Title: Nuclear Arms Control: History & Policy Context

Author(s): Miller, Karen Ann

Intended for: Internal presentation

Issued: 2021-08-06 (rev.1)

Los Alamos
NATIONAL LABORATORY

Nuclear Arms Control: History & Policy Context

Dr. Karen Miller

August 2021

LA-UR-21-27496

Introduction

- Thomas Schelling and Morton Halperin famously defined “arms control” in their 1961 book *Strategy and Arms Control* as “all forms of military cooperation between potential enemies in the interest of reducing the likelihood of war, its scope and violence if it occurs, and the political and economic costs of being prepared for it"
- The United States has a long history of using nuclear arms control as a tool to advance its national security interests
  - The United States and the Soviet Union began to sign agreements limiting their nuclear weapons in the early 1970s
- This presentation provides an overview of key concepts in arms control, a history of nuclear arms control agreements, some of the contemporary challenges and opportunities in the field, a discussion of the process for negotiating arms control agreements, and updates on recent developments

Key Concepts in Arms Control

Security Dilemma

- Experts often refer to the concept of a “security dilemma” in discussions about arms control
- This is the situation wherein the actions states take to heighten their own security are interpreted as threatening by other states
- These other states respond by taking steps to increase *their* own security, steps which are then interpreted by the original states as threats
- This action-reaction spiral escalates tensions and increases the risk of the conflict that both sides had intended to avoid in the first place

Strategic Stability

- “Strategic stability” is another widely-used term in arms control
  - It emerged as a concept during the Cold War as scholars and government officials began thinking about issues such as how a nuclear war might be fought, the challenge of surprise attack, and the requirements of a credible deterrent
- It has classically been used to describe the absence of incentives to use nuclear weapons first (crisis stability) and the absence of incentives to build up a nuclear force (arms race stability)
  - Central to this conception is the idea of mutual vulnerability and ensuring that each side has the ability to strike back effectively after an attempted disarming first strike by its opponent
- However, there are a variety of perspectives on its meaning, what factors contribute to or detract from it, and how to consider strategic stability in the context of an increasingly multipolar and multidomain security environment

Modalities

- Arms control is often thought of as entailing formal treaties, but the history of arms control also includes examples of informal political arrangements and reciprocal commitments
  - In the United States, the ratification process for a treaty can be difficult (it requires the advice and consent of the Senate by a two-thirds majority), but treaties are legally-binding and inspire confidence that the agreement will endure over time
  - Informal approaches are less authoritative than treaties and are easier to exit if domestic support shifts between presidential administrations, but the flexibility they offer can also be a strength in some cases
- Arms control agreements may be used to limit capabilities, regulate behaviors, and/or enhance transparency
- It has also become routine as part of arms control agreements to establish a forum for consultation in which compliance concerns or other implementation issues can be raised

Quantitative vs. Qualitative Limits

- There is a distinction between the quantitative and qualitive aspects of arms control
  - This gets to consideration of number versus character or function
- Quantitative limits impose freezes or cuts on the total number of weapons or delivery systems
- Qualitative limits restrict certain types of capabilities

Risk Reduction Measures

- Efforts to reduce the risks that nuclear weapons will be used—either by accident or intentionally—have been an important part of the arms control process
- Examples of possible risk reduction measures include
  - Transparency on nuclear policy and doctrine
  - Dialogue aimed at developing a common understanding of pertinent issues and terminology
  - Pre-notification of actions susceptible to misinterpretation
  - Establishing clear lines of communication for crisis situations
  - Reductions in the number of deployed weapons
- Notably, the United States and the Soviet Union formally established nuclear risk reduction centers in 1988 as a secure, rapid, and reliable means of communication
  - Today, the work of the U.S. National and Nuclear Risk Reduction Center (NNRRC) encompasses notification regimes with over 50 international partners on issues such as nuclear and conventional arms control, ballistic missile launch notifications, and international cyber incidents

Potential Benefits of Arms Control

- Many experts believe that the most important use of arms control is as a means of achieving strategic stability
- They argue that arms control can provide transparency and predictability, which, in turn, enhance stability and reduce the chance of inadvertent escalation
- Arms control can help constrain costs by capping expenditures on new systems
- Progress on arms control has also been seen as underpinning international support for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)
  - Under Article VI of the NPT, each party undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament

