

This article was downloaded by: [Center for Policy Studies in Russia], [Evgeny Petelin]
On: 30 October 2013, At: 03:16
Publisher: Routledge
Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered
office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



Security Index: A Russian Journal on International Security

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rsec20>

FURTHER NUCLEAR ARMS LIMITATION: FACTORS AND PROSPECTS

Anatoly Antonov

Published online: 10 Apr 2013.

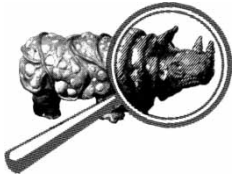
To cite this article: Anatoly Antonov (2013) FURTHER NUCLEAR ARMS LIMITATION: FACTORS AND PROSPECTS, Security Index: A Russian Journal on International Security, 19:2, 13-22, DOI: [10.1080/19934270.2013.779437](https://doi.org/10.1080/19934270.2013.779437)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/19934270.2013.779437>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>



Anatoly Antonov

FURTHER NUCLEAR ARMS LIMITATION: FACTORS AND PROSPECTS

The New START treaty between Russia and the United States has entered into force. Under the terms of the treaty, by 2018 the Russian and U.S. strategic offensive arsenals will be brought below the new ceiling of 700 deployed delivery systems and 1,550 warheads deployed on these systems.

The treaty stipulates a large number of measures which must be accomplished within a clearly defined time frame. The implementation of some of those measures began even before the ratification; others have yet to be rolled out. Several of the measures agreed in the treaty have already been implemented. First and foremost, Russia and the United States have exchanged initial data on the composition and the location of their strategic offensive weapons arsenals at their military bases. They have also put together teams of inspectors and conducted several demonstrations stipulated by the treaty. They have begun inspection visits under the new procedures. Finally, they have launched a consultation mechanism in the framework of the Bilateral Consultative Commission (BCC). Experts and officials attending the commission's sittings discuss practical issues pertaining to the implementation of the treaty. During the winter 2012 session of the BCC (held on January 24–February 7) they “signed agreements about exchanging telemetry information for ICBM and SLBM launches, to be submitted by each Party, and about the procedures for conducting demonstrations of information storage mediums and/or equipment for the reproduction of telemetry data.” They have also reached an agreement “about the number of ICBM and SLBM launches for which telemetry information will be exchanged in 2012.”¹

The question is, what next? Are deeper strategic offensive arms reductions after the expiration of the latest START treaty possible, or indeed necessary?

DETERMINING FACTORS

Obviously, strategic offensive arms reductions are not an end in themselves. The notion of such reductions was born at the beginning of the era of nuclear arms disarmament talks, and it had a very clear purpose. It aimed to maintain the security of both parties at lower levels of nuclear arsenals.

It is quite clear that at this moment Russia's security does not depend solely on the balance of strategic nuclear arsenals with the United States. It also depends on numerous other factors, including: U.S. plans for a global missile defense system; the situation with sea-based, long-range cruise missiles and other long-range high-precision weapons; the prospects for the removal of American non-strategic nuclear weapons from Europe; the balance of conventional forces; the numerous military bases with growing military infrastructure in close proximity to Russia's borders; implementation of various ideas for placing weapons in outer space; etc.

Let us focus specifically on the issue of numerical indicators of the Russian and U.S. nuclear arsenals. The indicators for delivery systems are approaching critical levels. I doubt if anyone



A
N
A
T
O
L
Y
S
T
I
S

would argue that, in the end, the real deterrence capability depends precisely on the numbers of delivery systems, their technical specifications, their resilience and survivability, and many other factors.

The need for the engagement of all countries which possess nuclear weapons in the nuclear arms reduction and limitation process is becoming increasingly pressing. It is important that this realization is becoming part of the broad public and political debate. Public opinion, and the opinion of NGOs and the research community, have become impossible to ignore.

In this context let us recall the ideas voiced by the Global Zero initiative, the Luxembourg and Munich forums, and some other NGOs specializing in global security. The Sustainable Partnership with Russia (SuPR) Group, a PIR Center project, deserves a separate mention. There are many interesting, rational, and constructive ideas in its proposals. Of course, some of the ideas are debatable and contentious. Nevertheless, it is obvious that we must make use of the intellectual potential of such organizations to choose the right strategy for further nuclear arms reduction and limitation.

