side's strategic offensive forces. The preamble also notes "current strategic defensive arms do not undermine the viability and effectiveness of the strategic offensive arms of the Parties." That statement reflects the current strategic reality. This preambular language does not constrain missile defense.

The single limit in the treaty on missile defense appears in Article V, paragraph 3. It says "each Party shall not convert and shall not use ICBM launchers and SLBM launchers for placement of missile defense interceptors therein." This would prevent the United States from converting existing ICBM silos to hold ground-based interceptor missiles. However, as senior Department of Defense officials have testified, the cost of converting one ICBM silo to house a ground-based interceptor missile would be \$20 million more than building a new interceptor silo from scratch. No one has offered a plausible reason or scenario for putting missile defense interceptors on ballistic missile submarines. A limit that prevents the United States from doing something that the United States would not do in any event is a limit that the United States should be able to live with.

Others have expressed concern about the unilateral statement issued by the Russians on April 8, which says in part that New START "may be effective and viable only in conditions where there is no qualitative or quantitative build-up in the missile defense system capabilities of the United States. Consequently, the extraordinary events referred to in Article XIV of the Treaty also include a build-up in the missile defense capabilities of the United States of America such that it would give rise to a threat to the strategic nuclear force potential of the Russian Federation." This statement merits several observations.

First, as a unilateral statement rather than as a part of the treaty, this statement has no legal bearing. It should be read merely as a statement of Russian concern.

Second, Russia has the right under the treaty—as does the United States—to withdraw on three months notice for any reason that it determines endangers its supreme interests. Such withdrawal clauses have been an integral part of every U.S.-Soviet or U.S.-Russian strategic nuclear arms agreement. Indeed, the United States invoked the withdrawal clause in December 2001 when it notified Russia of its intent to withdraw from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty.

Third, President Medvedev explained the unilateral statement in some detail in an April 9 interview. He said "that formula says there is an interconnection between strategic offensive arms and missile defense. But it's mentioned there also about circumstances which were the basis [for signature] of that treaty agreed upon by both parties. So, if those circumstances will change, then you would have, we would consider it as the reason to jeopardize the whole agreement. That doesn't mean that because of that rule, if the American side starts to build up the missile [defense] system, that the treaty would automatically lose its power. ... I would like to make sure there is no impression that any

change would be a reason to abandon a signed agreement.”⁶ The point is that the Russians would not be concerned by any U.S. missile defense developments but by missile developments that would endanger their strategic offensive forces. In those circumstances, they have the option of withdrawing from the treaty. Why is this considered a remarkable point? Were Russian missile defense developments to threaten the U.S. strategic deterrent, Washington presumably would want the option to withdraw from the treaty.

Fourth, Moscow expressed concern about potential U.S. missile defense developments in 1991 and made a similar unilateral statement in conjunction with its signature of the START I Treaty. In fact, the Russians did not withdraw from START I, even after the United States withdrew from the ABM Treaty in 2002 and began deploying ground-based interceptors whose deployment would have been barred by the ABM Treaty. Moscow may hope to use the threat of withdrawal to persuade the United States to scale back its missile defense plans, but that tactic has not worked in the past.

Fifth, the Russians signed New START after President Obama made clear that he would not agree to limit the U.S. ability to defend against a ballistic missile attack from North Korea or Iran. They did so presumably because they concluded that the constraints on strategic offensive forces are in their interest and that U.S. missile defense plans—particularly the Phased Adaptive Approach based on the Standard SM-3 interceptor—will not endanger their strategic offensive forces over the ten-year life of the treaty.

Second, some express concern that conventional warheads on ICBMs and SLBMs will count under New START’s limit of 1,550 strategic warheads. At present, the United States deploys only nuclear warheads on its strategic ballistic missiles. The Russians are concerned that, given the increased accuracy of U.S. strategic systems, conventional warheads could destroy strategic targets that previously would be targeted with nuclear weapons. The Russians therefore sought a ban on conventional warheads on ICBMs and SLBMs but fell off that when the United States agreed to count any conventional warheads on strategic ballistic missiles under the warhead limit.

