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**WRITTEN STATEMENT FOR HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS**  
**COMMITTEE**  
**HEARING ON THE NEW START TREATY**  
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Chairman Engel, Ranking Member McCaul, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today on a vital issue that affects the lives of every American and indeed the security of our world.

That issue is the solemn responsibility of the United States to be a responsible steward of a safe, secure and reliable nuclear deterrent as long as nuclear weapons exist, and to protect the American people and our allies from the risk of nuclear weapons. In my view, this necessitates seeking cooperation with Russia where possible to reduce the risk of nuclear use and avoid a costly and destabilizing nuclear arms race. Despite significant reductions since the height of the Cold War, the United States and Russia together still own over 90% of the world's nuclear stockpile. This means that despite significant differences in values, political systems and geopolitical objectives, our two countries have an undeniable mutual interest and joint responsibility to reduce nuclear risks and provide global leadership to prevent and discourage nuclear proliferation to other states and non-state actors.

I appear before you today as a private citizen, following a 43-year career in the U.S. Navy that culminated in my service as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from 2007-2011. During my tenure, I was privileged to serve as the principal military advisor to the President, the Secretary of Defense, and the National Security Council throughout the negotiation of the New START Treaty. Indeed, I was personally involved in negotiating with my Russian counterpart – Chief of the General Staff General Nikolai Makarov - some of the final issues leading to the conclusion and signature of the Treaty in April 2010.

Based on my firsthand knowledge of the Treaty and its successful implementation to date, and my belief that strategic arms control agreements are an integral

element of our overall nuclear policy and posture, I want to make six key points to you today:

1. The New START Treaty contributes substantially to U.S. national security by providing limits, robust verification and predictability about Russian strategic nuclear forces.
2. It is strongly in the U.S. national interest to extend New START for five years so that the United States and Russia can continue to realize the mutual benefits and stability it provides.
3. New START will apply to the new strategic systems Russia is most likely to deploy during the Treaty's extended lifetime, and it provides the best means for discussing Russia's novel and emerging systems that could be deployed later.
4. Any additional steps or agreements the United States wants to pursue with Russia or other countries like China will have a better prospect for success if the foundation of New START remains in place.
5. It is critical to conduct a strategic stability dialogue with China, pursue transparency and confidence building measures, and lay the groundwork for future arms control measures, but it would be an unconscionable mistake to sacrifice the benefits to national security of mutual restraints with Russia to the pursuit of an unlikely near term arms control agreement with China.
6. Robust U.S.-Russia dialogue on strategic stability and bilateral and multilateral crisis management mechanisms with Russia are essential and should be reinvigorated. Congress should encourage and support this.

I will elaborate briefly on these six points.

**The New START Treaty contributes substantially to U.S. national security by providing limits, robust verification and predictability about Russian strategic nuclear forces.**

For fifty years, the United States and the Russia have relied on verifiable nuclear arms control to constrain competition in nuclear arms, enhance strategic stability, and maintain transparency and predictability regarding each side's strategic nuclear forces. The most recent of these agreements – the New Strategic Arms Reductions Treaty (New START) – was signed in April 2010 by President Obama and then-Russian President Medvedev, approved in December 2010 by the U.S. Senate with a large bipartisan vote, and entered into force on February 5, 2011. The Treaty limits U.S. and Russian strategic nuclear warheads and delivery systems, and provides robust, intrusive verification mechanisms to ensure compliance.

Limits: New START limits the United States and Russia to a total of 1,550 deployed nuclear warheads; 700 deployed intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), and heavy bombers equipped for nuclear armaments; and 800 deployed and non-deployed ICBM launchers, SLBM launchers, and heavy bombers equipped for nuclear armaments. Both sides met these limits as required by February 4, 2018, and both sides are complying with the Treaty's terms.