Another problem lies in the context of the outlook for nuclear arms control. Some weapons systems which affect the strategic balance of power are not categorized as strategic by the existing international legal framework—but their nature is in fact strategic because they are capable of taking out strategic military targets and major command and control centers. As we implement deeper cuts to our strategic offensive arsenals, the impact of such weapons systems on the balance of power will continue to grow.

Take, for instance, high-precision weapons, which are not subject to any limitations in terms of their numbers, performance specifications, or deployment locations, and which are well disguised in terms of their true purpose (portrayed as they are, for example, as an instrument of the war on terror). Such weapons can in fact be used to take out strategically important targets. Thanks to their very short approach time and high precision of targeting, they can be used to deliver a sudden strike, leaving little time for reaction or retaliation.

Can Russia afford simply to ignore all of these factors? Obviously, it cannot talk about a nuclear zero while turning a blind eye to all these problems and their effects. Russia consistently advocates a reduction in the level of nuclear confrontation. Nevertheless, it cannot ignore the fact that, of the many factors which affect military security, the Americans tend to focus only on strategic nuclear weapons, while at the same time undermining all attempts to resolve problems in all the areas in which the United States has the advantage over Russia. With such an approach, achieving further strategic offensive reductions will be very problematic. In these circumstances, rather than strengthening strategic stability, any further Russian–U.S. strategic offensive reductions are more likely to undermine that stability.

The outlook for further strategic offensive arms reductions therefore depends on finding mutually acceptable solutions to other important security problems. The United States must unambiguously indicate its readiness to search for solutions to the problems outlined above. Further agreements on strategic offensive arms reductions will not be in Russia's national security interests unless these solutions are found. It has become quite obvious that in the current situation nuclear weapons are Russia's main instrument for ensuring its national security.

INTERMEDIATE-RANGE AND SHORTER-RANGE MISSILES

In recent years politicians and experts in Russia have been debating the possibility of pulling out of the 1987 INF treaty.

The terms of that treaty and its significance for strategic stability have been discussed in earlier sections of this monograph. Let us recall, however, that the successor states of the Soviet Union as far as the treaty is concerned were Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan. These four countries and the United States remain the parties of the INF treaty.

The following arguments have been proposed in favor of withdrawing from the INF. The geopolitical situation has changed radically since the treaty was signed. One of the two original parties to the treaty, the Soviet Union, has ceased to exist. Some of the former Soviet republics and Warsaw Pact countries that used to host Soviet intermediate and shorter-range missiles—which were an instrument of deterrence against NATO—have since become NATO

members or want to join the alliance. The threat of global nuclear war or a large conventional war involving Russia and other leading world powers has diminished. The purpose of the INF treaty was to defuse nuclear confrontation in Europe between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. That purpose has been served, and the original military-political reason for signing the treaty has ceased to exist.

On the other hand, although the likelihood of a global war has diminished, the world has become much more prone to regional conflicts. There is a growing threat of proliferation of nuclear weapons and missile delivery systems, and the new challenge of international terrorism.

For some of the state parties to the INF treaty these new challenges can pose a very real national security threat. Some of the INF parties could counter those threats and minimize their costs by deploying weapons systems which are currently banned under the treaty; this applies especially to intermediate and shorter-range missiles with conventional warheads. Many of these countries have retained the expertise and industrial capability required to build intermediate and shorter-range ground-based ballistic and cruise missiles.

In addition, the situation whereby the five INF parties (Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia, Ukraine, and the United States) are bound by the treaty while the rest of the world is free to develop intermediate and short-range missiles in order to meet its defense requirements is discriminatory.

That is why Russia has called for a discussion of the possibility of making the INF treaty universal by means of persuading other countries to join it, relinquish their intermediate and shorter-range ground-based ballistic and cruise missiles, and shut down all relevant programs. A joint Russian-U.S. statement to that effect was made at the 62nd Session of the UN General Assembly in 2007.²

Some decision-makers and experts believe that unless other countries heed the call for making the INF treaty universal, Russia should seriously consider exercising its right to withdraw from that treaty. Such a decision could be justified by Russia's need to take additional steps to strengthen its security in a situation which has changed significantly since the signing of the INF treaty.

