

УДК 327  
ББК 66.4

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Russia-U.S. Nuclear Nonproliferation Dialogue: Lessons Learned and Road Ahead / PIR Center. Edited by Vladimir Orlov, Sergey Semenov. Moscow: Izdatelstvo Ves Mir, 2021 — 544 pp.

ISBN 9-785-7777-0866-3 (Ves Mir)

The monograph analyzes the cases of U.S. – Russian cooperation on non-proliferation and arms control matters and draws the relevant lessons for the future. Notwithstanding all their bilateral differences, Moscow and Washington managed to preserve cooperation on these matters in the past. The monograph covers a significant range of U.S. – Russian interaction on nonproliferation matters, from NPT review process matters to arms control and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The book has been prepared in coordination between Russian and American scholars and experts and is a result of a series of Track 2.5 events devoted to restoring nonproliferation cooperation between Russia and the United States.

The book is addressed to diplomats, military specialists, experts, and students in international security and international relations as well as to all those who take interest in nuclear nonproliferation and arms control issues.

Editorial work was completed on June 2, 2021.

Printed in Russia

ISBN 9-785-7777-0866-3 (Ves Mir)

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*In memoriam of Amb. Roland Timerbaev (1927–2019)  
and all Russian and American diplomats,  
who spent their careers to avert the dangers  
of nuclear proliferation and arms race*

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project benefited immensely from events and discussions held in 2016–2021. These meetings would not have been possible without smooth and efficient assistance and support we received from Alexey Borodavkin, Sarah Bidgood, Ekaterina Palazzolo, Andrey Malov, and Tatyana Zhdanova.

The editors appreciated thoughts and ideas provided by Alexey Arbatov, Andrey Baklitskiy, Evgeny Buzhinskiy, Elena Chernenko, Thomas Countryman, Alexander Deyneko, Lewis Dunn, Robert Einhorn, Gleb Efremov, Anita Friedt, Vartan Gregorian, Jenny Gromoll, Sergey Kislyak, Adlan Margoev, Eugene Miasnikov, Patricia Nicholas, William Potter, Brad Roberts, Oleg Rozhkov, Vadim Smirnov, Vladimir Voronkov, Andrew Weber, and Albert Zulkharneev. Our special thanks go to Anatoly Antonov, Andrey Baklitskiy, and Sergey Ryabkov who took the time to review the manuscript and provided valuable feedback. While we benefited enormously from their comments, the responsibility for possible inaccuracies lies solely with the authors and editors.

The editors also express their gratitude to Maria Bondareva, Artem Kvartalnov, Anna Lashina, Maksim Lats, Savva Nikulin, Elena Ziulina, and Alexandra Zubenko for administrative assistance and their contributions.

# PREFACES

*By William Potter, Anatoly Torkunov*

One does not often think of the Cold War as a period of superpower cooperation, but it was, at least in the sphere of nuclear nonproliferation. Regrettably, those habits of cooperation between Moscow and Washington are now a distant memory, and it is proving increasingly difficult today for both countries to recognize any issues in which their interests coincide. Even such fundamental tenets of diplomacy as respect and trust — much less empathy — are noticeable mainly by their absence. It is all the more important, therefore, to understand why ideological and military rivals were able to join forces in the past to negotiate a rules-based regime to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and to cooperate in its implementation.

This volume of original essays goes a long way in illuminating the history of prior nuclear cooperation (and competition) in a number of key issue areas, including regional security, the NPT review process, nuclear sharing, the peaceful use of nuclear energy, nuclear security, and nuclear arms control and disarmament. It is especially valuable in highlighting the role played by both individuals and institutional actors, the importance of personal relationships in the negotiating process, and the multiplicity of fora in which nonproliferation consultations and cooperation transpired.

It also demonstrates the coming of age of 'the next generation of nonproliferation specialists' — a pedagogical mission that has been central to the work of the PIR Center and the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies since the founding of the two institutions over a quarter of a century ago. It was an objective that Ambassador Roland Timerbaev and I embraced even earlier, in the dimming lights of the Soviet Union, when we set out jointly to recruit and nurture a new cadre of nonproliferation experts and rebuild

the institutional memory about nonproliferation cooperation in our respective countries. I know that Roland Mikhailovich would have been very proud of the collection of essays by young Russian scholars and practitioners that the PIR Center has assembled in this volume. They are a testament to the possibilities for cooperative action between the leading nuclear powers when their interests objectively coincide. It is a lesson that contemporary policy makers would be wise to observe.

**William Potter,**

Director, James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies  
Foreign Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences

I had the chance to work in the United States in the 1980s, when I was the first secretary at the USSR Embassy in the United States. It was a difficult period, no less difficult than now: a Soviet missile took down a South Korean airliner, Reagan called us "an evil empire", spy hysteria was gaining momentum. Meeting with me, old acquaintances of mine, scholars, assistants to congressmen used to leave their doors open so that their secretaries could see and hear what we were talking about.

But even at that juncture, as the authors of the monograph show, Moscow and Washington could engage each other substantively and professionally on the issues where our interests were convergent. Our interest to preclude the proliferation of nuclear weapons fully overlapped. Those contacts might have not been conducive to immediate breakthroughs, but they laid the grounds for fragile mutual confidence and respect for each other's professionalism.

Given that, the more discouraging it is to see what is currently happening in Russian-U.S. relations. It is disheartening that instead of discussing the pressing issues of international agenda, we have to spend time on sorting out dirty tricks: denegation of visas, limitation of contacts.

In this context, the more valuable are PIR Center's efforts to reduce the differences, build the bridges — initially, in Track II discussions. In a situation where bilateral contacts are reduced to a minimum, every expert performs an important diplomatic role. As a result, PIR Center's brainchild Track 2.5 dialogues — a format

involving officials, experts, and junior specialists is extremely useful. Scholars look for solutions to bilateral issues, engaging officials into a dialogue — at first, for them to comment on disparate ideas, explain their practicality or the lack thereof. Then, to take note of something interesting, innovative, and develop the idea. This is how comment by comment an understanding of each other's stances emerges, mutual respect is established (or, rather, is restored). And I take particular inspiration in the fact that young specialists — evidently, with no deductions for age — get accustomed to this pattern of conversation.