The United States has considered a program—Prompt Global Strike—to put conventional warheads on ICBMs or SLBMs. Were that program to go forward, those conventional warheads would count under the terms of New START. However, the number of conventional warheads on strategic ballistic missiles would likely be small. The Obama administration has characterized this as a niche capability. The Bush administration considered removing the nuclear warheads from two Trident D-5 SLBMs on each Trident ballistic missile submarine and replacing those with conventional warheads. That plan, which did not go forward, would have meant less than 30 conventional warheads on the total SLBM force, a tiny fraction of the 1,550 warheads permitted under New START. An ICBM or SLBM is an awfully expensive way to deliver a conventional warhead to a target. It is difficult to conceive of plausible scenarios where other, more cost-effective means—such as bomber-delivered weapons or Trident submarines converted to carry conventional sea-launched cruise missiles—would not suffice and provide lower-cost strike options.

⁶ “Transcript: George Stephanopoulos Interviews Russian President Dmitry Medvedev,” April 9, 2009, <http://abcnews.go.com/print?id=10348116>.

Third, some criticize New START for counting heavy bombers as carrying only one warhead each, when they can carry many more. New START treats warheads on ballistic missiles and heavy bombers differently. It counts the actual number of warheads on ICBMs and SLBMs; thus, if either side were to choose to deploy only ICBMs and SLBMs, it would face a hard limit of 1,550 warheads. The rule attributing one weapon to each heavy bomber equipped for nuclear armaments is more an accounting mechanism rather than a hard limit. Depending on how many weapons the sides plan to place on bombers, the total number of ballistic missile warheads and bomber weapons could exceed 1,550.

The negotiators explained this rule by noting that, in contrast to ICBMs and SLBMs, neither U.S. nor Russian bombers are normally maintained with any nuclear weapons on board. They thus decided to attribute one weapon to each deployed heavy bomber.

Securing preferential treatment for bombers has been a central goal of U.S. arms control policy for 40 years. The rationale for differentiation between bombers and ballistic missiles is that bombers, due to their long flight times (as much as eight-ten hours as opposed to 15-30 minutes for strategic ballistic missiles), cannot be used in a surprise attack. The Reagan administration's original START proposal in 1982 contained *no* limits on bombers. When it was concluded in 1991, START I had counting rules that discounted the number of weapons attributed to bombers under the 6,000 warhead limit.⁷

It would have been preferable had New START included a counting rule that provided less of a discount for bomber weapons. However, this rule benefits Russia and the United States equally. The United States historically has given greater weight to the bomber leg of its triad than did the Soviet Union or Russia, and deploys twice as many bombers as does Russia, though many U.S. bombers have been converted to conventional-only roles.

Fourth, some worry that New START does not define a rail-mobile ICBM launcher, thereby creating a loophole for future exploitation by the Russians. It is correct that the treaty's definitions do not specifically define a "rail-mobile ICBM launcher." U.S. negotiators did not pursue this because the Russians retired their rail-mobile ICBMs prior to the beginning of the New START negotiations. The plant which manufactured those SS-24 ICBMs is located in Dnipropetrovsk, in what today is independent Ukraine.

Part One of the New START Protocol defines an ICBM launcher as "a device intended or used to contain, prepare for launch, and launch an ICBM." This would capture under New START's limits any rail-mobile ICBM that the Russians might choose to deploy in the future. It is difficult, moreover, to give credence to the notion that a U.S. administration

⁷ Under START I, each U.S. bomber equipped to carry long-range air-launched cruise missiles (ALCMs) counted as ten under the 6,000 warhead limit, even though U.S. bombers could carry more. The B-52H, for example, could carry up to 20 ALCMs. Russian bombers equipped to carry long-range ALCMs counted as eight under the 6,000 warhead limit; they could carry more than eight but not as many as U.S. bombers. U.S. and Russian bombers not equipped to carry long-range ALCMs counted as one under the 6,000 warhead limit, even though they could carry many more. U.S. B-52 bombers, for example, could carry 12-14 nuclear bombs and short-range attack missiles and still count as only one warhead under START I.

would sit back while the Russians deployed rail-mobile ICBMs and claimed that they somehow were exempt from the limits of New START.

Fifth, some express concern that New START has less in the way of verification than did START I. As Presidents Obama and Medvedev agreed in July 2009, one goal for New START was, where possible, to streamline and simplify verification measures. This reflected a desire on the part of the militaries on both sides to make verification measures less costly and less intrusive on operational practices. It also reflected the fact that, over 15 years of implementing the START I verification regime, the sides gained considerable expertise, including on how to make verification simpler and more efficient.