The balance of power in the area of conventional forces in Europe has changed. This is a topic of energetic discussions in Vienna in the framework of the Special Consultative Group. Experts at the NATO-Russia Council in Brussels are also involved in these debates. The armies of the NATO members and several other Russian neighbors are becoming increasingly capable. New potential security threats have emerged in the vicinity of Russia's borders on the Eurasian continent. These include NATO's eastward enlargement; the development of WMD and missile delivery systems in several neighboring countries; growing tensions near the Russian borders; the growing threat of international terrorism; and many other developments.

In such circumstances Russia could use an arsenal of intermediate range and (to a lesser degree) shorter-range missiles as an additional instrument of regional deterrence and as a way of neutralizing the superiority of NATO and other countries in conventional weapons.

Experts are also discussing another reason for deploying intermediate-range missiles: it is argued that Russia needs to respond to U.S. plans to deploy a missile defense system in Europe. Missile defense facilities in Europe could become potential targets for Russian weapons, and intermediate-range missiles are ideally suited for that task.

Nevertheless, Russia needs to conduct a meticulous analysis of all the pros and cons before deciding whether to withdraw from the INF. Such a unilateral step could in fact lead to serious negative consequences for Russia's own security.

A Russian pullout from the INF could be used as a justification for the deployment of American intermediate and shorter-range missiles in Europe. As a result Russia would once again face a problem which it has resolved at great cost to itself by signing the INF treaty in the first place. Essentially it would create a threat to its own security which is much greater than the missile threat posed by third countries. The new NATO members will not require much persuading to host American missiles. They have already demonstrated their attitude when decisions were being made on the deployment of the American missile defense system in Europe. The deployment of intermediate-range missiles in the early 1980s was seen as a serious threat by the Soviet Union. For Russia, it would be an even greater threat in the current situation. The American Pershing-2 missiles had only about half of the Soviet Union's European territory within their range. If similar



missiles were to be deployed on the territory of the new NATO members, the entire European part of Russia would be within their striking distance.

Many European countries are likely to respond to Russia's withdrawal from the INF treaty by inviting the United States to deploy its missile defense facilities on their territory. The intermediate-range missiles Russia could deploy to take out missile defense sites in Europe would themselves become targets for American missile interceptors. Everything would then depend on the balance of numbers and technical characteristics of the weapons in question.

A Russian decision to deploy intermediate-range missiles would further consolidate NATO countries around their shared anti-Russian sentiment, thereby strengthening the United States' position on the European continent. Russia would once again be portrayed as an enemy.

A unilateral Russian withdrawal from the INF treaty would also be destructive for the entire arms control system. It would have negative consequences for the NPT and the nuclear nonproliferation process as a whole.

Let us now move on to the Russian and U.S. initiative on turning the INF into a global treaty. Establishing and implementing such a regime would yield many benefits.

The world would be free of missiles with a range of 500km to 5,500km. This would result in a radical improvement in the security situation for the entire planet.

Such an outcome would also make an important contribution to strengthening the WMD nonproliferation regime. It is well known that missiles are the best delivery systems for nuclear ammunition. The absence of such missiles would significantly reduce the incentive to develop nuclear weapons. That would be an extremely valuable contribution by third countries to the nuclear disarmament process.

An agreement on a global elimination of intermediate and shorter-range missiles would essentially remove the need for missile defenses against such missiles because that is exactly the class of missiles being deployed by the "countries of concern." Suggestions that such countries could deploy ICBMs remain purely hypothetical.

Combined with a new climate of relations between Russia and the United States, a global INF treaty would be a powerful stimulus for further strategic offensive reductions.

Finally, a global INF treaty would not only strengthen international and national security, but would also relieve the participating states of the economic costs of developing, manufacturing, and deploying intermediate and shorter-range missiles.

Nevertheless, it should be recognized that a global INF regime is not a realistic possibility in the foreseeable future.

