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**REDUCTION OF TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND NON-DEPLOYED
STRATEGIC NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

A Policy Memo

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American and European advocates of deep reductions of non-strategic (tactical) nuclear weapons, first of all belonging to Russia, have been very active lately. The issue of the alleged “disparity with the greater Russian stockpiles of short-range nuclear weapons” has been reflected first in the new Strategic Concept of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization adopted in Lisbon in November 2010 and second in the Resolution on advice and consent to the ratification of the new US – Russian START Treaty adopted by the Senate of the United States in December 2010 (“disparity between the non-strategic (tactical) nuclear weapons stockpiles of the Russian Federation and of the United States”). Although it’s not clear what disparity in favor of Russia authors of the above mentioned documents are talking about if no official data on tactical nuclear weapons stockpiles was ever published neither in Russia nor in the USA.

Moreover US officials declaring their readiness to start negotiations on limitation and reduction of tactical nuclear weapons stockpiles (and even their complete elimination) prefer to talk only about US stockpiles in Europe and forget about tactical nukes in the North American continent.

It's worth mentioning that starting from late 60s of the past century when USSR and USA started negotiations on limitations on strategic nuclear weapons Americans were constantly against putting under US – Soviet control regime their forward deployed nuclear weapons (although for Russia US tactical nuclear weapons in Europe are of a strategic nature) under the pretext that those weapons were to compensate for Warsaw Pact superiority over NATO in conventional weapons.

Now more than forty years have passed since that time and what do we have? There is no Warsaw Treaty Organization, Soviet Union ceased to exist, after implementation of the CFE Treaty there exists a huge disparity (in favor of the alliance) in conventional weapons between Russia and NATO. Moreover “ the Alliance does not consider any country (including Russia) to be its adversary” and this fact is reflected in the new Strategic Concept of the alliance.

But still US tactical nukes are being deployed in Europe and corresponding infrastructure is being kept in order to receive additional weapons if needed. Moreover the new Strategic Concept of the Alliance says that “NATO will remain a nuclear alliance as long as nuclear weapons exist” (i.e. Russian nuclear potential including strategic weapons) .

Under present conditions tactical nuclear weapons are practically the only means of securing Russia's independence and territorial integrity and as it was said recently by Foreign Minister of Russia Sergey Lavrov “my country needs some advantage in this class of weapons because the balance of forces in Europe has been seriously tilted with NATO eastward expansion”.

At the same time Russian leadership's agreement to start negotiations on limitation and reduction of tactical nuclear weapons is not excluded provided:

First – all nuclear powers should deploy their tactical nuclear weapons in their national territories. Overseas storage infrastructure should be destroyed.

Second – Russia should complete the program of re-equipment of its Armed Forces and sharply reduce its lagging behind the world's leading powers in high precision weapons.

Third - negotiations on limitation and reduction of tactical nuclear weapons should be multilateral with the participation of all de-jure and de-facto nuclear states.

Forth – future negotiations on tactical nuclear weapons should also focus on conventional warheads and weapons in space.

As for reductions of the non-deployed strategic nuclear weapons (warheads and means of delivery) they will be carried out in a natural way within the framework of implementation of the new START Treaty. Since the number of means of delivery is limited by the Treaty there is no practical sense in storing excessive number of nuclear warheads (militarily – ineffective, financially – too expensive).