The monograph *Russia-U.S. Dialogue on Nuclear Proliferation: Lessons Learned and Road Ahead* culminated five years of such dialogue. I find particular pleasure in the fact that among the authors of the book there are not only white-haired experts, but also young specialists, many of whom are alumni of the dual-degree MA program, which is jointly implemented by MGIMO-University, PIR Center, and the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey. That said, the chapters penned by younger authors are far from beginner's level, being deep, thoughtful, professional. And, I dare believe, not burdened with the disappointments of the last decade of Russia-U.S. relations

Not only does the book have all the chances — it should! — become a *livre de poche* for diplomats and military people involved in preparing and making decisions on arms control and nonproliferation. Not only because the authors went through the five-decades-long history of our interaction with the United States, but because the authors distill the lessons to be learned from this history. I share the editors' message that the previous patterns of cooperation were the children of their time and the attempts to mechanically restore them are doomed to failure. But the history of the bilateral dialogue is a manual on applying Russian-U.S. dialogue to solving the most serious nuclear issues. And an understanding the experience of its victories and defeats will help to avoid the same mistakes in the future.

**Anatoly Torkunov,**  
Rector, MGIMO-University  
Academician, Russian Academy of Sciences  
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary

# WHERE THERE'S, A WILL THERE'S A WAY

*Vladimir Orlov*<sup>1</sup>

"I do not think a nuclear catastrophe will happen. The more common this nonsense is, the more secure we are [...] just because the feeling of responsibility will become more common", Joseph Brodsky opined.

Brodsky was a genius poet. But he was no specialist in nuclear weapons. Did not his intuition (his vision of the world was rather pessimistic) let the poet down? Are there grounds for this ray of unexpected optimism?

## 1

As a specialist, I have always wanted to get to the bottom of the issue. And to assess if it is true that nuclear-weapons-states are becoming increasingly responsible. It has also been clear to me that such an assessment would be best done using the example of the relations of two nuclear superpowers – Russia (and its predecessor – the Soviet Union) and the United States of America. My ambition was to study the history of their nuclear dialogue, look into the dichotomy cooperation/rivalry. And draw conclusions for the near future so that the lessons learned be practically useful and applicable.

I made the first attempt to do so twenty years ago. At that juncture, in close cooperation with my senior PIR Center colleague Amb. Roland Timerbaev and a younger colleague of mine Anton Khlopkov, who at that time was only beginning his professional

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Vladimir Orlov, Director of PIR Center and Co-Editor of this monograph, has been directing the project "Russian-American Dialogue on Nuclear Nonproliferation" since 2015. This monograph resulted from this project.

journey, we published a monograph<sup>2</sup> on this issue. It goes without saying that a lot of water has flown under the bridge since then and to a great extent, at the distance of two decades, many problems are seen differently. However, the key finding of that, already time-honored study, I regard as correct, the way I did two decades earlier. **"Russia and the U.S., as major nuclear powers, are doomed to act together in the areas related to nuclear weapons and their proliferation. This dialogue requires a definite agenda. It also requires mutual trust"**<sup>3</sup>.

Six years ago, in May 2015, as an advisor to the Russian delegation at the NPT Review Conference, I witnessed how the lack of mutual trust in Russia-U.S. relations began to corrode their traditionally respectful dialogue on nuclear nonproliferation, running the risk of undermining the dialogue in the areas where the two countries' interests converged or at least did not collide. It did not avoid the attention — with a mix of unease and nuisance — of some of my Russian colleagues, both those wise and seasoned and the ones who were only beginning their professional journeys in international security, strategic stability, and WMD nonproliferation.

Our dismay for the future of the international nuclear nonproliferation regime, which was put under the threat of erosion as a result of the full-fledged blame game between Russia and the United States, led us to brainstorming sessions rooms, where — firstly, in Geneva, and then in New York and Moscow — we sought to find an answer to the question if this mutual interest of Russian and the U.S. in maintaining the resilience of international nuclear nonproliferation regime, in preventing further proliferation of nuclear weapons in the world was a phantom, a myth. To do so, we studied the history of the last five decades.

When we came to a conclusion that it was neither a myth, nor a phantom, we began to explore what points of convergence exhausted themselves, where previously overlapping interests transformed into pressure points and what could be done about this to reduce the tension in the bilateral relations on all the matters dealing with nuclear weapons and their nonproliferation.

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<sup>2</sup> Vladimir Orlov, Roland Timerbaev, and Anton Khlopkov. (2002) Nuclear Nonproliferation in U.S.-Russian Relations: Challenges and Opportunities. Moscow: PIR Center.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. P.5.

At times, such brainstorming sessions were disillusioning and even disappointing because on most occasions we did not seem to see the light at the end of the tunnel. But there were also encouraging findings. Particularly useful, I thought, was the greater participation of younger people. They indeed lacked the experience, which they made for by diving into numerous sources (including those that were becoming publicly available in the course of our project). At the same time, they were not blinkered. For most of them, even the collapse of the Soviet Union was something that had happened before they were born. In this project, the voice of a new generation of nonproliferation specialists was a matter of principal importance for me.

## 2

What are those encouraging findings? Below I cite some of them, which I am ready to endorse. In the final sections of each chapter, as well as in the monograph Conclusion, you will find a lot more such findings, there is a whole palette of those — as well as of policy recommendations regarding the road ahead. This broad palette reflects the broad circle of our monograph's authors: overall twenty authors and contributors took part in its writing and preparation for publishing.

With all the increasing importance of the P5 dialogue and process, I believe that **our two nations, Russia and the United States, still keep special responsibility for the smooth running of the NPT review cycles** and for a successful X NPT review conference which has been postponed because of the coronavirus pandemic and, as we currently anticipate<sup>4</sup>, should take place in January-February 2022.

In 2015, it was because of the United States (as well as their allies UK and Canada) that the conference failed and the final document was not adopted. However, the problem was deeper than disagreements over the Middle East. The problem was that the United States, between 2014 Prepcom and later on at the plenary of the 2015 Rev-Con in New York, had introduced issues that had nothing to do with the nuclear nonproliferation agenda and with the NPT per se. With that, they had indicated that they preferred the blame game. Well, Russia had to respond.

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<sup>4</sup> Editorial work on this preface was completed in June 2021.

*Blame game* at the NPT review process is a waste of time. I suggest that **both nations re-establish the tradition of cooperative game, and put the blame game aside.** Tradition of *cooperative game* between the two nuclear superpowers had been established, on the then Soviet side, by Andrey Gromyko who had insisted that, despite all contradictions we had – we always had! – with the United States, despite all the heavy baggage of disagreements, despite *Vietnams* or *Afghanistans*, nuclear weapons and prevention of their proliferation in the world was so vital for Soviet national security – as well as for global security – that this issue should be treated as a separate basket free from the strains which could affect other baskets. Americans normally accepted such separation.

Not that it was always easy, particularly during the darkest days of the Cold War. But, mostly, it worked. As a result, we now have a very short list of nations outside of the NPT and with nuclear weapons: Israel, India, Pakistan, and DPRK<sup>5</sup>. With the bilateral blame game, such a list could have been much longer. And it would not have been good news for Russia's own security, needless to say for the global security.