On the one hand, many countries see such missiles as an important (and sometimes their main and only) instrument for ensuring their own security or preventing regional conflicts. A case in point is Indian–Pakistani relations. In addition, many countries view possession of such missiles as a way of bolstering their political clout in the regional and global arena.

On the other hand, the initiative to globalize the INF does not include any security guarantees for the countries which agree to relinquish such missiles, or which have never had them in the first place. Neither does it contain any incentives for such countries. Clearly, the countries which have acquired missile weapons have spent huge financial and material resources in the process—and there is not even a suggestion that some kind of compensation might be possible.

Finally, there is another very important question: does the initiative require the participation of every single country—or should only selected countries be invited to join?

Eliminating two classes of missile weapons is, in itself, a good idea. But before we can begin to implement it, we need to discuss the terms, conditions, and principles for negotiating an agreement on the elimination of intermediate and shorter-range missiles. The following considerations must be taken into account, among others:

- We need to recognize the inadmissibility of using force or threat of force to resolve political issues. Policies such as those demonstrated by NATO in Yugoslavia and in the Middle East remain a serious obstacle to the implementation of such an initiative.

- ❑ We need to decide whether the agreement should be universal, or whether individual countries (including some states which possess intermediate or shorter-range weapons) can remain outside the treaty or join it at some later point.
- ❑ The treaty must be signed for an indefinite term.
- ❑ The treaty must necessarily stipulate a step-by-step resolution of the problem over a relatively long time frame (the problem cannot be resolved all in one go).
- ❑ An important staging post on the way to implementing the initiative would be an agreement by all countries to declare their stockpiles of intermediate and shorter-range missiles.
- ❑ The eventual agreement must include national security guarantees for all its participants; a successful outcome is unlikely without such a provision.
- ❑ In addition to security guarantees, it is important to develop and agree measures to reward countries for relinquishing WMD missile delivery systems. These could include, for example, preferential terms for putting their spacecraft into orbit using other countries' space launchers, or assistance in developing their own space launchers.

NON-STRATEGIC NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN RUSSIAN–U.S. RELATIONS

Even before the official talks on the New START treaty had begun, many U.S. politicians were calling for the inclusion of non-strategic (tactical) nuclear weapons on the agenda of the talks.

Their arguments in favor of initiating non-strategic nuclear weapons (NSNW) talks included Russia's alleged numerical superiority in that weapons category; the opacity of Russia's NSNW policy; and concerns over the reliability and security of Russian nuclear munitions.

The scope of the New START treaty does not include NSNW. Even before the New START talks had begun, a joint statement by the Russian and U.S. presidents made in London in 2009 said that "The subject of the new agreement will be the reduction and limitation of strategic offensive arms."³

In fact, NSNW have never been included in the scope of strategic offensive reduction treaties. It is worth noting, however, that when the Russian and U.S. presidents negotiated the outlines of the START III treaty in Helsinki in 1997, they deemed it necessary to instruct their teams of negotiators to discuss possible NSNW measures in the context of the talks.⁴ But, for various reasons, the START III negotiations never took place, so the two presidents' instruction was never implemented.

Nevertheless, politicians in the United States continue to demand a negotiated agreement, which would reduce Russia's alleged superiority in NSNW. They say that without such measures no further progress is possible on strategic offensive reductions.

Such demands are contained in the U.S. Senate resolution on the ratification of the New START treaty. Let us recall that the resolution instructs the U.S. administration to seek, within a year of the 2010 New START treaty entering into force, the launch of Russian–U.S. talks on further nuclear reductions which would also cover tactical and non-deployed warheads. As a first step the resolution proposes mutual transparency and confidence-building measures, including exchange of information regarding the numbers, types, and storage locations of NSNW.

At the same time, the 2010 U.S. Nuclear Posture Review sets out a somewhat different objective—namely retaining the U.S. forward-based NSNW capability, which relies on tactical fighter-bombers and heavy bombers. It also contains plans for extending the service life of the B-61 nuclear ammunitions (about 200 of which are stored in five European NATO countries).⁵ Also, the new NATO Strategic Concept (adopted in November 2010 in Lisbon) says that the alliance's nuclear forces are an especially important element of the deterrence system and a means of demonstrating transatlantic solidarity.⁶

There seem to be good reasons to believe that for now the U.S. administration is not planning any major NSNW reductions. To comply with the Senate resolution, the White House will probably have to do nothing more than to enter, for appearance's sake, into talks with Russia on transparency measures.



