



# Fact Sheet

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## New START Treaty – Main Issues

**No United States inspections of Russian nuclear facilities have taken place in a year, threatening our national security.** The U.S. has not conducted a single on-the-ground inspection of a Russian nuclear facility since START expired on December 5, 2009. Without American inspectors verifying Russia's nuclear weapons, our insight into Russia's arsenal is limited and our national security is at risk. Inspections provide our military leaders with essential information about Russia's strategic nuclear capabilities that is used to inform our own strategic posture. Satellite images and other intelligence gathering techniques are greatly bolstered by boots on the ground and physical inspections of the inside of Russian weapons. Opposing ratification of New START perpetuates our current strategic lack of transparency. Ratifying New START enables the U.S. to resume intrusive, on-site inspections and rebuild our understanding of Russia's arsenal so that we can calibrate the posture of our own forces. Furthermore, verifying the security of nuclear materials safeguards against theft and prevents terrorists from acquiring nuclear capabilities.

### **The New START Treaty Will Not Constrain Missile Defense.**

Assertions that New START limits U.S. missile defense capabilities are false. Numerous Pentagon officials and arms control experts have attested to that fact, including Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen, and Missile Defense Agency Director Lieutenant General Patrick O'Reilly.

Our military leaders have said that the prohibition in Article V of the Treaty preventing the conversion of intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) and submarine launched ballistic missile (SLBM) launchers into missile defense launchers is not relevant to either current or future U.S. missile defense plans. Other than the 5 converted ICBM silos at Vandenberg Air Force Base that were grandfathered into the treaty, the Defense Department has no plans to convert any additional silos. As then-U.S. National Security Advisor James Jones wrote in April, "It's a limit in theory, but not in reality." It is far more cost effective to simply dig a new hole for a missile interceptor silo than convert an existing silo, and the Treaty in no way affects new construction of silos for missile defense purposes. Our military and civilian leaders have also stated that neither the language in the preamble referencing the inter-relationship between strategic offensive and defensive forces nor the Russian unilateral statement place legally binding obligations upon the U.S.<sup>1</sup>

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee made it absolutely clear in the resolution of ratification that the Treaty would not constrain missile defense. Both Understanding #1 and

Declarations #1 and #2 specifically address and reiterate the U.S. commitment to developing and deploying missile defenses. The Committee's resolution goes to great lengths to reaffirm and further clarify that the Treaty's preamble and Russia's unilateral statement impose no limits on our ability to develop and deploy missile defenses. A provision similar to the preamble existed in the original START document. Moreover, Declaration #1 underscores current U.S. policy by restating language in the 1999 Missile Defense Act mandating the implementation of a national missile defense system "as soon as technologically possible."<sup>2</sup>

**The Administration has made a significant down payment on enhancing our nation's nuclear infrastructure by committing \$85 billion over the next ten years to modernize our nuclear weapons complex.** The "1251 Report" submitted to Congress by the Obama Administration, as required by the FY 2010 National Defense Authorization Act, lays out a comprehensive plan to enhance our nation's nuclear weapons infrastructure. It calls for substantial maintenance to nuclear weapons delivery platforms; outlines a detailed plan for sustaining a safe, secure, and reliable U.S. weapons stockpile; and commits to historic growth in funding for the nation's nuclear weapons complex.

The Administration has more than demonstrated its commitment to strengthening America's nuclear infrastructure with dramatic budget increases for FY 2011, issuing a revised "1251 Report," and by responding to the unorthodox request to release a draft budget for FY 2012, in which the Administration will provide an even larger increase in modernization funding. In his FY 2011 proposal, the President requested nearly a 10% increase for the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) over FY 2010 levels. For FY 2012, the Administration plans to increase NNSA funding by nearly 9% more than the increased FY 2011 budget. In addition, the Administration outlined a ten-year budget for NNSA that substantially augments funding for weapons activities, as well as extensive Life Extension Programs (LEP) for the nuclear weapons stockpile. The Administration also detailed its commitment to constructing two critical new research facilities.