The recipes for re-establishing of a *cooperative game* are not brand new. We should take those ones from the past which did not contain poison and which produced fruit.

We should **resume and re-build bilateral Russian-American holistic dialogue on the three pillars of the NPT.** First of all, we should restore our collaborative work on preventing horizontal proliferation in the world. In my view as a nongovernmental expert, it should be in the interest of the Russian Federation to keep nonproliferation as the top priority in the international security agenda.

Secondly, both our nations should do together our own homework on Article VI of the NPT. We should continue our work on further bilateral strategic arms control, making it non-stop and irreversible. We should not find excuses not to do this homework, we should not blame Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) as it is already *fait accompli*. Instead, more effort should have been invested into the implementation of the NPT by all state parties, both nuclear and non-nuclear. Having said that, I believe that while Russia and the United States feel free to criticize TPNW as much as they like (and there are so many reasons to criticize), they should not forget

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<sup>5</sup> DPRK's status within the NPT remain unclear.



to do their homework on arms control and nuclear disarmament. **The extension of the New START in 2021 has become a signal to the NPT state parties that Russia and the United States are back to dialogue and are back to their homework, taking it seriously.** They will no further entertain the whole NPT community with endless *rights of reply* destructing from real business.

Thirdly, **Russia and the United States should rebuild the spirit and the practical work on bilateral cooperation on peaceful uses of nuclear energy.** Legal framework for such cooperation has been built. We should also promote international cooperation in peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including our full support to the IAEA, but without politicizing the work of the Agency, including the issue of safeguards. It would open a Pandora box.

When I look at the options for Russian nonproliferation policy, I always think of that very sensitive moment in 2014 – early 2015 (but particularly in 2014) when negotiations on Iran were going on, with the United States, UK, France, Germany at the table, among others - and Russia at the same table. And, in a parallel universe, the Americans, the Brits, – they all were imposing sanctions on Russia, because of restored Russian sovereignty over Crimea. U.S. warships entered the Black Sea... tensions raised as well as risks of accidental military conflict. But was it a parallel universe, really? Or was it the same universe? Was it right, for Russia, to continue sitting at the same table with those who were introducing sanctions against her?

I think it was. What was born from those negotiations we know as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on Iran (JCPOA). JCPOA was a good concept, which, when signed, turned into an important document. It is not Russia's fault that the Americans withdrew. It has been a lot of effort on the Russian side to contribute to JCPOA, and, later on, to keep it alive. One could even say: Russia did more than it should have done... But it has been in Russia's national interests.

**Iran should remain the top priority** in the Russian-American nonproliferation dialogue. It is the highest potential threat proliferation-wise. And the biggest potential opportunity for both Russia and the U.S., and for all the P5, in case diplomacy prevails over pressures and politics.

If, or when, the United States is fully back to the JCPOA Russia should be supportive and should contribute to full, transparent, and sustainable implementation of the JCPOA by all parties, including

Iran. Russia is well-positioned to do so. Russia maintains its vibrant dialogue with all key stakeholders in the region.

It would be useful if, at some point, we extend this dialogue with the United States on a broader *comparing of nonproliferation notes when it comes to potential nuclear proliferation risks throughout the globe*, from the Middle East to East Asia, with the emphasis on potential new state proliferators as well as on non-state actors.

We have a history of such dialogue, including in the 1970s and 1980s. Not always it led to proliferation prevention. For example, Pakistan was a mutual failure. But there were success stories, including our dialogue on the Republic of South Africa<sup>6</sup>. We should not ignore the fact that jointly Russia and the United States can do *a lot* to stop others from going nuclear. But for that, we need at least two things. **We need to maintain a frank dialogue immune from stormy weather in our bilateral relations. And we need to lead by example.**

### 3

When this volume has already been signed to print, in June 2021, welcome news came from Geneva. In what some analysts and the media called "a historic summit", two Presidents, Joseph Biden and Vladimir Putin, made an important Joint Statement:

*"... 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."*<sup>7</sup>

No, it is not a new *détente*, it rather creates the environment for such long-awaited *détente*. It is telling that in search of stamina

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<sup>6</sup> Sarah Bidgood (2016) The 1977 South Africa nuclear crisis, Adelphi Series, 56:464 – 465, 55 – 78, DOI: 10.1080/19445571.2016.1494248

<sup>7</sup> U.S. – Russia Presidential Joint Statement on Strategic Stability. Kremlin. June 16, 2021, available at <http://en.kremlin.ru/supplement/5658/print> (last accessed July 1, 2021)

for moving forward, both leaders looked backward and drew from Reagan-Gorbachev statement on the inadmissibility of a nuclear war. One year ago, I remember, when raising this issue with the senior officials of the U.S. Department of State, I heard back that such affirmation – and reaffirmation – was unacceptable for them.

The progress is evident. But so far it is more verbal than practical. It is too fragile and may turn out to be easily reversible. What vaccine should one get to receive immunity from unnoticed slide to the abyss? The answer may be found in the same Geneva Joint Statement: it is necessary to launch a bilateral dialogue, which would be simultaneously «deliberate and robust»<sup>8</sup>. The two countries' leaders allocated six months of time for launching such a dialogue.

The readers, which would read this book of ours some time away from the Geneva summit, six months after, will have a formidable opportunity, which I lack, to observe and compare if the reality was up to the expectations. If the Geneva spirit, which was of inspiration for us, when we were publishing the book in Summer 2021, faded away? Finally, may the readers decide if Joseph Brodsky was a good prophet. And whether the feeling of responsibility, which he discussed, prevails over geopolitical egocentricity in nuclear matters.

And I, myself being under the fresh effect of the Geneva spirit, would invite you to the journey over this monograph's pages, where the lessons learned from history transcend into forecast-like recommendations on what this road to be traveled should look like.

You may encounter direction signs, which could lead to different directions, yet, this is a collective study, which *a priori* allows for options and crossroads. The calculation of a mutually acceptable security equation is a theorem rather than an axiom. But the complexity of the tasks we face should not justify beating around the bush. The road will be mastered by the walking. In my view, this *is* the axiom.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

# INTRODUCTION

*Vladimir Orlov, Sergey Semenov*

Russia-U.S. relations are at their lowest point since the end of the Cold War. Since 2014 such statements have been made every year with less and less optimism. The fabric of the bilateral dialogue has unraveled: currently, the official dialogue leaves much to be desired. Pessimism has permeated any discussion of the future of bilateral relations: most of the time it is hard to expect that the two countries will stabilize their tensions, let alone cooperate.