Potential Risks of Arms Control

- Arms control agreements are not inherently stabilizing and, in some circumstances, could be incubators for instability
  - For example, certain arms control agreements could undermine relations within alliances or lock in conditions that become destabilizing due to technological change
- There is always the possibility that one or more parties to an arms control agreement will cheat and get away with it
- It is also possible that an arms control agreement will break down or collapse, which could have political or military consequences

Verification

- Verification is the process that parties to an agreement use to determine whether the other parties are complying with the agreement
- The traditional approach to “effective verification” was focused on developing measures that would ensure each party could detect a militarily significant violation in time to respond effectively and deny that party the benefit of the violation
- No verification regime can remove all doubt of violations, but it should
  - Permit countries to detect evidence that violations have occurred
  - Deter violations to the agreement
  - Build confidence in the viability of the agreement
- Verification regimes are generally built around an interlocking set of measures that combine in a way that raise the cost and difficulty of cheating undetected
  - They may include employing technical solutions whose development require scientific cooperation of the involved parties

Compliance

- The Department of State prepares a “Compliance Report” each year on the adherence of the United States and other nations to obligations undertaken in all arms control, nonproliferation, and disarmament agreements or commitments to which the United States is a participating state
  - The report is prepared with the concurrence of the Intelligence Community and in consultation with the Departments of Defense and Energy and the Joint Chiefs of Staff
  - The unclassified version is available on the State Department’s website
- The United States has, for example, determined that Russia is violating the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the Open Skies Treaty, and the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty and not adhering to its commitments under the politically-binding Vienna Document
  - Russia’s poor compliance record has colored a lot of U.S. expert opinions about Russia’s reliability as an arms control treaty party

The Arms Control Debate

- Experts have long debated the value of arms control agreements
- The challenge for policymakers is to avoid the traps that arms control can create, while taking advantage of the benefits it can offer
  - Technical experts play an important role in helping policymakers understand the security implications and verifiability of proposed agreements
  - For existing agreements, technical experts may be part of an associated inspection team or contribute to compliance assessments
- Progress on arms control is not an end in itself and depends on the security environment and the participation of willing partners
  - Arms control is a means to enhanced security and a more peaceful world
  - The evaluation of any arms control proposal will depend on its specific contents within the context at the time

Further Reading

- T. Schelling and M. Halperin, *Strategy and Arms Control*, Martino Publishing, 2014 (first published in 1961).
- R. Jervis, “Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma,” *World Politics*, Vol. 30, No. 2, January 1978.
- E. Colby and M. Gerson (eds.), ”Strategic Stability: Contending Interpretations,” U.S. Army War College Press, February 2013, https://ssi.armywarcollege.edu/2013/pubs/strategic-stability-contending-interpretations/.
- W. Wan, “Nuclear Risk Reduction: A Framework for Analysis,” UNIDIR, 2019, https://unidir.org/publication/nuclear-risk-reduction-framework-analysis.
- CRS Report, “Monitoring and Verification in Arms Control,” R41201, Updated December 2011, https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R41201.
- U.S. Department of State, “Adherence to and Compliance with Arms Control, Nonproliferation, and Disarmament Agreements and Commitments,” https://www.state.gov/adherence-to-and-compliance-with-arms-control-nonproliferation-and-disarmament-agreements-and-commitments/.
- C. Ford, “Russian Arms Control Compliance: A Report Card, 1984-2020,” *ACIS Papers*, Vol. I, No. 10, June 2020, https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/T-Series-Paper-Comp-Rpt-History-FINAL-T-508.pdf.

A History of Arms Control Agreements

Outline

- Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT I and SALT II)
- Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty
- Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START)
- Presidential Nuclear Initiatives (PNIs)
- START II
- Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT)
- New START

SALT I and SALT II

- Arms control played an important role in the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War
- The Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) refers to two rounds of talks between the United States and Soviet Union on nuclear arms control
- SALT I (1969-1972) resulted in two agreements
  - The Interim Agreement on Offensive Arms
  - The Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty
- SALT II negotiations began in 1972 and sought to replace the Interim Agreement with a long-term comprehensive treaty on strategic offensive nuclear forces

