

Statement of  
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Before the

House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on  
Europe, Eurasia, Energy and the Environment

Russia and Arms Control: Extending New START or Starting Over?

July 25, 2019

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Kinzinger, and members of the subcommittee, it is a pleasure to appear today before the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe Eurasia, Energy and the Environment. Thank you for the invitation and the opportunity to discuss New START, nuclear modernization, arms control and nuclear policy.

To start off the discussion, I would like to make five points.

First, one of the most important things that the Trump Administration could do is extend the New START Treaty from its current February 2021 expiration date to 2026. The treaty allows a 5-year extension by mutual agreement. It is a simple matter of saying yes. The Senate, because it provided its consent to the treaty in 2010, has no further role in the actual extension but it would be very helpful if congress, on a bipartisan basis, could indicate not only broad support for the treaty but actually urge the five-year extension.

Extension of New START is in the national security interests of the United States, as the treaty provides strategic stability, certainty and transparency in the relationship between the United States and Russia at least as far as strategic nuclear arms are concerned. Moreover, a 5-year extension would allow an opportunity for discussions of what comes next in the broader US-Russian relationship and in arms control. This could include non-strategic nuclear weapons and some of the more novel systems that Russia has recently unveiled, as well as a new approach to intermediate range missiles to replace the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty, which will cease to exist on August 2, per the US notice of withdrawal, and absent a dramatic and unexpected change of course by Russia.

New START has been criticized from the outset because it covers only strategic nuclear warheads and systems and it did not address non-strategic systems. As former National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft and Jake Garn, a former Republican senator from Utah, said in a September 22, 2010 op-ed in the Washington Times in support of New START “No single treaty provides a ‘silver bullet’ to mitigate all of the threats we face, and New START is no exception. To condemn it because it fails to accomplish tasks it was not meant to address is to misunderstand the history of arms control and of international relations. And, if we fail to have New START enter into force, we will have significantly reduced our chances of obtaining in the future a treaty that regulates short-range systems.”

This idea still holds true today—there are no silver bullet treaties that solve all problems, incremental steps are still important.

Many also forget that the START Treaty had expired in December 2009 and that New START was replacing the START Treaty, which also only covered strategic warheads and systems. More importantly, however, without the START Treaty there were no inspections, no information exchanges, no transparency and no limitations on strategic forces between December 2009 and February 2011 when New START entered into

force. Without an extension of New START now the US situation will repeat that period of the unknown.

Point two is support the Triad. The current multi-decade program to replace the Triad of US delivery systems, a new ballistic missile submarine, a new ICBM – the Ground-based strategic deterrence program, a new bomber—the B-21 are all important to US national security and that of our allies and partners.

Similarly, the warhead life extension programs undertaken by the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) will allow the smaller active nuclear weapons stockpile (3822 at the end of 2017) to be maintained safely and securely, while increasing its reliability. This is important as there is correlation between the size of the stockpile and its reliability, security and safety—the smaller the stockpile the greater the need for confidence.

President Obama, in seeking a world without nuclear weapons, said clearly in his 2009 Prague speech that “as long as these weapons exist, we will maintain a safe, secure and effective arsenal to deter any adversary, and guarantee that defense to our allies.”

In the period after 9/11, as a nation we dropped the ball on replacing these systems; the US fought the long war in the middle east and elsewhere and nuclear deterrence was not a priority.

As a result, President Obama laid out a program of delivery system and platform modernization, and warhead life extensions in the 2010 Nuclear Posture Review. For the most part this effort was continued in President's Trump's 2018 NPR, although with significantly less emphasis on threat reduction.

Third is replacing the infrastructure at the NNSA and supporting the science that underpins the warhead life extension programs. Over the last 25 years, NNSA has made a significant investment in the science of nuclear weapons, allowing the weapons to be maintained, and now life extended, without the need for underground explosive nuclear testing.

The scientific achievements are remarkable and were thought not to be achievable when the program started in the mid-1990s. The naysayers were certain a return to underground explosive nuclear weapons testing would be needed but have clearly been proven wrong. While the science has excelled, and still needs to be supported, the manufacturing side of the NNSA complex was largely ignored.

Many of the manufacturing buildings date back to the era of the Manhattan project and the early Cold War; and even with the inclusion of the new science facilities, 54% of the NNSA facilities are inadequate or substandard. The NNSA complex is roughly the size of Delaware, has over 2000 miles of roads and has about 6 pentagon equivalents of active space under roof.