Yet, there is an acute need for such cooperation – especially on nuclear issues, where Moscow and Washington are by virtue of being two biggest nuclear powers have a special role and special responsibility. The New START extension is an example of such cooperation. In the past, there has been plenty of cooperation-game cases, the most spectacular one being the negotiating the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). This landmark international agreement has crucial importance in averting the dangers of further encroachment of nuclear weapons.

Now that the NPT is being eroded, great power cooperation is desperately needed. Regrettably, in the recent years, the NPT diplomacy has been moving away from this concept. The 2018 and 2019 PrepComs, in particular, resembled the good old days of the Cold War in terms of the rhetoric used but not in terms of mutual respect the two superpowers had for each other at that time.

The purpose of this book is to remind of the cases where savvy diplomacy managed to reconcile the stances of Russia (the Soviet Union) and the United States on the crucial issues of nuclear nonproliferation. Constructive, mutually respectful interaction between the two countries has never been easy to achieve and sustain. Yet, doing so has neither been impossible, to which the monograph is a testament.

The monograph crowns a five-years-long dialogue effort by PIR Center and James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies (CNS), which was launched in the wake of the failed 2015 NPT Review Conference. The objective of this Track 2.5 dialogue involving government officials, expert community, and the next generation of nuclear policy professionals was two-fold. On the one hand, our ambition was to look backward and try to distill the lessons learned from the fifty years of nonproliferation-related exchanges between Moscow and Washington. On the other, the two think tanks aspired to look forward and provide recommendations that would be useful to restart the bilateral dialogue – at least on the matters of mutual concern and interest. NPT is certainly one of such areas.

The monograph the esteemed readers have in their hands was designed to cover both parts of this equation. By analyzing a variety of cases of bilateral interaction ranging from arms control to peaceful uses of nuclear energy on nuclear security, the authors try to distill the lessons learned from those experiences. That does not mean that those lessons should be treated as an absolute truth with the past cooperation being romanticized as some Golden Age. The cases discussed in this book are the children of their epoch and were conditioned by concrete historical realities. All of the exchanges discussed in this monograph were not exempt from errors, and it is the hope of the editors that learning on those errors will be helpful for the future generations of U.S. and Russian diplomats working in the nuclear field.

The experience of such dialogue between Russian and American experts shows that U.S.-Russian dialogue is not dead as many are tempted to believe. The bilateral relationship still has some promise, which, of course, is not unlimited and which deserves to be explored.

As the objective both PIR Center and CNS had in mind was to ensure a future for the bilateral dialogue, it was a natural choice to fuse the expertise of long-time nuclear nonproliferation professionals and the zeal of those who are only making first steps in their respective careers. The unique dual-degree MA program in WMD nonproliferation and nuclear policy jointly organized by MGIMO-University, Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, and PIR Center has been an incredible source of talents to this end.

The monograph consists of five parts and fifteen chapters dedicated to a certain issue in the Soviet/Russia-U.S. dialogue on nuclear nonproliferation. **Part I** focuses on Soviet/Russia-U.S. dialogue on

NPT negotiations and extension. This part of the monograph is inaugurated by three chapters on how the Soviet Union (Russia) and the United States negotiated Articles I, II, and X of the NPT and prepared for and participated in the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference.

**Chapter 1 by Daria Selezneva** explores the history of bilateral negotiations on the core articles of NPT – Articles I, II as well as on discussions pertaining to the concept of NATO MLF as the main obstacle for the conclusion of the Treaty. Although the NPT was struck in 1968, the discussion of those negotiations has not lost policy relevance since the debate on whether NATO nuclear sharing arrangements are in line with NPT obligations is ongoing between Russia and the United States.

**Chapter 2 by Daria Selezneva** continues the analysis of the NPT negotiations, focusing on the “technical” article of the Treaty – Article X – governing the procedures on withdrawal from the Treaty. The North Korean withdrawal from NPT in 2003 incentivized the debates on whether the Article should be reinforced by additional provisions, with the relevant policy discussion being reflected in the Chapter.

The experience of the 1995 NPTREC, described in **Chapter 3 by Daria Selezneva**, is particularly illustrative of the U.S.-Russian cooperation potential. The author posits that the concerted approach of the United States and Russia was instrumental in reaching the indefinite extension of the NPT. Together with other P5 nations, Moscow and Washington managed to bring as many NNWS as possible to their side through persuasion, pressure, and, at times, even blackmail.

Part I is concluded with **Chapter 4 by Aleksandr Kolbin** taking a deep dive into the dynamics of Soviet/Russian leadership to the cooperation with the United States on nuclear nonproliferation. Relying upon the available archival documents and literature, Aleksandr Kolbin examines three layers of Soviet/Russian motivation to cooperate with the United States on the issues of nuclear nonproliferation. According to the author, interaction on equal footing, where each party has an important contribution to make, is the essential component of successful engagement between Moscow and Washington.

The bilateral exchanges on the regional challenges to the nuclear nonproliferation regime are discussed in **Part II**. The chapters

by Adlan Margoev, Petr Topychkanov, and Natalia Artemenkova provide case studies of the Iranian nuclear program, WMDFZ in the Middle East, and nuclear proliferation in South Asia. Evidently, the list of regional cases is longer, and the history of bilateral interaction on the prospects for nuclear proliferation in Latin America in 1970–1980s, Iraq, DPRK are still waiting for their researchers.

In **Chapter 5 Petr Topychkanov** considers the Soviet/Russia-U.S. dialogue on nuclear development in South Asia up until the nuclear tests that India and Pakistan conducted in 1998. The author argues that despite some differences in strategic positions and a crisis in bilateral relations, Moscow and Washington managed to establish a permanent channel for exchanging views on the nuclear programs of India and Pakistan. The chapter examines the approaches of the American and Soviet leadership towards the creation of a nuclear-free zone in Asia, as well as the constant mutual monitoring of the nuclear potential in the region, the American and Soviet-Russian voting protocols at the UN, which emphasize the strategic interests of both players in the region.

**Chapter 6 by Adlan Margoev** discusses the phases of the Russia-U.S. dialogue on the Iranian nuclear program. The author traces the roots of Russian-American disagreements and identifies four stages of bilateral cooperation between Moscow and Washington on the issue ranging from the U.S. attempts to adjust the Russian policy vis-à-vis Iran to Russia's role in facilitating the dialogue on the Iranian nuclear program. He concludes that Russia would be an essential player in facilitating Washington's diplomatic engagement with Tehran in the future.