SALT I: Interim Agreement on Offensive Arms

- The Interim Agreement imposed a freeze on the number of launchers for ICBMs and SLBMs and on the number of ballistic missile submarines
  - At the time, the United States had fewer of each of these systems than the Soviet Union, which raised serious concerns in Congress
  - U.S. limits: 1,054 ICBM launchers and 710 SLBM launchers on 44 submarines
  - Soviet limits: 1,618 ICBM launchers and 950 SLBM launchers on 62 submarines
- It entitled each party to use its national technical means (NTM) to verify compliance with the agreement and obligated them not to interfere with NTM of the other party nor to use deliberate concealment measures to impede verification
- The Interim Agreement was to remain in force for five years
  - In 1977, the United States and the Soviet Union agreed to continue honoring the agreement until they completed the SALT II Treaty

SALT I: The ABM Treaty

- This treaty limited anti-ballistic missile (ABM) systems
  - It permitted the United States and Soviet Union to deploy ABM interceptors at two sites; a protocol signed in 1974 further limited that to only one site
  - Each site could contain up to 100 ground-based launchers for ABM interceptor missiles, along with specified radars and sensors
  - It also forbade testing and deployment of space-based, sea-based, or air-based ABM systems and imposed a number of qualitative limits on missile defense programs
- It entitled each party to use its NTM to verify compliance with the agreement and obligated them not to interfere with NTM of the other party nor to use deliberate concealment measures to impede verification
- The ABM Treaty was the source of considerable debate for most of its history
  - It entered into force in 1972; the United States withdrew from the treaty in 2002
  - Supporters of the U.S. withdrawal argued that it was necessary for the United States to deploy a national missile defense system to respond to growing threats from countries like North Korea

SALT II

- The parties agreed on a basic framework for SALT II in 1974 that included
  - 2,400 equal aggregate limit on strategic nuclear delivery vehicles (ICBMs, SLBMs, heavy bombers)
  - 1,320 equal aggregate limit on MIRV systems
  - A ban on construction of new land-based ICBM launchers
  - Limits on deployment of new types of strategic offensive arms
  - Important elements of the Interim Agreement (e.g., on verification)
- The completed SALT II Treaty was signed in 1979 but was never ratified
  - President Carter withdrew the treaty from Senate consideration shorty after the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in December 1979
- The SALT II Treaty would have been verified through NTM
  - Because specific characteristics of some SALT-limited systems become apparent during missile flight tests, it banned deliberate denial (e.g., encryption) of telemetry generated during those tests
  - It also included counting and distinguishability rules for verification purposes

Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty

- The INF Treaty was signed in 1987 and entered into force in 1988
- It was seen as a significant milestone in arms control because it eliminated an entire class of weapons, specifically ground-based ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges between 500 and 5,500 kilometers (plus launchers and support structures/equipment)
  - This included all missiles of this type, irrespective of whether they were equipped with nuclear or conventional warheads
- The INF Treaty also established an intrusive verification regime
  - It permitted on-site inspections of selected missile assembly facilities and all storage centers; deployment zones; and repair, test, and elimination facilities
  - It allowed up to 20 short-notice inspections of sites designated in the treaty
  - The United States and Soviet Union agreed to an extensive data exchange intended to account for all systems covered by the agreement
  - The treaty also established a continuous portal monitoring procedure at one assembly facility in each country

Breakdown of the INF Treaty

- In 2014, the United States expressed concerns about Russia's testing and development of a new ground-launched cruise missile in INF range (later identified as the 9M729/SSC-8) in the State Department's annual Compliance Report
- The United States raised its concerns about this missile repeatedly with Russia, including in 2016 and 2017 meetings of the treaty's Special Verification Commission
- Russia denied the U.S. accusations and responded with its own accusations of U.S. noncompliance (which the United States denied)
- In 2018, the United States publicly declared that it would suspend its obligations with the treaty if Russia did not return to full and verifiable compliance within 60 days
  - In a show of support, NATO's foreign ministers also declared Russia to be in "material breach" of the treaty
- The United States formally withdrew from the treaty in 2019

Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START)

- START was signed in 1991, entered into force in 1994, and expired in 2009
- It was the first treaty to provide for deep reductions in strategic nuclear weapons
  - Established equal aggregate limits of 1,600 delivery vehicles and 6,000 warheads attributed to deployed ICBMs, deployed SLBMs, and deployed heavy bombers (with three sub-limits)
  - Established a limit on the throw weight of ballistic missiles
  - Banned construction of new types of heavy ICBMs and SLBMs
- START contained a complex and intrusive verification regime
  - Verification through NTM, along with a ban on actions that impair the NTM of the other party (including a ban on encryption of telemetry transmitted from ballistic missile tests)
  - Exchange of an extensive set of data detailing the numbers and locations of affected weapons
  - Numerous types of on-site inspections such as baseline inspections and random, short-notice inspections of deployed missiles to confirm that the number of warheads carried on the missiles did not exceed the number listed in the data exchanges
  - Perimeter and portal monitoring of plants that produce mobile ICBMs