Verification and Transparency: The Treaty contains robust verification and transparency measures. The Treaty is quite remarkable in this respect, and we don't talk enough about what this means in practice and how the United States benefits. The Treaty requires extensive exchanges of data and notifications regarding the number and status of each side's strategic offensive arms and facilities. Each side has the right to conduct up to 18 on-site inspections annually in the other country to confirm that data. This includes the right – which was a first in any nuclear arms control agreement – for the on-site inspection teams to select for inspection an individual launcher at an operational ICBM or submarine base to confirm that the actual number of reentry vehicles (warheads) deployed on it corresponds to the data provided to the team when it arrived at the base. No other treaty has ever provided that level of intrusive verification to visually inspect and confirm the actual warheads on an individual deployed launcher. The point of this, of course, is to deter cheating, and to detect it if it occurs. The treaty also provides for exhibition of each type of weapon covered by the Treaty. Notably, this

requirement for an exhibition where on-site inspectors can see and confirm the distinguishing features of the weapon system will apply to any new types of strategic offensive arms Russia deploys during the life of the Treaty.

As of August 2019, the U.S. and Russia have exchanged approximately 18,500 notifications and U.S. inspectors have conducted more than 150 on-site inspections in Russia. New START also contains provisions to facilitate the use of national technical means for Treaty monitoring.

Why is this important to our national security? Because these verification and transparency measures provide us high confidence that Russia is complying with the Treaty's limits and other provisions, and vice versa. Moreover, it is hard to overstate, from my perspective as a senior military leader, how much we benefit from the knowledge and predictability the treaty provides about Russia's nuclear forces and operational practices. The same is true for Russia about our strategic forces. This enhances mutual confidence and understanding and goes a long way to avoid "worst case" military planning. Without the Treaty and its verification provisions, we'd be "flying blind."

**It is strongly in the U.S. national interest to extend New START's duration for five years so that the United States and Russia can continue to realize the mutual benefits and stability it provides.**

New START has a duration of 10 years (until February 4, 2021), but includes a provision for extending the Treaty by executive agreement for up to five additional years (until February 4, 2026). For all of the reasons I just outlined above, I think it is essential to our national security that the United States and Russia agree to extend the treaty for five years to continue to benefit from its limits, verification and predictability.

President Putin has indicated that Russia is ready to discuss extension with the United States, and I hope President Trump will decide to pursue extension as well. The sooner our countries can discuss and agree to extend the Treaty the better, in order to remove the uncertainty that exists now and to lay the foundation for additional steps to address nuclear threats and enhance strategic stability.

I support a straightforward extension of the Treaty. Measures that change or add new obligations to the Treaty, such as bringing in another country such as China, or new categories of weapons such as nonstrategic nuclear weapons, cannot as a

legal matter be pursued through extension. Such measures would require a new agreement and a new Senate advise and consent process.

That said, it is certainly appropriate for the United States to seek an understanding with Russia about how the Treaty will apply to any new strategic systems it deploys while the extended Treaty is in force. Russia has indicated it wants to discuss implementation concerns about the conversion procedures the United States uses to take certain systems out of Treaty accountability. I would urge both sides to agree as soon as possible to extend the Treaty, and use the its implementing commission (the Bilateral Consultative Commission- or BCC) to continue working on questions of implementation and the potential emergence of new strategic weapons systems in the future.

Let me now address some of the specific concerns that have been raised in the United States in the debate over extension of New START: 1) Russia's new systems and 2) bringing China into the negotiations.

**New START will apply to the new strategic systems Russia is most likely to deploy during the Treaty's extended lifetime, and it provides the best means for discussing Russia's novel and emerging systems that could be deployed later.**

President Putin has made public pronouncements in the past few years regarding new nuclear weapon delivery systems Russia is developing. Some of these are novel systems based on new technologies, others are modernized versions of existing capabilities. Some are much closer to realization and deployment than others. Russia's continuing pursuit of nuclear modernization and innovation underscores the need for our countries to continue the arms limitation and reduction process, and the need for reinvigorated strategic stability talks in diplomatic and military channels. It is vital that we have a real and sustained dialogue to understand each side's perceptions of how new technologies and weapons affect strategic stability. The goal should be to identify additional steps we could take together to enhance stability and constrain competition in nuclear arms and related capabilities.

In the near term, we have a very effective means to address the new Russian strategic systems that are most likely to be deployed in the next five years, and that is to extend New START. Some who have opposed extension based their argument in part on a concern that Russia's new systems won't be covered by the Treaty.