In some cases, New START's limits did not require the kinds of verification provisions that START I did. This was the case with telemetry, the information that a missile broadcasts during a flight test to report on its performance. START I required that the sides broadcast virtually all telemetry unencrypted and that, following a test, the testing side provide the other with a copy of the telemetry that it recorded. START I needed access to this telemetry for three reasons: (1) to monitor START I's limit on ballistic missile throw-weight; (2) to monitor START I's limit on new types of strategic ballistic missiles; and (3) to monitor the number of warhead releases or simulated releases during a ballistic missile test to ensure that the total number of releases did not exceed the number of warheads attributed to that type of ballistic missile.

New START does not have limits on throw-weight, on new types of ballistic missiles, or on the total number of warheads attributed to a particular missile type. As for monitoring the number of warheads, New START uses inspections to confirm the actual number of warheads on individual ICBMs and SLBMs. New START thus does not need telemetry for purposes of verifying its limits. It would have been preferable for transparency purposes were New START to retain START I's telemetry provisions, so that we would have access to all telemetry from Russian ballistic missile tests. The Russians, however, were not prepared to agree to this. The result is a more limited transparency provision that provides for exchanging telemetry on five missile tests per year.

More broadly, however, asking whether New START has more or less in the way of verification measures than START I is using the wrong metric for judging New START's verification regime, just as it would be incorrect to compare New START to the SORT Treaty, which had no verification measures. The verification system of START I was designed to monitor compliance with a different treaty, with a different (and more complex) set of limits, in a different political context. For example, START I applied inspections to 70 facilities, many never previously seen by U.S. personnel on the ground. There are now only 35 facilities subject to inspection, many quite familiar to U.S. inspectors from past visits.

The verifiability of New START should be judged by whether its monitoring and verification measures are appropriate for its limits such that the United States will have high confidence that it could detect a militarily significant violation in a timely manner, that is, in time for the United States to respond before its security is jeopardized. The

answer to this question is “yes.” The treaty is effectively verifiable, as General Chilton, Commander of U.S. Strategic Command, stated last week.

Sixth, some criticize New START for not limiting tactical nuclear weapons, where Russia has a significant numerical advantage. It is correct that New START does not limit tactical nuclear weapons. Had the administration tried to limit those weapons in this agreement, it could have taken much longer to negotiate, when the urgency was to secure a new strategic arms agreement given the looming expiration of START I in December 2009. The negotiators would likely still be at it.

The Obama administration has stated that it will address tactical nuclear weapons in the next round of negotiations. This is important. With New START’s limits, we will be at the point where it is difficult to countenance further strategic arms cuts without addressing limits on tactical nuclear weapons. A failure to ratify New START, however, would damage the broader U.S.-Russian relationship and would not make securing Russian agreement to reductions in tactical nuclear weapons any easier. Under those circumstances, it is uncertain how quickly the Russians would even agree to return to the negotiating table. Once they did return, the new negotiation would prove far more difficult as the Russians revisited concessions from New START and made new demands.

Finally, as Senator Lugar noted in a July 8 statement, “most of Russia’s tactical nuclear weapons either have very short ranges, are used for homeland air defense, are devoted to the Chinese border, or are in storage.” The countries most exposed to Russia’s tactical nuclear arsenal—NATO allies in Europe—support New START.

Seventh, some argue that further reductions in the U.S. strategic arsenal would be risky without a plan to maintain a robust U.S. nuclear deterrent. In fact, the administration requested \$7 billion in the FY 2011 budget for the National Nuclear Security Administration’s (NNSA) weapons activities, a 10 percent increase compared to the previous year. The administration has stated that it intends to spend \$80 billion over 10 years for NNSA weapons activities and the nuclear weapons complex, as well as \$100 billion over 10 years to maintain and modernize strategic delivery systems.

When the concerns about New START are examined, they lack substantive basis or are over-stated relative to the benefits of the treaty. None of these concerns should offer grounds for the Senate to withhold its consent to ratification, particularly when bearing in mind the benefits that the treaty offers and the substantial costs to the United States of a failure to ratify.

Possible Russian Cheating

There has been some discussion before this Committee regarding the possibility of Russian cheating. No cheating on an arms control agreement should be politically acceptable. However, one can draw a distinction between cheating that will have little impact on the strategic balance and cheating that is militarily significant. While one would want a monitoring and verification regime capable of detecting any cheating, the focus should be

on a monitoring and verification regime that can detect militarily significant treaty violations in a timely manner, that is, in time for a U.S. response before its security interests are jeopardized. This is the standard of “effective verification” against which arms control treaties have historically been evaluated.

Under the New START Treaty, the United States should be able to detect militarily significant cheating. That plus possible U.S. response options should dissuade the Russians from considering cheating in the first place.

