



Fact Sheet

BYRON L. DORGAN
CHAIRMAN

DPC Staff Contact: Julie Klein (202) 224-3232

DPC Press Contact: Barry Piatt (202) 224-0577

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Glossary of terms in the New START Treaty:

Ballistic missile: A missile that is a weapon-delivery vehicle that has a ballistic trajectory over most of its flight path.

Basing area: A permanent facility that supports the long-term operations of a particular strategic offensive system on a permanent basis and is distinguishable from temporary stationing.

Conventional Prompt Global Strike (CPGS): The ability to deliver a non-nuclear weapon anywhere in the world within 60 minutes. Such systems may or may not be ballistic missiles (i.e., some possible CPGS systems are not ballistic for most of their flight paths). CPGS systems are also sometimes referred to as “strategic range non-nuclear systems.”

Cruise missile: A missile that is an unmanned, self-propelled weapon-delivery vehicle that sustains flight through the use of aerodynamic lift over most of its flight path. This definition distinguishes cruise missiles from ballistic missiles and remotely piloted airplanes.

Air-launched cruise missile (ALCM): An air-to-surface cruise missile of a type, any one of which has been flight-tested from an aircraft or deployed on a bomber on a bomber after December 31, 1986. The New START Treaty does not directly limit air-launched cruise missiles, limiting instead the heavy bombers capable of delivering long-range nuclear ALCMs. It does not limit ground- or sea-launched cruise missiles (GLCMs or SLCMs”) or their launchers.

Long-range nuclear ALCM: an ALCM with a range in excess of 600 kilometers that is nuclear armed.

De-MIRVed: An ICBM or SLBM that once carried multiple warheads in its payload but has been modified to carry only a single warhead.

Deployed heavy bomber: Any heavy bomber equipped for nuclear armaments, other than a test heavy bomber or a heavy bomber equipped for nuclear armaments located at a repair facility or production facility.

Each deployed heavy bomber is counted as having only one warhead, regardless of how many it can carry. This is similar to provisions in the original START Treaty. This counting rule encourages greater reliance on bombers. Bombers are slow, can be recalled, and also can be

shot down. Because they are not first-strike weapons, they are considered to be stabilizing systems. Thus, for heavy bombers, the treaty makes use of an attribution rule, rather than a more exact counting rule. This method “discounts” the number of warheads each bomber carries to promote strategic stability. Because neither the United States nor the Russian Federation maintains any nuclear armaments loaded on its deployed heavy bombers, if the counting approach adopted for deployed ballistic missiles had been applied to deployed heavy bombers, each deployed heavy bomber would ordinarily have been counted as having zero nuclear warheads.

Deployed ICBM and SLBM: An ICBM or SLBM that is contained in or on a deployed launcher of such missiles.

Deployed launcher of ICBMs: A launcher that contains an ICBM and is not an ICBM test launcher, an ICBM training launcher, or an ICBM launcher located at a space launch facility.

Deployed launcher of SLBMs: An SLBM launcher installed on a submarine that has been launched from port, that contains an SLBM, and is not intended for testing or training.

Front Section: The portion of the payload of the final stage of an ICBM or SLBM that contains the reentry vehicle or reentry vehicles and may, depending on design, include a platform for a reentry vehicle or reentry vehicles, penetration aids, and a shroud.

Heavy bomber: A bomber of a type, any one of which satisfies either of the following criteria: (a) its range is greater than 8,000 kilometers; or (b) it is equipped for long-range nuclear air-launched cruise missiles (ALCM) [Protocol, Part One, Paragraph 23]. The existing U.S. types of heavy bombers are B-52G, B-52H, B-1B, and B-2A.

Heavy bomber equipped for nuclear armaments: A heavy bomber equipped for long-range nuclear air-launched cruise missiles (ALCMs), nuclear air-to-surface missiles, or nuclear bombs.

Intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM): A land-based ballistic missile with a range, demonstrated in flight tests, in excess of 5,500 kilometers. The distance of 5,500 kilometers is based on the shortest distance between the northeastern border of the continental U.S. and the northwestern border of the Russian Federation. The existing U.S. types of ICBMs are Minuteman II, Minuteman III, and Peacekeeper.

ICBM base: For mobile launchers of ICBMs, an area in which one or more basing areas and one associated maintenance facility are located; for silo launchers of ICBMs, an area in which one or more groups of silo launchers of ICBMs and one associated maintenance facility are located. The Treaty does not establish outer boundaries for ICBM bases.

Multiple independent reentry vehicles (MIRV): An offensive ballistic missile system that can be launched by a single booster rocket and that carries multiple warheads, each of which can strike a separate target.

“New kinds” of strategic offensive arms: New offensive arms of strategic range that do not meet the treaty’s definitions of existing strategic arms. When a Party believes that a new kind of strategic offensive arm is emerging, that Party has the right to raise the question of such an arm for consideration within the framework of the Bilateral Consultative Commission (BCC).

The Parties understand that, if one Party deploys a new kind of strategic range arm for delivering non-nuclear weapons that it asserts is not a “new kind of strategic offensive arm” subject to the Treaty, and the other Party challenges that assertion, the deploying Party would be obligated to attempt to resolve the issue within the framework of the BCC. There is no requirement in the Treaty for the deploying Party to delay deployment of the new system pending such resolution, however.

“New types” of strategic offensive arms: Refers to new types of ICBM, SLBMs, and heavy bombers equipped for nuclear armaments that meet the definitions of the treaty. In other words, “new types” of arms are created through modifications to existing ICBM, SLBM, and heavy bomber platforms covered in the Treaty, and are accountable under the central limits established by the Treaty.

Non-deployed ICBM and SLBM: When an ICBM or SLBM is removed from its launcher for any reason, then both the missile and launcher become non-deployed for purposes of the Treaty.

There are no numerical limits on non-deployed ICBMs or SLBMs, but the treaty does restrict non-deployed ICBMs and SLBMs to being placed only at, as appropriate, submarine bases, ICBM or SLBM loading facilities, maintenance facilities, repair facilities for ICBMs or SLBMs, storage facilities for ICBMs or SLBMs, conversion or elimination facilities for ICBMs or SLBMs, test ranges, space launch facilities, and production facilities, except that they may be in transit between these facilities for no more than 30 days at a time.

Reentry vehicle: The part of the front section that can survive reentry through the dense layers of the Earth’s atmosphere and that is designed for delivering a weapon to a target or for testing such a delivery.

Soft site launchers: land-based launchers of ICBMs or SLBMs, other than a silo launcher, used for testing, training, or space launch that does not meet the definition of either deployed or non-deployed launchers. Soft site launchers are not covered by the treaty.

Submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM): A ballistic missile with a range in excess of 600 kilometers of a type, any one of which has been contained in, or launched from, a submarine. The range of 600 kilometers was selected in the original START Treaty to avoid limitations on tactical naval systems.

Telemetric information: Information that originates on board a missile during its initial motion (launch) and subsequent flight that is broadcast.

Triad: The strategic nuclear force structure consisting of ICBMs, SLBMs and nuclear-capable heavy bombers.

Warhead: For the purposes of this Treaty, a unit of account, not a physical item, used for counting toward the 1,500 aggregate limit established by the Treaty. The term represents the declared number of reentry vehicles emplaced on deployed ICBMs and deployed SLBMs, and the one nuclear warhead attributed to each deployed heavy bomber.