Another thing to take into account is that the international community has repeatedly urged Russia and the United States to reduce their NSNW arsenals as part of the NPT review process at the UN. Such calls have been made not only by Western countries but also by some non-aligned nations.

For example, during the 57th session of the UN General Assembly, the assembly's first committee approved a resolution headlined "Reduction of Non-strategic Nuclear Weapons."⁷ The resolution includes the following provisions:

- ❑ Reductions and elimination of non-strategic nuclear weapons should be included as an integral part of the nuclear-arms reduction and disarmament.
- ❑ Reductions of non-strategic nuclear weapons should be carried out in a transparent, verifiable, and irreversible manner.
- ❑ The Russian Federation and the United States are called upon to formalize their presidential initiatives into legal instruments and to initiate negotiations on further reductions.
- ❑ Further confidence-building and transparency measures are needed to reduce the threat posed by non-strategic nuclear weapons, as well as concrete agreed measures to reduce further the operational status of non-strategic nuclear weapons systems in order to reduce the danger of those weapons being used.
- ❑ The states which possess nuclear weapons must undertake a commitment not to increase the numbers of non-strategic nuclear weapons, not to create or deploy new types of such weapons, and not to develop logical justifications for their use.
- ❑ The types of non-strategic weapons which have been removed from the arsenals of the states should be banned, and new transparency measures should be developed to verify the elimination of these weapons.

It is therefore safe to assume that Russia will face growing pressure in the coming years over the issue of non-strategic nuclear weapons. In such circumstances it is very important to formulate a stance on the NSNW issue that would properly reflect the existing situation.

At present the Russian and American non-strategic nuclear arsenals are regulated by the political initiatives announced by the Russian and U.S. presidents in 1991 and 1992.

The October 5, 1991 initiative by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev was announced in response to the unilateral American initiative announced by President George H.W. Bush on September 28, 1991. After the break-up of the Soviet Union the Soviet commitments regarding NSNW were reaffirmed by Russia as the successor of the Soviet Union. They were also expanded and fleshed out in a January 29, 1992 statement by Russian President Boris Yeltsin, "On Russian Policy Regarding Arms Limitation and Reduction."⁸

The NSNW commitments included practical measures to cut or eliminate such weapons, and to reduce their operational status. Neither of the two countries specified any deadlines for NSNW reductions. Nevertheless, Russia soon announced the schedule for the elimination of various types of its NSNW, under which all the commitments it had undertaken were to be implemented before the end of 2000.

The key points of the unilateral NSNW initiatives are listed in Table 1.

Implementing these NSNW steps as unilateral initiatives had enabled the two countries to avoid protracted and difficult negotiations, and to achieve progress in eliminating the surplus of non-strategic nuclear ammunition.

According to the Congressional Perry-Schlesinger Commission, Russia and the United States have removed about 14,000 nuclear munitions from their armed forces as part of these NSNW reductions. Neither of the two countries has released any official information about the numbers of non-strategic ammunition that have been eliminated or the numbers still remaining in its arsenals. Russia and the United States do recognize, however, that they have reduced their NSNW stockpiles by 75–80 per cent compared with peak Cold War levels.⁹

Table 1. Russian and U.S. Initiatives on NSNW

Weapons type	U.S. Initiatives	Russian initiatives
Artillery pieces and warheads for ground-based tactical missiles	Removal to U.S. territory and complete elimination	Removal to storage, complete elimination, and end of manufacture
Mines		Removal to storage, complete elimination, and end of manufacture
Weapons for surface ships, multirole submarines, and land-based naval aviation	Removal from delivery systems to storage facilities on U.S. territory, large reductions	Removal to storage, reduction by one-third
SAM warheads		Removal to storage, 50 percent reduction
Air ammunition		50 percent reduction

Neither of the two countries has undertaken any new NSNW commitments since the announcement of the presidential initiatives, and no legally binding international NSNW regime has been put in place.

