

**Reaching a New START Agreement**  
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Prague, April 8, 2010



Following a telephone conversation between Presidents Dmitry Medvedev and Barack Obama on March 26, 2010, Moscow and Washington simultaneously announced their readiness to co-sign a treaty on April 8, 2010 in Prague to further reduce and limit strategic offensive armaments.

The decision to begin negotiations and draft a new comprehensive START treaty was made a year ago on April 1, 2009, during a meeting in London between the presidents of Russia and the United States. Afterwards, the Russian president appointed an interdepartmental delegation for the talks that began in Geneva in May 2009. The delegation united more than 30 representatives and was headed by the Director of the Russian Foreign Ministry Department for Security and Disarmament Issues, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary A.I. Antonov. The head of the U.S. delegation was the Assistant Secretary of State for Verification, Compliance, and Implementation Rose Gottemoeller.

A total of 10 full-format rounds of negotiations were held. Dmitry Medvedev personally supervised their progress and engaged directly in the solution of the most complicated issues. Nine telephone conversations between the heads of state were devoted to START issues, which were also discussed in meetings between Medvedev and Obama throughout the year in Moscow (July), New York (September), Singapore (November) and Copenhagen (December).

**Replacing the Original START**

The new treaty will replace one of the most significant agreements in the history of disarmament – the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms of July 31, 1991 (START) treaty between the USSR and the USA - which expired December 4, 2009. As the new treaty comes into effect, the Russian-U.S. Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions (SORT) agreed upon on May 24, 2002, will be terminated as the parties already fulfilled their related commitments.

The 1991 START treaty played a major role in promoting international peace, strategic stability and security. Since the end of the Cold War, the two countries have agreed upon deep cuts to their strategic offensive armaments, which has made the world a more stable and safer place. These efforts have removed the threat of impending war that weighed upon the peoples of Russia and the United States, as well as other countries, and by creating a principally different military-political climate, has helped move the two countries from an era of “co-existence” to one of partnership and mutually beneficial cooperation.

Along with Russia and the United States, the parties involved with the previous START included Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine. The historic role of the treaty would be incomplete without their major implementation efforts and without their complete fulfillment of obligations outlined in the 1992 Lisbon Protocol, where the countries agreed to withdraw nuclear weapons from their territories and join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as nuclear-free states.

**Transitioning from the Old to the New**

We worked to preserve everything valuable and viable from the previous START. However, many aspects of the treaty that related to the past historic epoch and previous state of the Russia-U.S. relationship had to be thoroughly reviewed and adapted to accommodate modern realities.

The work on the new treaty successively targeted the formulation of its provisions on a strict parity basis. We purposefully worked to reach this agreement, which would include agreed upon decreased “ceilings” of strategic offensive armaments, and at the same time, enhance the security of Russia and the United States, thus making Russia-U.S. relations more stable, predictable and relevant.

While it is impossible to reach such sensitive agreements without mutual concessions, it is important to preserve the balance of interests. With this, we believe we succeeded.

### **Specifications of New START**

The draft treaty that is ready to be signed, is a solid package of documents (over 160 pages) that comprises of the treaty itself, the protocol that specifies its articles and implementation rules (an integral part of the treaty with equal legal force), and an addenda to the protocol, which also specifies the provisions of the agreement. Some addenda are outside the package and therefore, can be “streamlined” by experts after the signing.

A special body called the Bilateral Consultative Commission has been set up to promote viability and efficiency of the treaty and is tasked with resolving any unclear issues related to its implementation.

Treaty provisions envisage that each country reduce and limit its strategic offensive armaments in such a way so that beginning from seven years after the treaty is ratified, total numbers do not exceed:

- **700** deployed intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM), submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBM), and heavy bomber-launched ballistic missiles
- **1550** warheads
- **800** deployed and non-deployed ICBM, SLBM launchers and heavy bombers.

### **The Rationale behind the Numbers**

The limit was based on our initiative to bring deployed and non-deployed launchers, as well as heavy bombers, into the legal space of the treaty, which will limit the so-called “returnable potential” and provide a stimulus for the elimination or reconfiguration of the aforementioned strategic weapons.

The parties agreed to reduce the total number of warheads by a third against the Moscow Treaty (START ceiling was 2200 warheads) and, more importantly agreed to more than halve the highest limit for strategic delivery vehicles (START ceiling was 1600 vehicles, while SORT did not limit the vehicles). Thus, Russia and the United States have demonstrated their aspirations for major and truly large-scale cuts in strategic offensive armaments.

At the same time the numerical parameters fixed in the treaty will provide opportunities to preserve and develop the grouping of strategic nuclear forces of the Russian Federation in compliance with existing plans, namely, ensuring that the necessary deterrence level remains guaranteed. In contrast to the original START, the new treaty allows each country to independently define the composition and structure of their strategic offensive armaments.

### **Connecting Strategic Offensive and Defensive Armaments**

The deployment of U.S. missile defense systems was not initially included in talks related to the new treaty. The presidents of Russia and the United States agreed from the very beginning that strategic offensive armaments would be the subject of the new agreement and that missile defense would be discussed between our countries in another format.