The President's commitment to invest \$80 billion over the next decade will sustain and modernize our nation's nuclear weapons complex. Moreover, President Obama pledged an additional \$4.1 billion to be injected into the U.S. nuclear infrastructure over the next five years. These investments will transform America's nuclear weapons complex into a modern, sustainable 21<sup>st</sup> Century Nuclear Security Enterprise. Such investments to the Stockpile Stewardship Program and its supporting infrastructure are critical for maintaining the U.S. nuclear deterrent, as well as furthering nuclear nonproliferation, preventing nuclear terrorism, strengthening our nation's emergency response, supporting our intelligence community, and fulfilling our global obligations.

Directors of the three primary Department of Energy/NNSA laboratories involved in nuclear weapons design and development – Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Los Alamos National Laboratory, and Sandia National Laboratory – fully endorse the Administration's commitment to ensuring that U.S. nuclear laboratories and stockpiles are state-of-the-art and sufficiently equipped. In a letter to Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Kerry and Ranking Member Lugar on December 1, 2010, the Directors write, "[W]e are very pleased by the update to the Section 1251 Report, as it would enable the laboratories to execute our requirements for ensuring a safe, secure, reliable and effective stockpile under the Stockpile Stewardship and Management Plan."<sup>3</sup>

As an added measure to ensure these pledges are enacted, the Foreign Relations Committee's advice and consent resolution Condition #9 underscores the nation's commitment to building and maintaining "a robust stockpile stewardship program" and to maintaining an updated and revitalized nuclear weapons production capability.

**The Treaty provides strong verification measures.**

New START streamlines verification and tracking procedures using a newly created, state-of-the-art inspections system and strict reporting guidelines. Compliance and verification measures in New START build on 20 years of verification experience and appropriately reflect technological advances made since 1991, as well as improved relations between the U.S. and Russia since the end of the Cold War.

New START's enhanced verification measures involve a five-pronged approach comprised of: 1) invasive, on-site inspections; 2) national technical means (NTM); 3) unique identifiers placed on each weapon; 4) regular data exchange; and 5) prompt notifications of movements of weapons.

- 1) New START permits up to 18 short-notice on-site inspections each year to determine the accuracy of Russia's data and to verify compliance. New START's inspection system is every bit as rigorous and informative as the original START regime. The original START Treaty allowed for U.S. inspections in 70 nuclear facilities located in Russia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and Belarus. However, the latter three countries have since "denuclearized." As a result, all of the former Soviet Union's nuclear weapons are now centralized in Russia and divided between the country's 35 nuclear facilities. Thus, decreasing the number of annual inspections from 28 in Start I to 18 in New START is at least effectively equivalent to those allowed under START I, since the number of facilities to visit and weapons to inspect are fewer and inspectors are allowed to gather more types of data during the inspections.
- 2) The U.S. is allowed access to employ national technical means (reconnaissance satellites, ground stations, and ships) to verify compliance. Moreover, the treaty expressly prohibits tampering with the other party's NTM.
- 3) Russia must assign and inform the U.S. of its unique alphanumeric identifiers designating deployed and non-deployed ICBMs, SLBMs and nuclear capable heavy bombers. This information further informs and serves to verify our tracking patterns of Russian equipment throughout each system's life cycle.
- 4) The treaty requires Russia to regularly provide to the U.S. aggregate data on their strategic offensive forces, including numbers, locations and technical characteristics of deployed and non-deployed strategic offensive arms.
- 5) New START establishes a comprehensive notification regime allowing us to track movement of Russia's strategic forces and changes in any strategic weapons system's status.

New START employs a robust and effective verification system predicated on decades of arms treaty verification experience. The verification system was expressly designed to be less complicated, less costly, and more effective than the one in the original START Treaty. This extensive verification regime is tailored to monitor the limits of the New START Treaty and

enables the U.S. to quickly and accurately detect any possible Russian violations and ensure that the U.S. can rapidly and effectively respond.

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<sup>1</sup> The Wall Street Journal, [4/20/10](#).

<sup>2</sup> [Text of Senate Executive Report](#).

<sup>3</sup> Letter to Senators Kerry and Lugar from all three Department of Energy/NNSA laboratories, [12/1/10](#)