For example, could the Russians cheat by deploying extra warheads on ICBMs or SLBMs? Perhaps, but they would run a significantly greater risk of being caught than in the past. START I provided for ten inspections per year to ensure that the number of warheads on an ICBM or SLBM did not exceed the number attributed to that type of ICBM or SLBM. The sides concluded that ten inspections created a sufficient risk of being caught so that neither would cheat. New START also provides for ten warhead inspections per year, but the number of inspectable ICBMs and SLBMs will be dramatically reduced compared to the number in START I. That raises the likelihood that cheating would be discovered.⁸

Given that the Russians will likely have significant headroom under the 700 limit on deployed ICBMs, SLBMs and heavy bombers equipped for nuclear armaments, it is hard to see that they would perceive an advantage to trying to build undeclared ballistic missiles. The United States, moreover, would likely detect the production of more than a small number of undeclared ballistic missiles.

Finally, when considering whether to cheat, the Russians would face a major disincentive in the form of the possible U.S. response. As described by the Department of Defense, the United States will have to eliminate or convert about 130 deployed strategic delivery vehicles under New START but will reach the warhead limit of 1,550 largely by “downloading”—removing warheads from deployed missiles. The Russians understand that those missiles could be “uploaded,” that is, the downloaded warheads could be returned to deployed missiles. New START will leave the United States with a significant upload capability. Under the plans announced by the Department of Defense, the U.S. Navy will have up to 1,090 warheads on its 240 deployed Trident D-5 SLBMs. Two hundred and forty Trident D-5s are capable of carrying 1,920 warheads, so those SLBMs would have an upload capacity of 830 SLBM warheads. As for the ICBM force, the

⁸ The ten START I warhead inspections were conducted when the treaty allowed each side to deploy 1,600 strategic nuclear delivery vehicles and the Russians deployed fewer than 100 heavy bombers; thus the “universe” of inspectable Russian ICBMs and SLBMs could be in the neighborhood of 1,500. New START permits ten inspections per year to confirm the number of warheads on individual ICBMs or SLBMs, but the “universe” of inspectable ICBMs and SLBMs will be far less than under START I—no more than 700 deployed ICBMs and SLBMs, if one were to make the unlikely assumption that the Russians deploy no heavy bombers and sustain a force of 700 deployed strategic missiles. One can infer from the July 2009 Russian proposal for the limit on strategic delivery vehicles—500—that Moscow plans to deploy fewer than 700 ICBMs and SLBMs. Some estimates by non-governmental analysts project a Russian deployed strategic delivery vehicle force under New START as low as 400. This would narrow the “universe” of inspectable ballistic missiles even further, again raising the odds of discovery of cheating.

planned 400-420 Minuteman III ICBMs will each carry single warheads, but each is capable of carrying three warheads, meaning an upload capacity of 800-840 ICBM warheads. When considering any cheating scenario, the Russians would have to bear in mind that the United States could respond in a matter of months by uploading more than 1,600 warheads, doubling the number allowed by New START. That should provide a significant disincentive to cheating.

Conclusion

Mr. Chairman, Senator McCain, members of the Committee, there are compelling reasons for the Senate to give its consent to ratification of the New START Treaty. That agreement serves the U.S. national interest: it will limit the number of strategic warheads that could target the United States, provide greater transparency regarding Russian strategic forces, allow the United States to maintain a robust deterrent, strengthen the U.S. hand in pressing to constrain proliferation, and contribute to a more positive U.S.-Russia relationship.

While one might wish for different provisions in some parts of the treaty—for example, a lower discount in the bomber weapon counting rule or greater access to telemetry—a treaty inevitably reflects compromises that take account of the other side’s position. These points do not come close to outweighing the gains that will accrue to U.S. security from the treaty’s entry-into-force. Moreover, a failure to ratify would carry substantial costs for the United States. Lack of New START’s verification regime would deny us valuable insights into Russian strategic systems, and unpredictability would grow. The U.S. effort to curb nuclear proliferation would suffer. And a failure to ratify would deal a major blow to U.S.-Russian relations, resulting in less cooperation from Moscow on problems such as Iran.

New START is in the U.S. national interest. The Senate should provide its consent to ratification. Finally, I would reiterate that, with the expiration of START I in December, the United States no longer receives the data on Russian strategic offensive forces provided by START I’s verification regime. Early ratification and entry-into-force of New START will close this gap and restore a situation in which the United States has access to important information regarding Russian strategic forces.

Thank you for your attention.

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