However, we had to move forward based on the fact that the new treaty was drafted in conditions when there were no restrictions on the deployment of strategic missile defense systems (in 2002, the United States unilaterally withdrew from the 1972 ABM Treaty). With regard to this, the negotiators had to insert the inextricable connection between strategic offensive and strategic defensive armaments (i.e. missile defense) into the treaty. This was successfully fulfilled and the importance of this connection when

reducing strategic offensive armaments will be included in the treaty and be legally binding. Besides, the United States has already agreed not to refurnish or use ICBM and SLBM launchers for interceptor missile deployment and vice versa. The U.S. also agreed to discuss the distinguishing features between interceptors and ICBM and SLBM, as well as between interceptor and ICBM/SLBM launchers, which would rule out a possibility to bypass the treaty.

The treaty is being finalized based on the current situation, where the parties possess a concrete level of strategic defense systems. The change of the levels entitles each party to decide on its further participation in the process of strategic offensive arms reduction. This provision does not ban unilateral decisions, but it is unequivocally based on the assumption that strategic offensive armaments will be reduced to such an extent that will ensure security of either party and take into account the presence of strategic defensive systems capable of neutralizing strategic offensive armaments. This interconnection has been legally stipulated.

### **The Right to Withdraw**

An international legal clause was inserted so that any party in exercising its state sovereignty has the right to withdraw from the treaty if it decides that exclusive circumstances resulting from its provisions pose a direct threat to its supreme interests. This includes qualitative and quantitative increases of the U.S. strategic missile defense potential. This stated provision will also be mentioned in the unilateral statement of the Russian Federation, which will be made during the signing of the treaty. The statement will become an independent political document accompanying the treaty, as well as a possible U.S. reciprocal statement.

### **Conventional vs. Nuclear Strategic Offensive Weapons**

The new agreement covers all existing (both deployed and decommissioned) U.S. strategic systems, including “MX” ICBM (Peacekeeper) and Minuteman-II, along with non-nuclear strategic offensive arms should they be developed. The new treaty introduces strict control over submarines and heavy bombers refurnished for conventional weapons and guarantees that the vehicles will not get nuclear weapon carrying capabilities back. Conventional (non-nuclear) ICBM and SLBM warheads are included in the limited number of warheads stipulated by the treaty, while the vehicles are included in the general ceilings of delivery means.

We believe this extremely important agreement will catapult further dialogue regarding the strategic stability influence of conventionally-armed ICBM and SLBM. If any party acquires a new type of strategic offensive arms, their liability to the treaty will be considered by the Bilateral Consultative Commission.

### **Verification Mechanisms**

The verification mechanism was considerably adapted to address modern realities and was simplified compared to the previous treaty. According to preliminary estimates, it nearly halves verification costs and radically decreases the load on inspected Russian objects.

The treaty does not allow the continuation of uninterrupted monitoring of the key Russian facility in Votkinsk, which produces missile equipment, as it was an archaic “instrument” resulting from Cold War-era mistrust.

We’ve simplified refurnishing and elimination procedures of strategic offensive arms and the elimination process no longer calls for the presence of inspectors. All these measures will truly ease the load on defense enterprises and allow them to operate more efficiently.

### **Information Exchange Procedures**

In contrast to the previous START, the new treaty does not allow for implementation control with the use of telemetric information. Nevertheless, we have agreed on information exchange procedures in order to establish and provide additional transparency and predictability of the parties. Information exchange provisions were considerably revised and the number of notifications was significantly reduced.

### **New Weapon Deployment Ban**

The treaty introduces a ban on the deployment of strategic offensive armaments outside the national territory. However, the provision does not affect the already-recognized principles and international law rights of the parties related to the passage of submarines, flights or submarine calls at third-country ports. Additionally, the treaty does not affect existing cooperation practices with third countries.

### **The Ratification Process and Treaty Implementation**

The treaty is subject for ratification and will come be enacted on the date ratification credentials are exchanged. It will be valid for ten years. A five-year prolongation option was added to the treaty and can be implemented following a decision of the parties, unless it is replaced by a follow-up arms reduction agreement.

The treaty implementation will not require additional federal budget appropriations. The financial obligations stipulated by the treaty will be fulfilled at the expense of funds already reserved by federal bodies for corresponding activities. Besides, the reduction of the excessive nuclear arsenal will naturally decrease the resource burden in the future. The new treaty also presents the opportunity to save funds particularly on implementation verification. The costs of strategic offensive armaments elimination will also decrease due to simplified and upgraded technologies.

### **No Winners or Losers: Treaty is Balanced and Mutually Beneficial**

Overall, the new treaty is a comprehensive and balanced document that fully satisfies the national security interests of the Russian Federation. It does not create advantages for either of the parties and therefore, leaves no grounds for claims that someone has won or that someone has lost. The main result is that an acceptable compromise was reached, clearly benefiting the bilateral strategic relationship and overall international stability and security.

The new treaty signals a transition to a higher interaction level between Russia and the United States in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation and lays a foundation for qualitatively-improved relations in the military-strategic sphere. The agreement achieves the mutual aims of both countries in enhancing national and global security. The treaty provides additional opportunities to imbue the political atmosphere of the partnership with real content and, to a major extent, determines the guidelines for further developing the bilateral relationship.

Major progress in the field of disarmament will raise the level of trust and mutual assurance, and will open the door for solutions to other complicated problems through constructive cooperation. The new treaty will likely become the driver for many other mutually advantageous initiatives across a variety of fields.