A number of problems make it difficult to begin NSNW talks. Most importantly, there are political differences with regard to non-strategic nuclear weapons. Because of Russia's geostrategic situation, the NSNW arsenal is a lot more important to Russia than it is to the United States. Moscow views its NSNW as a way of neutralizing NATO's large conventional superiority in Europe.

Another important argument is that Russian non-strategic nuclear weapons are an instrument of deterrence against third countries which have missiles capable of reaching targets in Russia. For the United States, on the other hand, the only threat comes from the strategic arsenals of Russia and China.

A very important thing to take into account is that all Russian NSNW are stockpiled on Russia's own territory; these weapons have been removed from the armed forces and are being kept at special storage bases. The Russian non-strategic nuclear weapons therefore pose no threat to the United States.

In contrast, the United States has NSNW stockpiles in Europe, in close proximity to Russian borders. Essentially, these weapons have strategic capability because they can be used to take out strategically important targets on Russian territory.

At its summit in May 2012, NATO decided to leave American NSNW in Europe, although members of the alliance also said they would work to put in place the necessary conditions for "further reductions." It appears that NATO has not overcome its internal divisions over the pullout of American bombs from Europe—but for now a decision has been made to leave things as they are. NATO's Deterrence and Defense Posture Review (one of the main documents approved at the May 2012 summit) includes a rather vague-sounding passage about studying possible concepts for participation of members of the Nuclear Planning Group in implementing agreements on nuclear sharing.¹⁰ However, NATO members make any changes in that area conditional on new NSNW reduction steps by Russia.

It is not difficult to understand the Russian position voiced during UN GA sessions and NPT review conferences; Moscow says that the United States must remove its NSNW from Europe to its national territory and dismantle the requisite NSNW infrastructure in the non-nuclear European NATO countries.

Russia's demands to remove American NSNW from Europe and dismantle the NSNW infrastructure on the European continent are portrayed in the West as an attempt by Moscow to weaken NATO, and a demonstration of Russia's unwillingness to discuss NSNW reductions in earnest. Some Russian experts also believe that such an approach by Moscow is unrealistic, given the nature of relations between the NATO allies and the American nuclear guarantees in NATO.



There is also the obvious need to include other nuclear-weapon states in any future NSNW dialogue. A serious agreement in this area will hardly be possible without taking into account those states' nuclear capability.

Apart from political differences, there are also several technical problems which must be resolved before any progress can be made on the NSNW front.

The experience of negotiations on strategic offensive reductions suggests that resolving technical issues (formulating precise definitions of the weapons being cut; developing verification mechanisms; agreeing the procedures for elimination or information exchange, etc.) requires much greater efforts than resolving headline strategic-level problems (ceilings, deadlines, phases, etc.). Over the past several decades Russia and the United States have accumulated a huge amount of definitions and legal instruments in the area of strategic offensive arms reductions, from precise terminology to a tried and tested system of inspections. No such definitions or instruments are available for non-strategic nuclear weapons talks, and the differences between NSNW and strategic offensive weapons are too great for the same verification mechanisms to be applicable.

Take, for example, the problem of defining strategic and non-strategic weapons. When the Soviet Union (Russia) and the United States worked on the text of the strategic reductions treaties, they proceeded from the notion that these treaties should cover all nuclear weapons systems capable of reaching the other country's territory. In other words, their understanding of what "strategic" means as applied to nuclear weapons only worked in a bilateral context; it cannot be used in dealings with the other nuclear-weapon states.

What is more, even Russia and the United States still have some unresolved differences concerning what kinds of weapons fall under the NSNW definition. For example, they do not agree on how to categorize long-range sea-launched cruise missiles. It is also well known that the same nuclear bombs can be deployed on strategic as well as non-strategic aircraft.

The problem of categories and definitions could be the starting point for NSNW discussions between the P5.

The delivery systems used for NSNW tend to be dual-purpose systems; they can be deployed with nuclear as well as conventional forces. Strategic offensive arms reductions have all been implemented by reducing the numbers of delivery systems. The same approach is unlikely to work in the case of NSNW. No country is likely to agree to eliminate delivery systems which can also be used for conventional weapons (i.e. aircraft, short-range missiles, surface-to-air missiles, torpedoes, weapons mounted on ships and submarines, and barrel artillery).