**Chapter 7 by Natalia Artemenkova** analyzes Russia-U.S. dialogue on the potential establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction (WMDFZ) in the Middle East. The chapter provides comprehensive coverage of Russia-U.S. engagement from the moment of the Soviet initiative to create a WMDFZ in the Middle East in 1958 until 2020 and analyzes key factors driving Moscow's and Washington's stances on the issue.

**Part III** focuses on the disarmament pillar of bilateral cooperation within the NPT. The part is inaugurated by **Chapter 8 written by Amb. Yuri Nazarkin**, the head of the Soviet delegation at START I negotiations. Amb. Nazarkin discusses such challenges to the negotiation process as the USSR's insistence on linking offensive and defensive weapons, the desire of both parties to use differences

in strategic forces to their advantage, and domestic opposition to negotiations. Based on his first-hand experience, he describes the negotiations of various provisions of the Treaty and the military logic underlying their inclusion into the text.

**In Chapter 9 Vladislav Chernavskikh** examines Soviet and American official approaches to nuclear disarmament and the idea of global zero. The author identifies the most fruitful periods of bilateral cooperation on the issue, including the campaign for international control over nuclear weapons in the late 1940s, the disarmament discourse of the 1960s leading to the inclusion of Article VI in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Gorbachev period marked by abolitionist beliefs.

**Chapter 10 by Vladislav Chernavskikh** continues the discussion of Russian and American approaches to global zero. The author explores the evolution of nuclear disarmament discourse within the NPT Review Process and discusses arms control negotiations throughout the post-Soviet era.

**Chapter 11 by Collin McDowell** analyzes the factors that impact the interpretation of strategic stability by the Russian Federation and the United States of America and how these factors have evolved over the time period of 2010–2020. This chapter achieves this through the analysis of certain doctrinal documents, including various iterations of the Russian Military Doctrine and the 2020 Basic Principles of State Policy of the Russian Federation on Nuclear Deterrence, as well as the American Nuclear Posture Reviews of 2010 and 2018. The aim of this chapter is to delineate areas of difference and commonality between the two countries' interpretations of strategic stability in the hopes that areas of common understanding can be found.

**Chapter 12 by Nikita Degtyarev and Sergey Semenov**, continues the discussion of NATO nuclear sharing arrangements from a different angle. While conventionally these arrangements are described as an abridged version of the MLF concept, available archival documents suggest that nuclear sharing in its current form was forming in parallel with the discussion of the MLF concept. The authors compare the U.S. and Soviet approaches to the deployment of nuclear weapons outside of national territories to see if the Soviet Union indeed adopted the same interpretation of Articles I, II as the United States as well as analyze the reasons that prompted Russia to raise the issue publicly in 2014.



**Part IV** focuses on the issue of peaceful uses of nuclear energy and nuclear security. This area gained prominence in bilateral relations only in the 1990s, when the concerns about the security of the former Soviet nuclear arsenal prompted the United States to provide assistance to Russia.

**In Chapter 13 Alexey Polyakov** examines the experience of bilateral cooperation to secure the Russian nuclear arsenal within the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program (also known as Nunn-Lugar program), G8 Global Partnership, and the Global Initiative to Combat Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT). The author provides a detailed overview of each of these programs and distills the lessons to be learned from cooperation in this area.

The end of the Cold War also made possible commercial nuclear projects between the two former foes. Based on the documents from the Clinton archive as well as interviews with former decision-makers in the nuclear field, **Veronika Bedenko in Chapter 14** analyzes the patterns of cooperation within the HEU-LEU agreement and the Plutonium Managements and Disposition Agreement (PMDA). The author posits that the two projects literally allowed to turn the megatons of former weapons stockpiles into megawatts and that the potential of bilateral engagement in the area of peaceful uses is not exhausted.

Finally, **Part V** focuses on the overview of the patterns of the Russia-U.S. nonproliferation and arms control dialogue under various U.S. administrations, from Clinton to Trump.

**Chapter 15 by Evgenii Kholodnov** is aimed to study the Russia-U.S. dialogue on arms control under Presidents Yeltsin and Clinton by analyzing declassified transcripts of phone calls and personal meetings between Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin. This chapter presents Russian-American cooperation on the nuclear weapons removal from the territory of Ukraine, Iran nuclear and missile programs, the HEU-LEU agreement, and the Nunn-Lugar program. The author provides key insights into the Clinton archives in order to determine whether the Yeltsin-Clinton dialogue on strategic stability is a benchmark for future Russia-U.S. cooperation.

**Chapter 16 by Anastasia Ponamareva and Sergey Ponamarev** explores the patterns in the U.S. policy under George Bush Jr. and Barack Obama. The authors argue that there is more continuity than change in the U.S. policy vis-à-vis nuclear issues. According to them, the so-called "operational code" in the Russia-U.S. coopera-

tion between the military and political establishment in the nuclear sphere.

**Chapter 17 by Sergey Semenov** deals with the bilateral exchanges on nuclear nonproliferation (or, rather, the lack thereof) under the Trump administration. By analyzing the two countries' stances in the 2017–2021 NPT Review Cycle, the author tries to discern the reasons for the increasing bilateral confrontation on nuclear nonproliferation, especially given that on several occasions have underpinned that this area is of shared interest for both Moscow and Washington. This author seeks to determine whether the current lack of Russia-U.S. cooperation is an aberration or the new normal.

**The Conclusions** attempt at bringing the multifaceted chapters of the book to a common denominator. Based on the previous chapter, **Vladimir Orlov and Sergey Semenov** discuss the periodization of the bilateral dialogue on nuclear nonproliferation and the traits of the dialogue Moscow and Washington see as desirable in the future interaction. While the previous patterns of cooperation were the children of their time and cannot be replicated in their original form, the editors posit that learning the previous lessons is essential to define the future role of bilateral engagement in solidifying the nuclear nonproliferation regime.

Finally, the **Reflections** provide initial reactions to this volume or to the major issues raised in this monograph by top Russian practitioners dealing with nuclear nonproliferation and arms control whom the editors briefed on this project and with whom shared the manuscript. The section includes pieces authored by Gen. Evgeny Maslin, former head of the 12<sup>th</sup> Main Directorate of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, Hon. Sergey Ryabkov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, and Amb. Anatoly Antonov, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the United States.



PART I

**SOVIET/RUSSIAN – AMERICAN  
COOPERATION ON NPT  
NEGOTIATIONS AND EXTENSION**

# CHAPTER 1

## **NEGOTIATIONS ON ARTICLES I & II OF NPT: HISTORY & LESSONS LEARNED**

*Daria Selezneva*

Articles I and II of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) represent the core of the parties' commitments as they prohibit the transfer and the receipt of nuclear weapons. Cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union with regard to these articles was based on the policies, which had been adopted by them unilaterally since the dawn of the nuclear era: refrain from transferring nuclear weapons into possession of states that did not have them.