Presidential Nuclear Initiatives (PNIs)

- In public speeches in 1991 and 1992, the presidents of the United States and the Soviet Union (and later Russia) pledged to take separate but related steps, most notably regarding reductions in the number and deployment of their tactical nuclear weapons
  - These became known as the Presidential Nuclear Initiatives (PNIs)
  - Since the time the pledges were made, both the United States and Russia have begun using the term “nonstrategic nuclear weapons” (NSNW) in lieu of “tactical nuclear weapons”
- The PNIs are reciprocal unilateral commitments and are politically (not legally) binding
- There are no verification measures associated with them
  - Monitoring and assessment of Russia’s adherence to its PNI pledges relies primarily upon information obtained unilaterally
- The United States assesses that Russia is not adhering to all of its PNI commitments
  - The State Department detailed inconsistences between Russia’s PNI commitments and its actions in the 2020 Compliance Report

START II

- START II was signed in 1993 but never entered into force
  - The U.S. Senate approved ratification of START II in 1996
  - The Russian Duma approved ratification in 2000, but it was contingent on U.S. ratification of several agreements related to the ABM Treaty
  - Russia withdrew from START II in 2002 in response to U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty
- START II would have complemented START by establishing further limits on strategic nuclear weapons for each party
  - Limited each side to between 3,000 and 3,500 warheads
  - Banned all MIRVed ICBMs
  - Limited each side to 1,750 warheads on SLBMs
- START II would have relied on the verification regime established by START with a few new provisions

Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT)

- SORT (also called the Moscow Treaty) was signed in 2002, entered into force in 2003, and lapsed in 2011 when New START entered into force
- The treaty contained only one limit obligating each party to reduce its strategic nuclear warheads to between 1,700 and 2,200 by the end of 2012
  - Each party could determine the composition and structure of its own strategic offensive arms
- SORT did not contain any verification provisions
  - The United States and Russia agreed that START provisions would provide the foundation for confidence and predictability in further strategic offensive arms reductions
  - Some questioned this approach given that START was set to expire in 2009, three years before SORT's limits were to take effect
  - The parties agreed to meet at least twice a year for a Bilateral Implementation Commission to discuss progress on implementation of the treaty

New START

- New START was signed in 2010, entered into force in 2011, and is set to expire in 2026
- It contains three central limits
  - Aggregate limit of 1,550 deployed strategic warheads
  - Aggregate limit of 800 deployed and nondeployed ICBM and SLBM launchers and deployed and nondeployed heavy bombers equipped to carry nuclear armaments
  - Within that limit, the number of deployed ICBMs, SLBMs, and heavy bombers cannot exceed 700
- Within the aggregate limits, each party has the flexibility to determine the structure of its strategic forces
- The New START verification regime resembles that of START
  - It includes a reliance on NTM, broadcast and exchange of telemetry, data exchanges and notifications, and on-site inspections and exhibitions
  - It built on lessons learned from implementing START but was tailored to New START's provisions

Further Reading

- CRS Report, “Arms Control and Nonproliferation: A Catalog of Treaties and Agreements,” RL33865, Updated March 2021, https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RL/RL33865.
- U.S. State Department, Key Topics – Bureau of Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance, https://www.state.gov/key-topics-bureau-of-arms-control-verification-and-compliance/.
- NTI, Treaties and Regimes, https://www.nti.org/learn/treaties-and-regimes/treaties/.

Contemporary Challenges & Opportunities

Taking Stock & Looking Ahead

- New START will expire in 2026 and cannot be extended
- The security landscape is deteriorating
  - In particular, the United States perceives strategic challenges from a destabilizing Russia and an increasingly assertive China
- The growing salience of new warfighting domains and the impact of emerging technologies on strategic stability introduce uncertainties that require further study
- Domestic issues such as U.S. nuclear modernization plans and the difficulty of treaty ratification with a polarized Senate will also impact the future of arms control
- Key questions
  - Is it possible to find and agree on an arms control outcome that advances U.S. security interests?
  - If there is a new agreement, what limits might it impose and how would those limits be verified?
  - Do viable options for risk reduction exist that do not include negotiation of a formal treaty?