To the contrary, my reading is that both the Sarmat heavy ICBM and the Avangard hypersonic vehicle deployed on a Russian ICBM will be accountable under the Treaty. The Sarmat is a new type of ICBM that clearly meets the Treaty's definition of an ICBM. The Avangard hypersonic vehicle, if deployed on an ICBM as Russia plans to do, will be accountable under the Treaty as a nuclear warhead on a deployed ICBM. In early November, 2019, Vladimir Leontiev, the Russian Commissioner of the BCC -- stated publicly that both of these systems would in fact be covered by the Treaty. Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov then publicly reiterated that point. This is a significant clarification from senior Russian officials that should give us confidence that these new systems will not run free of the Treaty's limits and verification provisions. Getting that commitment in writing in the context of extension would be a great accomplishment for the administration.

There are two other strategic systems that President Putin has discussed that are, in terms of their technical development, much less likely to be deployed during the lifetime of even an extended New START. One is the Poseidon strategic range nuclear powered nuclear torpedo, the other is the Burevestnik nuclear powered air launched strategic range cruise missile. Neither of these systems fits the definition of the types of strategic offensive arms that are covered under the Treaty.

However, the Treaty includes a provision stating that a party can raise in the BCC questions about the emergence of a "new kind" of strategic offensive arm. The United States can and should use this treaty mechanism to raise questions about these systems, and how the Treaty might apply to them in the event that either is deployed before the extended Treaty expires. Even better would be if the United States and Russia could agree in principle now that if these systems are deployed while New START is in force, they will discuss and agree on how to include them under the Treaty's limits and verification provisions. Given the state of development of these two systems, there is ample time to address them. In my view they are not a compelling reason for not extending New START. To the contrary, New START provides a mechanism and forum for discussing them.

If New START lapses, we will lose the limits and verification we have on Russia's existing strategic systems, as well as the only available vehicle for subjecting to limits and verification the two new systems likely to be deployed within the next five years: the Sarmat ICBM and the Avangard hypersonic vehicle. The alternative to New START extension is a nuclear free for all: No limits, no verification, and no predictability regarding Russian strategic nuclear forces. My best advice to you

and to the country as a former senior military leader is: We can and should avoid that worst case outcome by agreeing with Russia to extend the New START Treaty for five years.

**Any additional steps or agreements the United States wants to pursue with Russia or other countries like China will have a better prospect for success if the foundation of New START remains in place.**

President Trump has expressed an interest in negotiating a new and more ambitious agreement with Russia, and in bringing China into the negotiations. I support both of those goals, though I would advise pursuing them sequentially, not simultaneously. Both of those goals can best be advanced by first extending New START to retain and build on its essential foundation of limits and verification.

The next agreement with Russia is likely to be much more complex than START or New START because it will likely need to address systems and technologies not covered by those earlier agreements. For instance, we may want it to address additional classes of weapons – perhaps intermediate-range delivery systems along with strategic-range systems, perhaps non-strategic nuclear warheads which the Senate has made clear it wants the next bilateral agreement to address. The Russians have made clear for years that they have their own ideas about broadening the range of issues to be addressed in the context of future nuclear reductions, citing conventional prompt strikes systems and missile defense.

Even agreeing on the subjects for negotiation, let alone the content, will be complicated. Negotiations may result in a set of agreements or understandings -- some legally binding, some more akin to transparency measures or rules of the road. We might want the option of relying on New START and its verification provisions running in parallel with a new agreement.

The bottom line is that there simply isn't time to develop a detailed U.S. negotiating position, which by the way may require new verification procedures to accompany limits on a broader range of systems and weapons; let alone to negotiate one or more agreements with Russia; and complete the Senate advise and consent process before New START lapses in February 2021. We should not put ourselves in a position of negotiating against an artificial and self-imposed deadline because New START is expiring.

In my view, therefore, the optimal course at this time is to extend the Treaty and allow time to carefully work through the details of what we think should come next

and how to achieve it. This will ensure some stability in the U.S.-Russian nuclear relationship and provide a platform from which we can build future agreements to supplement or supersede New START. To let it lapse with nothing to put in its place would be profoundly unwise and could in addition poison the atmosphere for negotiating a new agreement with Russia.