Yet, by the end of the 1950s – early 1960s, the original policy started to shatter. The Soviet Union promised China assistance in the acquisition of nuclear weapons while the United States considered sharing nuclear weapons with its allies. The Soviet-Chinese cooperation was terminated due to the fallout between the two countries before tangible transfers were made, but U.S. plans for NATO nuclear forces continued to be discussed. This was the situation by the time negotiations on the NPT began in Geneva.

The project for the multilateral force as well as the transfer of nuclear weapons became a serious stumbling block during the NPT negotiations: the Soviet Union insisted that non-nuclear-weapon states (NNWSs) were not given access to nuclear weapons in any form or degree. In the end, however, the parties were able to reach a compromise – the United States modified its original plan while the Soviet Union allegedly agreed to accept the more limited 'nuclear sharing' arrangements within NATO as not violating Articles I and II<sup>1</sup>. This compromise was essential for the successful conclusion of the NPT.

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<sup>1</sup> Since 2014 Russia has claimed that NATO nuclear sharing arrangements are in violation of Articles I, II. For more details regarding the dispute see Chapter 12.

The United States and the Soviet Union played a key role in forging the compromise on Articles I and II. Not only were they the leading nuclear-weapon states (NWSs), but they were also a potential source of transfer of nuclear weapons to their allies. Without exaggeration, the fate of the two key articles of the NPT was determined by the two of them. As it happened with some other articles of the NPT, the positions of the United States and the Soviet Union were asymmetric. U.S position was strongly influenced by its allies; in effect, Washington had to engage in two interrelated negotiating tracks: with Moscow and with its allies. Consequently, its position always represented a compromise between these two and, in a way, in its dealings with Moscow, Washington had to implicitly represent its allies. The Soviet Union, in contrast, could enjoy much greater (although not absolute) freedom to determine its position, was primarily engaged in strictly bilateral talks with Washington, and, overall, its position had the liberty to be more consistent with strict non-proliferation norms than that of the United States. Same as in other cases, the end result of U.S.-Soviet interaction on Articles I and II represented a 'double compromise' between the original Soviet position and the U.S. position, which in turn was a compromise between the United States and its allies.

The issue of nuclear sharing, however, did not die away. Following the entry into force of the NPT, the Soviet Union continued to adhere to the view that it violated at least the spirit of the treaty, but that criticism was muted: after all, although Moscow had never allowed any access to nuclear weapons to its allies or their participation in nuclear planning, it retained a sizeable nuclear force deployed in their territories. The situation changed dramatically after the end of the Cold War.<sup>2</sup>

The gap between Russian and U.S. approaches, which was characteristic of the period of NPT negotiations, widened even further. Soviet nuclear weapons were withdrawn from former Warsaw Pact countries and subsequently from the former Soviet republics. As a result, one feature, which the two countries shared during the Cold War — the presence of nuclear weapons in territories of third countries — disappeared.

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<sup>2</sup> Bandy, Alex (1991) 'Premier: Soviets Stored Nuclear Weapons in Hungary,' Associated Press, April 22, available at: <https://apnews.com/article/4a3565b4d8c3e7204444d5e074bb96de> (29 July, 2021).

As a result, Russia radically bolstered its criticism of the U.S. and NATO policy demanding that all nuclear weapons be withdrawn to national territories and also significantly enhancing the criticism of nuclear sharing arrangements in NATO. The two lines of criticism went hand in hand. This theme became a permanent element of the Russian position on European security and nuclear arms control complicating the U.S.-Russian interaction with regard to the NPT. It can be said that the post-Cold War asymmetry in nuclear postures has been hampering greater cooperation between the two states on nuclear-related issues.

A long road was travelled from the adoption of the U.S. Atomic Energy Act prohibiting the transfer of nuclear weapons 'to another country'<sup>3</sup> to the conclusion of the NPT which prohibited the transfer of nuclear weapons 'to any recipient whatsoever'<sup>4</sup> including military alliances and groups of countries. During the NPT negotiations, the United States and the Soviet Union came down differently on the issue of the prohibition on the transit of nuclear weapons and control over them, which caused negotiations to stall for almost three years. Eventually, the parties were able to set aside disagreements in order to conclude the treaty. For decades the issue of nuclear sharing was not thrust into the limelight until after the collapse of the bipolar system when the global balance of power underwent significant changes. Today the issue of nuclear sharing is increasingly discussed in the NPT review process.<sup>5</sup>

## Origins of the Multilateral Nuclear Force Proposal

NATO was created as a 'nuclear alliance' in the sense that the United States (later also the United Kingdom and, to a limited extent, France) assigned its nuclear weapons to the defense of NATO. Nuclear forces historically had a high profile in common NATO defense posture as a result of Soviet superiority in conventional forces, which the United

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<sup>3</sup> Atomic Energy Act (1946) Public Law 79-585. U.S. Government Publishing Office, p. 760.

<sup>4</sup> Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (1968) United Nations, Office for Disarmament Affairs, available at <https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/nuclear/npt/text> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>5</sup> Bunn, George and John B. Rhinelanders (2008) 'Looking Back: The Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty Then and Now,' Arms Control Association, 3 September, available at [https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2008\\_07-08/lookingback](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2008_07-08/lookingback) (17 May, 2021).

States sought to balance through reliance on nuclear weapons. The United States was expected 'to carry out strategic bombing promptly, by all means, possible with all types of weapons, without exception'<sup>6</sup> in response to an anticipated Soviet attack on NATO. In 1954, Washington began to forward deploy nuclear gravity bombs on the territory of European countries, including Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and West Germany – at that time, short- and intermediate-range weapons constituted the bulk of both countries' nuclear arsenals.<sup>7</sup>

As the Cold War and the attendant military confrontation continued to intensify and especially after the successful launch of the unmanned satellite Sputnik I by the Soviet Union in 1957, the reliability of U.S.-security assurances was called into question. Many in Europe began to doubt that the United States would act in defense of Europe if its own territory were vulnerable to a Soviet strike. This prompted a number of European countries to consider their own military nuclear programs; the most visible and potentially risky among them was the possibility that West Germany might become a NWS. It was at that time that nuclear proliferation became a serious concern for the United States. 'The acquisition of nuclear weapons by smaller countries would increase the likelihood of the great powers becoming involved in what otherwise might remain local conflicts',<sup>8</sup> noted William Foster, Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Collins, Brian (2011) *NATO: A Guide to the Issues*, Greenwood: ABC-CLIO: 46.