Russia – What Next?

- One option would be to pursue a new treaty with same the scope as New START
  - Potentially with deeper cuts in strategic systems
- Another option would be to pursue a broader arms control framework
  - Including Russia's nonstrategic nuclear weapons (NSNW) in any prospective arms control agreement has been a longstanding U.S. objective
  - Russia is building a new generation of "exotic" delivery systems not covered by New START
  - This could also include a replacement for the INF Treaty
- The United States and Russia could also pursue steps short of a formal treaty such as parallel policy statements or transparency and confidence-building measures
- Russia has continually raised concerns about U.S. missile defenses and long-range precision strike conventional weapons
- Any future arms control agreement with Russia will likely require a robust verification regime given its track record of arms control violations

China – Incentivizing Engagement

- China has a smaller nuclear arsenal than either the United States or Russia but is rapidly expanding its arsenal, both quantitatively and qualitatively
  - This has caused experts to raise questions about the extent to which the principle of minimum deterrence still guides China's nuclear posture
- The United States increasingly sees China's lack of transparency regarding its nuclear arsenal and posture and continued resistance to engaging in meaningful dialogue on risk reduction as cause for concern
- China has repeatedly said that it will not participate in any arms race and has indicated that it is not interested in joining arms control talks with the United States and Russia until their arsenals are reduced to the Chinese level
- China has also raised concerns about U.S. missile defense systems in East Asia
- What is the best way to engage constructively on these issues?
  - Bilaterally, trilaterally with Russia, via the P5 process, through a track 1.5 dialogue?

New Warfighting Domains & Emerging Technologies

- Transformational changes in technologies such as artificial intelligence and those associated with outer space and cyberspace have increased uncertainty and raised the risk of accidents and miscalculation in the nuclear domain
- How might advances in these areas impact strategic stability and what can be done to mitigate risks?
- The fast pace of change and dual-use nature of these technologies challenge traditional frameworks for arms control
  - For example, how should we be thinking about verification and compliance?
  - The solution may rely more on establishing international norms of responsible behaviors than on negotiating formal treaties
- Addressing these crosscutting challenges will require breaking down traditional silos between expert communities to enable multidisciplinary examination of the issues

U.S. Nuclear Modernization

- Experts have long studied the balance between deterrence and arms control, and many have emphasized the need to consider both of them together as complementary tools for nuclear risk reduction
  - For example, the 1967 Harmel Report was a seminal document in NATO's history and advocated a double-track policy of deterrence and détente
  - U.S. nuclear modernization is a key component of deterrence and, thus, will be an important factor in the future of arms control
- Moreover, some in Congress link support for arms control with support for the nuclear modernization program

Verifying New Agreements

- The verification aspects of any treaty will depend on what is agreed, but there is value in laying the groundwork for what can be achieved in advance to give negotiators a toolbox of options to draw from if/when the time is right
  - The marginal cost of cheating rises as the total number of weapons decreases, underscoring the importance of effective verification in any future agreements
  - A number of recent initiatives have examined various aspects of nuclear disarmament verification (e.g., the Quad, UK-Norway Initiative, IPNDV, UN GGE on nuclear disarmament verification)
- Up to this point, nuclear arms control agreements have focused on constraining delivery vehicles for warheads and their launcher systems
  - These large pieces of hardware can be seen from space and counted using satellite imagery
  - Many experts are now studying prospective technologies and procedures to allow for warhead verification, which would require a much more intrusive and complex verification approach
- Could new capabilities in ubiquitous sensing and machine learning enable new approaches to verification and provide greater certainty in the verification process?

Further Reading

- R. Legvold and C. Chyba (eds.), “Meeting the Challenges of a New Nuclear Age,” *Daedalus*, Spring 2020, https://www.amacad.org/sites/default/files/daedalus/downloads/Daedalus%20Sp2020.pdf.
- R. Gottemoeller, “Rethinking Nuclear Arms Control,” *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 43, Issue 3, September 2020, https://cgsr.llnl.gov/content/assets/docs/Gottemoeller_TWQ_43-3.pdf.
- K. Hewitt and B. Jones (eds.), “Managing Risk: Nuclear Weapons in the New Geopolitics,” Brookings Interview, February 2019, https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/FP_20190211_nonproliferation_interview.pdf
- M. Kroenig, et al., “Russia’s Exotic Nuclear Weapons and Implications for the United States and NATO,” Atlantic Council Issue Brief, March 2020, https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Russias-Exotic-Nuclear-Weapons.pdf.
- B. Roberts (ed.), “Taking Stock: U.S.-China Track 1.5 Nuclear Dialogue,” CGSR, December 2020, https://cgsr.llnl.gov/content/assets/docs/CGSR_US-China-Paper.pdf.
- R. Hersman, “Wormhole Escalation in the New Nuclear Age,” *TNSR*, Vol. 3, Issue 3, Summer 2020, https://tnsr.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/06_TNSR-Journal-Vol-3-Issue-3-Hersman.pdf.