Essentially, NSNW reductions will have to be implemented by means of reduction and verifiable elimination of nuclear munitions—for which there has been no precedent in the history of negotiated nuclear disarmament.

In view of all the serious political differences and technical problems faced by any future NSNW limitation regime, there is understandable skepticism about the chances for signing a full-scale NSNW treaty containing verification measures any time soon. Even if the negotiations can be launched, they will be long and difficult. It is also obvious that any NSNW discussion can begin only if the parties manage to find solutions to the aforementioned strategic stability problems; these solutions are also required before any talks on further strategic offensive reductions can begin.

If and when the NSNW discussion begins—most importantly, in the P5 format—the most pressing objectives for such consultations would be as follows:

- reach an agreement on nuclear weapons definitions and classification;
- develop a mechanism for taking into account the impact of various types of weapons—including conventional weapons—on strategic stability;
- negotiate a commitment to remove all nuclear weapons stationed abroad back to national territory, and to ban any future deployment outside national territory;
- end the practice of military exercises and training events that involve the use of nuclear weapons by the armed forces of countries which do not possess such weapons;
- discuss the future of NSNW as part of a whole set of measures to limit other types of weapons, including conventional.

WHAT CAN NUCLEAR-WEAPONS COUNTRIES DO TOGETHER?

Until now, only two countries, Russia (the Soviet Union) and the United States, have participated in strategic offensive arms limitation talks. These talks began back in the late 1960s, and the two countries have signed a large number of bilateral agreements over the past decades.

The other official nuclear-weapon states, i.e. Britain, China, and France, are not taking part in strategic arms reduction talks. This is despite the fact that, in accordance with Article IV of the NPT, all of these countries have undertaken a commitment “to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament. . . .”¹¹

Britain, China, and France justify their position by pointing out that their nuclear arsenals are much smaller than the Russian or U.S. stockpiles.

It is true that Russia and the United States account for the vast majority of strategic delivery systems and nuclear munitions in the combined arsenals of the P5.

Various sources estimate Britain’s nuclear arsenal at 180–225 warheads, France’s at 300–320 warheads, and China’s at 200–250 warheads (plus up to 150 non-strategic nuclear weapons).¹²

In talking about the future of the British, French, and Chinese nuclear arsenals, the following considerations must be kept in mind.

As far as Britain and France are concerned, it is safe to assume that, at the very least, neither country intends to increase its nuclear weapons stockpiles. There is, however, a lot of uncertainty about China’s plans.

In any event, and regardless of the various scenarios for the Chinese strategic nuclear arsenal, it is in Russia’s national interests to secure the involvement of Britain, China, and France in a multilateral dialogue on strategic offensive weapons.

This has been reflected in the Russian National Security Strategy,¹³ which states that:

- Russia is ready for further discussion of nuclear reductions based on bilateral agreements as well as multilateral formats.
- Russia will work to encourage the involvement of other countries, especially those which possess nuclear weapons, in the process of strengthening strategic stability.

The question of multilateral talks between all the countries which possess strategic offensive weapons has been raised on several occasions at the UN General Assembly, the UN Commission for Disarmament, the NPT review conferences, and other disarmament forums.

But for now, and despite the commitments undertaken in the NPT, there is no evidence that Britain, China, and France are willing to join the U.S.–Russian disarmament process. The three countries continue to claim that even after Russia and the United States have implemented the reductions mandated by the New START treaty, they will have to press ahead with further reductions on a bilateral basis.


It is important to stress that the strategic arms reduction process cannot remain bilateral indefinitely. Even at this stage Britain, France, and China can make their contribution. To begin with, they could undertake a commitment not to increase their nuclear arsenals.

One of the reasons for engaging the other nuclear powers in the strategic arms reduction talks would be to agree joint transparency measures, with joint verification measures to follow later on.

It appears that for now the other nuclear countries are only just beginning to look at the possibility of joint measures in the area of nuclear disarmament. At the 2010 NPT Review Conference, Britain, France, and China were categorically opposed to the idea that they should join the U.S.–Russian nuclear disarmament talks. They only agreed to go as far as hold some informal consultations on individual topics related to nuclear disarmament. There have already been several joint meetings to discuss the disarmament experience, nuclear weapons terms and definitions, and other issues pertaining to Article VI of the NPT. But none of the three countries has expressed any willingness to take concrete joint steps on nuclear disarmament.