<sup>7</sup> Khalosha, Boris (1975) *NATO and Atom (Nuclear Policy of the North Atlantic Treaty)*. Moscow: Znaniye, p. 11; 'Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State' (1954) *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952–1954*, *Western European Security* 5 (2), available at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v05p2/d138> (17 May, 2021); Rozhanovskaya, Nina. (2010) 'Cooperation Between the United States and the Soviet Union on Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament' *Nuclear Nonproliferation*, Tomsk: Ivan Fedorov, p. 257; 'Note by the Secretary to the North Atlantic Defense Committee on the Strategic Concept for the Defense of the North Atlantic Area' (1949) *NATO Strategic Documents 1949-1969*, available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/stratdoc/eng/a491201a.pdf> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>8</sup> 'Statement by AGDA Director Foster to the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee: Nondissemination of Nuclear Weapons' (1964) *Documents on Disarmament*, p. 33.

<sup>9</sup> Pifer, Steven and Richard Bush, Felbab-Brown Vanda, O'Hanlon Michael, Pollack Kenneth. *U.S. Nuclear and Extended Deterrence. Considerations and Challenges* (2010) *Brookings Institution, Arms Control Series Paper 3* (May), available at [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/06\\_nuclear\\_deterrence.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/06_nuclear_deterrence.pdf) (17 May, 2021).



To reassure its allies and reduce their propensity to seek nuclear weapons, the United States sought to strengthen the nuclear deterrence posture in Europe. This resulted in proposals to create a common nuclear force under NATO's aegis put forth by Robert Bowie, former Director of Policy. According to Special Advisor to the Secretary of State Gerard Smith, the goal was to contribute to European integration and to avert nuclear proliferation in Europe by addressing the motives for nuclearization and strengthening deterrence of the Soviet Union.<sup>10</sup>

The proposal to create a multilateral nuclear force (MLF) was officially introduced in December 1960 at a ministerial meeting in Paris by U.S. Secretary of State Christian Herter. The proposal envisaged the transfer of five U.S. submarines carrying 'Polaris' submarine-launched ballistic missiles to the alliance. The project provided for the U.S. President's sole control over these missiles through Permissive Action Links, a system of coded switches preventing any unauthorized use of nuclear weapons.<sup>11</sup>

The proposal was not well received by the international community as a whole and caused division among NATO members. Some NATO countries were skeptical about a sea-based nuclear force, insisting on the deployment of land-based intermediate-range missiles under a 'dual-key' arrangement, as was negotiated with the United Kingdom. The 'dual-key' system was giving 'the Royal Air Force the ability to turn on the missile and the U.S. Air Force the power to arm the warhead'.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> North Atlantic Council 'Final Communiqué' (1957) NATO, Ministerial Communiqués, available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c571219a.htm> (17 May, 2021); Wheeler, Michael (2006) 'International Security Negotiations: Lessons Learned from Negotiating with the Russians on Nuclear Arms,' INSS Occasional Paper 62, p. 39; Alberque, William (2017) *The NPT and the Origins of NATO's Nuclear Sharing Arrangements*. The Institut français des relations internationales, available at [https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/alberque\\_npt\\_origins\\_nato\\_nuclear\\_2017.pdf](https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/alberque_npt_origins_nato_nuclear_2017.pdf) (17 May, 2021); 'Address by the Special Advisor to the Secretary of State (Smith) at the Naval Academy Foreign Affairs Conference: Proposed Multilateral Force' (1964) Documents on Disarmament, p. 173; Nazarkin, Yuri (2017) Personal Interview, 9 August.

<sup>11</sup> Nazarkin, Yuri (2017) Personal Interview, 9 August; Connolly, Erin (2016) 'U.S. Nuclear Weapons in Europe,' The Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, 10 August, available at <https://armscontrolcenter.org/u-s-nuclear-weapons-in-europe/> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>12</sup> 'U.K. Briefly Had Ability to Fire U.S. Nuclear Missiles During Cold War' (2013) NTI, available at <https://www.nti.org/gsn/article/uk-briefly-had-ability->

The only strong proponent of MLF was West Germany. Its economic power was growing rapidly and its military forces were categorized as the second largest in NATO. The German armed forces at the time sought to increase the political influence of the country to the level of its economic and military might. One of the ways to accomplish this was through the procurement of nuclear weapons. The Minister of Defense of the Federal Republic of Germany, Franz Strauss, deemed the possession of nuclear weapons to be 'the symbol, the characteristic feature and decisive criterion of sovereignty'.<sup>13</sup> While West Germany anticipated strong resistance to the prospect of acquisition of nuclear weapons, a multilateral nuclear force appeared to pave the way toward the eventual emergence of an independent German deterrent. West Germany's ambitions were further strengthened by its special place in NATO, which made the United States particularly sensitive to that country's interests. For the U.S., West Germany was the 'last hold in Europe, with Britain weak and France defiant'.<sup>14</sup> Given that other countries were hesitant to join the force, it was easy for West Germany to press for concessions. As such, West Germany was close to taking a leading role in the implementation of the MLF.<sup>15</sup>

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launch-us-nuclear-missiles-during-cold-war-documents-show/ (17 May, 2021); Kohl, Wilfried (1965) 'Nuclear Sharing in NATO and the Multilateral Force,' *Political Science Quarterly* 80 (1): 90-91; 'NATO Ministerial Communiqué: Final Communiqué' (1960) NATO, available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c601216a.htm> (17 May, 2021); 'Address by the Special Adviser to the Secretary of State (Smith) at the Naval Academy Foreign Affairs Conference: Proposed Multilateral Force' (1964) *Documents on Disarmament*, p. 181; UK Parliament (2006) 'The UK Strategic Nuclear Deterrent', available at <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmselect/cmdfence/986/98605.htm#note25> (17 May, 2021); Khalosha, Boris (1975) *NATO and Atom (Nuclear Policy of the North Atlantic Treaty)*. Moscow: Znaniye, p. 5; 'Memorandum of Conversation' (1963) *Foreign Relations of the United States 1961 – 1963, Volume XIII, Western Europe and Canada*, available at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v13/d318> (17 May, 2021); Quinlan, Michael (2009) *Thinking About Nuclear Weapons: Principles, Problems, Prospects*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 118.

<sup>13</sup> 'Tass Statement on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons' (1964), *Documents on Disarmament*, pp. 297.

<sup>14</sup> Baldwin, Hanson (2013) *Multilateral Force or Farce?* The New York Times, 13 December, available at [http://www.nytimes.com/1964/12/13/multilateral-force-or-farce.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/1964/12/13/multilateral-force-or-farce.html?_r=0) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>15</sup> Baldwin, Hanson (2013) *Multilateral Force or Farce?* The New York Times, 13 December, available at [http://www.nytimes.com/1964/12/13/multilateral-force-or-farce.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/1964/12/13/multilateral-force-or-farce.html?_r=0) (17 May, 2021).