Replacing and upgrading the NNSA complex will be difficult and expensive, but in the end, it will be the smaller, more modern, safer and more secure complex that the nation needs.

We hear much about the cost of the nuclear enterprise. A Congressional Budget Office report in October 2017 assessed the cost of the enterprise to be \$1.2 trillion over 30 years in 2017 dollars. This estimate was based on a New START force structure. Maintaining a nuclear deterrent is costly, although a small percentage of the overall defense budget, estimates range from 3% to 7%. Without the constraints of New START on both Russia and the US the cost could certainly be more.

Fourth is people. DOD, the Services and NNSA don't have enough people for the modernization. Getting the right people is very difficult in the current competitive environment. Developing and adopting more creative ways to attract, train, hire and retain employees is critical. This could include scholarships, on the job training, and retention pay for example, but whatever is the correct answer hiring has to be easier and faster. And of course, the back log in getting new security clearances, updated security clearances and even getting security clearances transferred from one agency to another has an enormous impact on the nuclear and national security enterprise and the morale of the workforce.

The fifth and final point is that the US nuclear capabilities are not only the ultimate deterrent for the United States but also many of our allies and partners. Their belief that the United States maintains a credible deterrent is critical to sustaining these alliances and avoiding the proliferation of nuclear weapons. One of America's great strengths is its structure of alliances. The Department of Defense's National Defense Strategy, supports these important alliances, by dedicating one of its three lines of effort to "strengthen alliances as we build new partners."

Both the 2018 and 2010 Nuclear Posture Reviews (NPR) also emphasize the commitment to our allies and partners. The 2018 NPR specifically states that "No country should doubt the strength of our extended deterrence commitments nor the strength of the U.S. and allied capabilities to deter, or if necessary, defeat, any potential adversary's nuclear or non-nuclear aggression." The 2018 NPR also makes clear that extended deterrence and our allies' and partners' confidence in the nuclear umbrella is "essential to their security, enabling most to eschew possession of nuclear weapons and thereby contributing to U.S. non-proliferation goals."

Assurance and deterrence are just part of our commitment to allies and partners. Our allies and partners also want to ensure that the United States does not support, start, or participate in another arms race similar to that of the Cold War. As a result, our allies continue to support arms control. In the July 11, 2018, NATO Brussels Summit Declaration, the heads of state and government of the 29 member nations of the North Atlantic Alliance set forth their support for both arms control and New START. "Arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation have made and should continue to make an

essential contribution to achieving the Alliance's security objectives and for ensuring strategic stability and our collective security.”

The Summit Declaration also praised the US and Russia for meeting the central limits of New START and set out NATO's continuing support for the Treaty. “We acknowledge the United States' and Russia's reductions in strategic nuclear weapons and applaud their meeting the central limits of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) as of 5 February 2018. The new START Treaty contributes to international stability, and Allies express their strong support for its continued implementation and for early and active dialogue on ways to improve strategic stability.”

In closing, I would like to highlight the need for a national discussion on nuclear policy, including nuclear deterrence.

Part of the national discussion is finding the right balance between reductions and modernization and building the consensus to support both. Achieving the balance and starting a consensus was a major achievement of the Obama Administration. Sustaining that consensus will be difficult, as it is already showing signs of fraying.

Ensuring a safe, secure and reliable nuclear deterrent for the US and our allies can help to prevent nuclear use until the time when there is an opportunity to reduce the threat and resume work to set the conditions that will, ultimately, eliminate nuclear weapons. In the meantime, while the nuclear deterrent programs will vary and evolve over time, consistency in support and funding is necessary to ensure a safe, secure and reliable deterrent for the US and our allies and partners.

President Obama tried to lead the way down the road that would lead to a world without nuclear weapons. Sadly, the world didn't pick that path and the threat of nuclear use is increasing. On the other hand, the increasing nuclear threat makes discussions with others, Russia, China, and even North Korea and Iran all the more important. Withdrawing from agreements and hoping the problem goes away is certainly not the answer. Engagement at all levels is necessary to avoid a new nuclear arms race, and new conflicts, particularly those with a potential nuclear dimension.

Dialogue is also important to address the more probably threats of terrorist use of a nuclear device and the accidental or misinformed intentional use of a nuclear weapon by a nation.

Arms Control in its broadest context isn't something we do for fun. Agreements and treaties to limit numbers, types, capabilities or kinds of systems and provide transparency in research, development, and deployments, bring certainty and stability and should improve mutual understanding and trust.

Thank you and I look forward to your questions.