In the longer term, the future multilateral regime should include not only the five official nuclear-weapon states, but every country which has serious nuclear weapons capability. The present author deliberately avoids using the term “de facto nuclear-weapon states,” lest such phrasing be taken by those countries as recognition of their nuclear status or equal standing with the NPT nuclear-weapon states. The author firmly believes that granting these countries recognition as official nuclear-weapon states would have a destructive impact on the NPT and is therefore completely unacceptable under any circumstances.

There is no doubt that the countries which possess nuclear weapons play an important role in the global balance of power. In a world dominated by two super-powers, the United States and Soviet Union, those two superpowers agreed to set up a bilateral strategic arms control regime. A new world with many centers of power requires a similar multilateral regime. 

For more analytics on disarmament, please, visit the section “Ways towards Nuclear Disarmament” of the PIR Center website: disarmament.eng.pircenter.org

NOTES

¹ Third Session of the Bilateral Consultative Commission under the New START Treaty, Russian Foreign Ministry, February 8, 2012, <http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/newsline/3F533672651420034425799E00510BA9>, last accessed January 22, 2013.

² Joint U.S.–Russian Statement on the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles at the 62nd Session of the UN General Assembly, New York, October 25, 2007, United Nations, <http://www.un.int/russia/new/MainRootrus/docs/off_news/281007/newru2.htm>, last accessed January 22, 2013.

³ Joint Statement by Dmitry A. Medvedev, President of the Russian Federation, and Barack Obama, President of the United States of America, Regarding Negotiations on Further Reductions in Strategic Offensive Arms, London, April 1, 2009, <http://news.kremlin.ru/ref_notes/167>, last accessed January 22, 2013.

⁴ Joint Statement on the Parameters of Future Nuclear Arms Reductions, March 21, 1997, Helsinki, Electronic Fund of Acts of Legislation, <<http://docs.kodeks.ru/document/901857459>>, last accessed January 22, 2013.

⁵ *Nuclear Posture Review Report* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, April 2010), <<http://www.defense.gov/npr/docs/2010%20Nuclear%20Posture%20Review%20Report.pdf>>, last accessed January 22, 2013.

⁶ *Active Engagement, Modern Defense: Strategic Concept for the Defense and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization*. Adopted by heads of state and government at the NATO summit in Lisbon, November, 19–20, 2010 (Brussels: NATO, 2010).

⁷ General Assembly Fifty-seventh Session, *Official Records: 57th Plenary Meeting*, November 22, 2002, 10 a.m. (New York: UN), pp.7–8, <<http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N02/705/84/PDF/N0270584.pdf?OpenElement>>, last accessed January 22, 2013).

⁸ “On Russian Policy Regarding Arms Limitation and Reduction,” statement by Russian President Boris Yeltsin, January 29, 1992, *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, January 30, 1992.

⁹ H. Cartland [et al.]; chair. W.J. Perry; vice-chair. J.R. Schlesinger. *America’s Strategic Posture: The Final Report of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2009), p. XVI.

¹⁰ *Deterrence and Defense Posture Review*, NATO, May 20, 2012, <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_87597.htm?mode=pressrelease>, last accessed January 22, 2013.

¹¹ *Nuclear Weapons Non-Proliferation Treaty, Approved by Resolution 2373 (XXII) of the United Nations General Assembly on June 12, 1968*, United Nations, <http://www.un.org/ru/documents/decl_conv/conventions/npt.shtml>, last accessed January 22, 2013.

¹² See, for example: V.A. Dronov et al., *Nuclear Weapons of Britain, France, and China* (Moscow: Rosatom Institute of Strategic Stability, 2012), pp. 38, 77, 112.

¹³ *Russian National Security Strategy up to 2020*. Approved by Presidential Decree No 537 of May 12, 2009, Russian Federation National Security Council, <<http://www.scrf.gov.ru/documents/99.html>>, last accessed January 22, 2013.