

UNCLASSIFIED

**REPORT ON THE REASONS THAT CONTINUED
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW START TREATY IS IN
THE NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS OF THE UNITED
STATES**



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Prepared by the U.S. Department of State**

**In response to
Section 1247 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016
(Public Law 114-92)**

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The New START Treaty entered into force on February 5, 2011. Under the treaty, the United States and Russia were required to meet the following central limits on their strategic offensive arms by February 5, 2018:

- i. 700 deployed intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), and heavy bombers;
- ii. 1,550 warheads on deployed ICBMs and SLBMs and warheads counted for deployed heavy bombers; and
- iii. 800 deployed and non-deployed ICBM launchers, SLBM launchers, and heavy bombers.

Since the previous Section 1247 report was submitted, both parties to the New START Treaty have continued to successfully comply with the treaty’s central limits, which took effect on February 5, 2018. This is reflected in the aggregate forces data exchanged subsequently by the parties:

NEW START TREATY

AGGREGATE NUMBERS OF STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS (as of September 1, 2019)

Category of Data	United States of America	Russian Federation
Deployed ICBMs, Deployed SLBMs, and Deployed Heavy Bombers	668	513
Warheads on Deployed ICBMs, on Deployed SLBMs, and Nuclear Warheads Counted for Deployed Heavy Bombers	1,376	1,426
Deployed and Non-deployed Launchers of ICBMs, Deployed and Non-deployed Launchers of SLBMs, and Deployed and Non-deployed Heavy Bombers	800	757

IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS

The New START Treaty's limitations on the size of the strategic nuclear force that the Russian Federation can deploy and the verification regime established by the treaty both regulate competition and provide key data, information, and insights regarding Russian strategic nuclear forces. The treaty also increases transparency, predictability, and stability in the U.S.-Russian strategic nuclear relationship.

Through its verification regime, the New START Treaty enables the United States to gain greater information and insight into Russia's strategic nuclear forces. The treaty mandates that both sides exchange data detailing the numbers, locations, and technical characteristics of all weapons systems and facilities subject to the treaty. The 18 on-site inspections that are conducted by the United States each year under the terms of the treaty allow confirmation of Russia's declared data on the number of deployed and non-deployed strategic systems located at the inspected facility, the number of reentry vehicles on deployed ICBMs and SLBMs, and declared conversions or eliminations of weapons systems that have taken place. The New START Treaty also affirms the right of the United States to use its national technical means (NTM) in a manner consistent with generally recognized principles of international law for monitoring Russian activities and capabilities which provide the United States with another source of information that is used to confirm data from exchanges and inspections.

Without the data exchanges and the access through on-site inspections to Russian facilities subject to the treaty, the overall effect would be a decrease in our knowledge of Russia's strategic nuclear forces. The information provided through the treaty's implementation contributes to reducing the risk of strategic surprise, mistrust, and miscalculations that can result from excessive secrecy or decisions based on worst-case assumptions.

Under the New START Treaty, the United States can rebalance its forces and adapt to any future technical or geopolitical changes that could affect a given leg of the delivery system Triad, and to determine its appropriate nuclear force structure. The treaty provisions state that "each Party has the right to determine for itself the composition and structure of its strategic offensive arms." The U.S. nuclear force structure is designed to account for possible adjustments in the Russian strategic force configurations.

Russia's strategic forces are undergoing a comprehensive modernization in their force structure, operations, and planning. In a March 1, 2018 speech, President Vladimir Putin spoke about the development of five new nuclear-armed systems: a nuclear-powered, nuclear-armed cruise missile (which had a criticality accident on August 8, 2019, during the recovery operation from a previous flight test that caused at least seven fatalities and a radiation release), called Burevestnik or by its NATO designator, Skyfall; a nuclear-powered unmanned underwater vehicle with intercontinental range called Poseidon; an air-launched ballistic missile called Kinzhal; the Avangard "gliding wing unit;" and the Sarmat heavy ICBM. Of these five systems, the Avangard and Sarmat systems will be accountable under the terms of the treaty. As required by the Treaty, the Russian Federation held an exhibition of the Avangard that the United States participated in prior to the Russian Federation declaring the system operational in December

2019. Russian official commentary and media reports have also indicated that the Kinzhal could be fielded before New START is scheduled to expire in February 2021. The United States is monitoring the development of these systems and has raised them with Russian officials. The New START Treaty's Bilateral Consultative Commission, which meets twice annually, provides the United States a forum in which to raise questions about Russian strategic force developments. Russia's large stockpile of nonstrategic nuclear weapons is not subject to the treaty's limits and verification regime.¹

CONCLUSION

The New START Treaty's limits on Russia's strategic nuclear force, establishment of data exchanges including the locations, numbers, and technical characteristics of weapons systems and facilities, and its verification provisions, which grant the United States access to Russian facilities containing deployed or non-deployed strategic systems, currently contribute to the national security of the United States. These provisions in the New START Treaty provide predictability, transparency, and unique insight with respect to Russian nuclear forces and planning as Russia continues to modernize its strategic nuclear forces. The New START Treaty allows the United States to both retain and modernize its nuclear Triad while also providing the United States with the flexibility to adapt its force structure as needed.

However, the New START Treaty does not restrain Russia from developing and deploying new, advanced kinds of strategic nuclear weapons systems that are not covered by the treaty. The treaty also does nothing to restrict Russia from developing and deploying nonstrategic nuclear weapon systems. Russia has developed or is developing both of these types of nuclear systems and has up to 2,000 nonstrategic nuclear warheads as described publicly by Defense Intelligence Agency Director Lieutenant General Robert Ashley on May 29, 2019. Additionally, because the New START Treaty is bilateral and applies only to the United States and Russia, the treaty does not impose any constraints on China's nuclear forces, which are undergoing a rapid and comprehensive modernization that will likely result in a doubling of their numbers over the next decade.

These unconstrained and unverified forces pose threats to the United States, our allies, and our partners. Much has changed in the near-decade since the New START Treaty was signed in 2010, including the development of new Russian and Chinese nuclear capabilities. The Administration is seeking arms control that can deliver real security to the United States and its allies and partners, and has not yet made a decision regarding whether extension of the New START Treaty will be an element of that effort. This effort must account for changes in the strategic environment, broader concerns regarding Russia's non-compliance with many of its international obligations and commitments, and the expanding nuclear arsenals of both Russia and China. The 2018 Nuclear Posture Review described how the Administration would respond to these challenges through maintaining both effective and flexible U.S. nuclear capabilities and pursuing effective arms control. Ensuring a strong U.S. nuclear deterrent will help convince other countries to engage in meaningful arms control initiatives.

¹ Per the Senate's Resolution of Ratification on Advice and Consent to the New START Treaty, the Department of State provides an annual report on efforts to seek negotiations to address the disparity between the U.S. and Russian nonstrategic nuclear stockpiles.