Further Reading (cont.)

- International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV), https://www.ipndv.org/.
- Quad Nuclear Verification Partnership (Quad), https://quad-nvp.info/.
- UK-Norway Initiative (UKNI), https://ukni.info/.
- Final report of the Wilton Park meeting on verification in multilateral nuclear disarmament: preparing for the UN Group of Governmental Experts, WP1595, January 2018, https://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/WP1595-Report.pdf.
- Final report of the Group of Governmental Experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament, A/74/90, May 2019, https://undocs.org/A/74/90.

Negotiating Arms Control Agreements

The Importance of Case Studies

- With no new arms control agreements in over ten years, we have lost some of the “muscle memory” of how to engage in arms control talks
- Every negotiation is different, but much can be learned about the process of arms control negotiations and factors that contributed to past successes and failures from case studies of historical precedents
- Memoirs of those who participated in past arms control negotiations and other historical accounts provide useful insights and lessons learned that are instrumental in training the next generation of arms control negotiators
- This section attempts to capture some of those procedural issues and lessons learned drawn from a variety of sources

Laying the Groundwork

- Once an administration decides to pursue arms control talks, it typically appoints a senior official to lead the effort
- The official will assemble a team to support negotiations
  - Drawing experts primarily from State, DoD, DOE, the Intelligence Community
  - Representing a range of backgrounds, including diplomats, experts in verification technologies, weapon system operators, lawyers, translators, regional experts, and intelligence analysts
- The team will develop a negotiating strategy, which involves
  - Defining the national security objectives and priorities
  - Developing negotiating positions
  - Identifying red lines and possible tradeoffs

Negotiating How to Negotiate

- Once the parties have agreed to launch negotiations, they will begin initial consultations to chart out a framework for how to proceed
- This will include reaching agreement on things like which topics will be covered, when and where the parties will meet, format, and sequencing
  - These procedural issues provide the structure for more focused talks
- In her book *Negotiating the New START Treaty*, chief New START negotiator for the United States Rose Gottemoeller stressed the importance of Presidents Obama and Medvedev agreeing early on the objectives of the treaty
  - They released a statement agreeing that the treaty would be about strategic offensive arms, the parties would seek reductions below the level of the Moscow Treaty, and it would include verification measures drawn from experience implementing START
  - Importantly, discussions on missile defenses proceeded on a separate track

Communicating with Washington

- The delegation directly involved in the talks will be backed up by an interagency team in Washington
- Good communication between the delegation and Washington is essential
  - The delegation reports back on developments in the talks
  - The backstopping team in Washington considers the updates and provides guidance to the delegation
  - Talks can move very quickly, so it is imperative that the teams stay in close contact and provide timely communication in both directions
- Arms control negotiations are highly-technical undertakings with huge implications for national security
  - It is critical to get the details right
  - Experts at the National Labs have in the past played a key role in providing technical analysis on proposals under consideration in the lead up to and during negotiations

Building Consensus

- History has shown that negotiating arms control agreements requires sustained effort over a long period of time
  - Perseverance and dedication are critical
- Creative problem solving skills are also important in order to bridge the concerns of each party
  - This is another area where technical experts have played a key role in arms control negotiations
- At times, top officials may need to be called upon by the negotiating teams to break impasses

The Treaty Ratification Process

- If the parties have reached agreement on a treaty, the president must receive the advice and consent of a two-thirds majority of the Senate in order to ratify the treaty
  - This means that not only must senators approve the treaty (the consent piece), they also have the opportunity to offer recommendations about how the treaty is implemented (the advice piece)
- To garner the necessary support from the Senate, members of the negotiating team will likely play a significant role supporting various hearings and briefings, preparing fact sheets, and answering questions
- The Senate provides its advice on the treaty through a resolution of ratification
  - The resolution of ratification may make consent on the treaty conditional on certain demands
  - The negotiators will almost certainly want to avoid conditions that must be re-negotiated with the other parties to the treaty
  - The resolution of ratification for New START linked Senate consent to commitments from the president on nuclear modernization and included language on the need to pursue follow-on negotiations aimed at addressing the disparity in U.S. and Russian nonstrategic nuclear weapons