**It is critical to conduct a strategic stability dialogue with China, pursue transparency and confidence building measures, and lay the groundwork for future arms control measures, but it would be an unconscionable mistake to sacrifice the benefits to national security of mutual restraints with Russia to the pursuit of an unlikely near term arms control agreement with China.**

Regular and sustained bilateral nuclear dialogue between the United States and China is also essential for building transparency and trust and reducing risks of miscalculation and blunder. This is all the more important as China modernizes its nuclear forces, and in light of the potential for miscalculation or conflict with regard to the South China Sea or Taiwan.

I fully support bringing China eventually into the nuclear arms control and reduction process. But we must recognize that the United States and Russia still hold over 90% of the world's nuclear weapons. China has a much smaller though significant stockpile of a few hundred nuclear weapons. China has made clear that it is not prepared to join nuclear reduction talks with the United States and Russia, given our respective arsenals of more than 4000 nuclear warheads. Moreover, unless we are prepared to reduce to the levels China is at, we should not pursue an agreement that could legitimize China coming up to level of U.S. and Russian nuclear forces. And let's not forget that Russia will insist on inclusion of our allies the UK and France in any nuclear negotiation that also includes China.

More realistic in the near term is to continue efforts bilaterally and within the P-5 context to engage China in discussions of strategic stability, and to encourage enhanced transparency about its nuclear policies, doctrine and posture and plans. There are some confidence building measures we could pursue, such as ballistic missile test launch notifications. We should be aiming to bring all of the P-5 into the nuclear reductions process, consistent with our collective obligation under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, but this will take time, and realistically will need to be preceded by greater progress on reductions by the United States and Russia.

I also fully support developing ideas for regional arms control in the Asia –Pacific, to help address the concerns of our allies and partners, and by this I mean

conventional as well as nuclear capabilities. My sense is that we have internal homework to do to identify our goals for any negotiations, to take into account concerns and interest of our allies, and to develop ideas that might be negotiable with China and others.

In sum, we should be thinking about how to include China in multilateral conventional and nuclear arms control discussions, but including China in a nuclear reduction negotiation with Russia and the United States is not likely to happen in the near term.

We certainly should not hold the maintenance of significant restraints and verification on Russian strategic nuclear forces hostage to a demand for China to join in negotiations that have no prospect of success in the time before New START expires.

We can extend new START and intensify dialogue with China on nuclear transparency, confidence-building measures, and strategic stability.

**Robust U.S.-Russia dialogue on strategic stability and bilateral and multilateral crisis management mechanisms with Russia are essential and should be reinvigorated.**

Everyone in this room understands that the backdrop for this discussion of New START is a badly deteriorated and increasingly fraught relationship between Russia and the West. The erosion of trust between Russia and the West is profound and corrosive, and steps must be taken on both sides to reverse this tide.

There are profound differences in values, perspectives and geopolitical interests that cannot be waved away or solved in a kumbaya conversation. Russian interference in the U.S. election process is unacceptable.

We do nonetheless share with Russia an existential interest in not blundering into war or devastating the world with a nuclear conflict.

Crisis management mechanisms can help avoid conflict and the risk of military escalation. Strategic stability dialogue is essential to reducing nuclear risks, and is an important means to understanding each side's security concerns and identifying potential areas of overlapping interest that could be advanced through future agreements.

Crisis management mechanisms and strategic stability dialogue with Russia have atrophied to a dangerous point. Either because we choose to strictly interpret a

policy of “no business as usual” to stifle such interactions bilaterally or in the NATO context, or because in the current domestic political atmosphere the congress does not trust the administration to engage diplomatically with Russia, or for other reasons including a dangerously misguided complacency about the risks, we have gotten to a dangerous point of insufficient communication with Russia.

Thus, my final advice today to you and to the American people is that our security depends on the ability to engage regularly with Russia in military and diplomatic channels to prevent and manage crises and to discuss and agree on measures to increase strategic stability and reduce nuclear risks. New START extension is a necessary but insufficient step in this regard.

I urge you to support and encourage the expansion and deepening of these channels of communication with Russia to enhance the security of the American people and our allies.

### **Conclusion**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I look forward to your questions.