Further Reading

- J. Newhouse, *Cold Dawn: The Story of SALT*, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1973.
- S. Talbott, *Endgame: The Inside Story of SALT II*, Harper & Row Publishers, 1979.
- S. Talbott, *Deadly Gambits*, Knopf, 1984.
- W. Sherman, *Not for the Faint of Heart*, PublicAffairs, 2018.
- W. Burns, *The Back Channel: A Memoir of American Diplomacy and the Case for Its Renewal*, Random House, 2019.
  - Related archive of nearly 100 declassified memos, cables, and e-mails from Ambassador Burns' career: https://carnegieendowment.org/publications/interactive/back-channel#
- R. Gottemoeller, *Negotiating the New START Treaty*, Cambria Press, 2021.

Recent Developments

Biden-Putin Summit | Geneva | 16 June 2021

U.S.-Russia Presidential Joint Statement on Strategic Stability

JUNE 16, 2021 • STATEMENTS AND RELEASES

We, President of the United States of America Joseph R. Biden and President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin, note the United States and Russia have demonstrated that, even in periods of tension, they are able to make progress on our shared goals of ensuring predictability in the strategic sphere, reducing the risk of armed conflicts and the threat of nuclear war.

The recent extension of the New START Treaty exemplifies our commitment to nuclear arms control. Today, we reaffirm the principle that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.

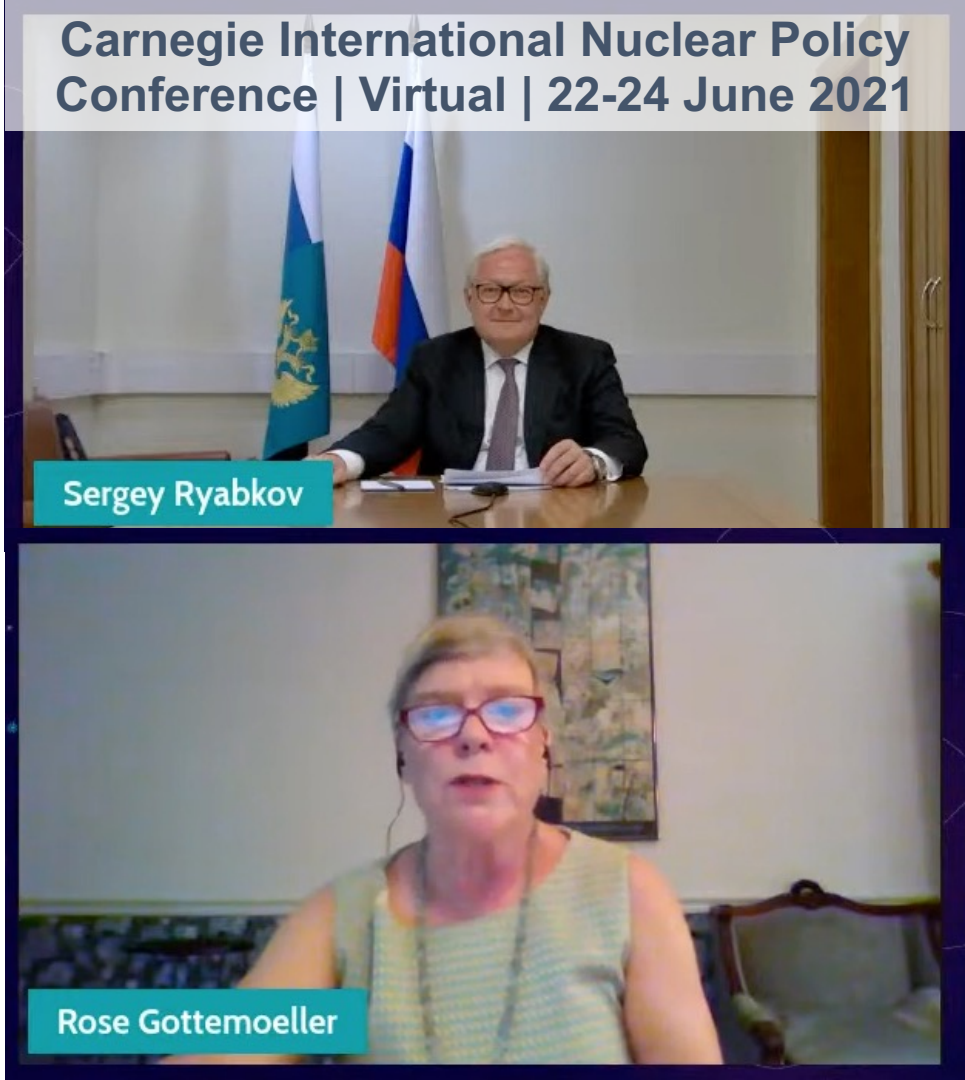
Consistent with these goals, the United States and Russia will embark together on an integrated bilateral Strategic Stability Dialogue in the near future that will be deliberate and robust. Through this Dialogue, we seek to lay the groundwork for future arms control and risk reduction measures.

The statement reaffirmed the principle agreed by U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985 that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought

The two presidents agreed to embark on an integrated bilateral Strategic Stability Dialogue in the near future seeking to lay the groundwork for future arms control and risk reduction measures

A week after the presidential summit in Geneva, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov previewed Russia's positions on strategic stability and arms control during his keynote at the Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference

The keynote was moderated by Rose Gottemoeller, who was the chief negotiator of New START for the United States



Ryabkov's Key Points

- Ryabkov proposed jointly developing a "new security equation" comprised of key factors that affect strategic stability
  - He suggested this include the entire spectrum of nuclear and non-nuclear, offensive and defensive arms that have strategic capabilities
- On offensive arms, he emphasized both nuclear and conventional systems
  - Russia would like to maintain focus on delivery vehicles and associated platforms
  - On warheads, Russia favors concentrating on the deployed parts of the arsenals
- He proposed a moratorium on deployment of INF range missiles—starting in Europe—that would include the 9M729 as a "goodwill gesture" and agreed verification measures
- He was clear about Russia's intention to seek formal limitations on missile defenses

Ryabkov's Key Points (cont.)

- Ryabkov also proposed working on a common approach to preventing an arms race in outer space and ensuring the security of space activities
- He said that including all these elements in a single treaty would be a challenge and noted the possibility of adopting a package of interrelated agreements
  - The elements might have different status (i.e., treaties vs. political agreements)
  - Some elements could be designed to allow others to join
- He stressed the need for strict parity and reciprocity
- When pressed on bringing China into strategic stability talks, Ryabkov said the talks should start bilaterally
  - If they are to be expanded to a multilateral format, Russia's major interest is in bringing the United Kingdom and France into the discussions

Strategic Stability Dialogue Kickoff Meeting
Geneva | 28 July 2021

Wendy R. Sherman
@DeputySecState

Today, I led a U.S. interagency delegation to Switzerland to kick off a bilateral Strategic Stability Dialogue with the Russian Federation. We remain committed, even in times of tension, to ensuring predictability and reducing the risk of armed conflict and threat of nuclear war.

10:06 AM · Jul 28, 2021 · Twitter Web App

Los Alamos
NATIONAL LABORATORY

Strategic Stability Dialogue Kickoff Meeting

- The State Department released a readout of the meeting characterizing the discussions as “professional and substantive”
- The readout reported that the U.S. delegation discussed U.S. policy priorities and the current security environment, national perceptions of threats to strategic stability, prospects for new nuclear arms control, and the format for future sessions
- The two delegations agreed to meet again in a plenary session at the end of September
- They plan to hold informal consultations in the interim, with the aim of determining topics for expert working groups at the second plenary

References & Further Reading

- White House, U.S.-Russia Presidential Joint Statement on Strategic Stability, 16 June 2021, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/06/16/u-s-russia-presidential-joint-statement-on-strategic-stability/.
- Remarks by President Biden in Press Conference, Geneva, 16 June 2021, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/06/16/remarks-by-president-biden-in-press-conference-4/.
- S. Ryabkov, Keynote Address, Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference, 22 June 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yrj082o4tGM.
- U.S. State Department, Readout of Deputy Secretary Sherman's participation in Strategic Stability Dialogue with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov, 28 July 2021, https://www.state.gov/deputy-secretary-shermans-participation-in-strategic-stability-dialogue-with-russian-deputy-foreign-minister-sergey-ryabkov/.