The Soviet Union vehemently objected to the establishment of NATO's nuclear force. The leading concern voiced by Moscow referred to the prospect of what it deemed German revanchists getting access to nuclear weapons through the MLF. An article published in *Soviet State and Law* in 1965 went as far as to compare the establishment of the MLF to the policy of appeasement of resurgent German militarism in the late 1930s. Soviet concerns further intensified in 1964 when the United States revealed the details of a project for the transfer of missile-bearing submarines with mixed crews of 49 servicemen to NATO. Their rationale was that the manning of the MLF fleet would grant West German servicemen access to the engines and missiles, which could be qualified as access to nuclear weapons.<sup>16</sup>

Even inside the United States the support for the MLF was not universal. The strongest supporters of that initiative were in the State Department. After U.S. Secretary of State Cristian Herter left his post, his successor Dean Rusk and Under-Secretary of State George Ball continued to promote the project. The 'MLF coalition'<sup>17</sup> also included Henry Owen of the U.S. State Department's Policy Planning Staff, Assistant Secretary of State for Policy Planning and Special Consultant to the Department of State Gerard Smith, and Rear Admiral of the United States Navy Admiral John Lee.<sup>18</sup>

The Department of Defense, in contrast, was quite skeptical about the proposal; it considered additional deterrence forces to be redundant. Instead, U.S. military officials suggested creating a consultation mechanism that would engage European allies in NATO nuclear planning.<sup>19</sup>

In May 1961 President John F. Kennedy, in an address to the Canadian Parliament in Ottawa committed himself to the MLF project. However, according to multiple accounts, Kennedy had, in

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<sup>16</sup> 'Statement by the Soviet Representative (Zorin) to the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee: Nondissemination of Nuclear Weapons' (1964) Documents on Disarmament, p. 247.

<sup>17</sup> Brinkley, Douglas and Griffiths Richard (1999) John F. Kennedy and Europe, LSU Press, p. 53.

<sup>18</sup> Steinbruner, John (2002) *The Cybernetic Theory of Decision: New Dimensions of Political Analysis*, Princeton University Press, p. 250.

<sup>19</sup> Kuznetsov, Evgeny (2004) 'The Multilateral Force Debates,' *The Centre Virtuel de la Connaissance sur l'Europe*, available at [http://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/1999/1/1/937a5818-7fea-47da-944e-11114da4e0a3/publishable\\_.pdf](http://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/1999/1/1/937a5818-7fea-47da-944e-11114da4e0a3/publishable_.pdf) (17 May, 2021).

fact, second thoughts about it. George Anderson Jr., Chief of Naval Operations and member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who supported the MLF, recalled how 'President [Kennedy] finally embraced this project, but only as an idea, only as an idea to propose to our allies if they, themselves, wanted it, it was something we could offer them'.<sup>20</sup>

After the missile crisis erupted in Cuba, pushing the world closer to the brink of nuclear war, President Kennedy proposed negotiations on a nonproliferation agreement. General Secretary Khrushchev immediately endorsed this initiative.<sup>21</sup>

The conclusion of the NPT was crucial for both the United States and the Soviet Union as they both sought to prevent the expansion of the nuclear club. Moscow and Washington were coming to the negotiating table with very similar agendas and, it appears, the United States was prepared to put the MLF on the table if necessary to reach an agreement. Similarly, the Soviet Union and its allies were determined to prevent West Germany from acquiring access to nuclear weapons.<sup>22</sup>

## Start of Negotiations on the Non-Proliferation Treaty

From the start of negotiations, it was clear that MLF and, more broadly, the issue of NATO nuclear deterrence would be a serious stumbling block. The U.S. approach to the future nonproliferation treaty was influenced by its European allies, primarily West Germany, who sought to keep U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe and looked into the possibility of a nuclear force in Europe assigned to NATO,

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<sup>20</sup> Anderson, George W. Jr. (1967) Oral History Interview recorded by Joseph E. O'Connor. John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program, 25 April, P. 10, available at <https://archive2.jfklibrary.org/JFKOH/Anderson,%20George%20W/JFKOH-GWA-01/JFKOH-GWA-01-TR.pdf> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>21</sup> Bunn, George and John B. Rhineland (2008) 'Looking Back: The Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty Then and Now,' Arms Control Association, 3 September, available at [https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2008\\_07-08/lookingback](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2008_07-08/lookingback) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>22</sup> Wheeler, Michael (2006) 'International Security Negotiations: Lessons Learned from Negotiating with the Russians on Nuclear Arms,' INSS Occasional Paper 62, p. 37; The White House (1964) 'Memorandum for the Record,' National Security Archive, available at [http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB1/nhch1\\_1.htm](http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB1/nhch1_1.htm) (17 May, 2021); Timerbaev, Roland (1999) *Russia and Nuclear Non-Proliferation. 1945-1968*. Moscow: Nauka, pp. 216 – 217.

featuring some role for European members of the Alliance, if they were not allowed to acquire their own nuclear weapons.<sup>23</sup>

To allay these concerns and satisfy the deterrence requirements of NATO, the United States sought to find ways to exempt NATO from the broad ban on the transfer of nuclear weapons. These issues emerged even before the official opening of negotiations, still at the stage of bilateral U.S.-Soviet consultations.<sup>24</sup>

For the Soviet Union and its allies, the issue was equally important. Barely 15 years after the end of World War II, the prospect that West Germany might acquire nuclear weapons or obtain access to U.S. nuclear weapons was unacceptable. Furthermore, the Soviet Union never intended to relinquish full control of nuclear weapons and allow its allies anywhere near them; it wanted the same situation in NATO so that both political and military planning on all nuclear issues were limited to a small number of actors.<sup>25</sup>

The Soviet allies, who did not have a chance to partake in the nuclear status of the Warsaw Pact, sought to preserve the same situation on the Western side of the line dividing the two alliances. Moreover, they were concerned about the risk of a nuclear war in the center of Europe – in their territories, first and foremost. That approach informed the Rapacki Plan of 1958 – a proposal on a nuclear-weapons-free zone in Central Europe and demilitarization of that zone. The nuclear-weapon-free zone was to cover the territory of Poland, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, and the Federal Republic of Germany. The nuclear weapon countries would undertake 'not to maintain nuclear weapons among the armaments of their forces in the territory of the States comprising the zone'.<sup>26</sup> The Soviet Union did not have problems with approving

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<sup>23</sup> 'Discussion between Soviet Marshal V. V. Kuznetsov and the SED Politburo' (1963) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, SAPMO BA, J IV 2/2-900, pp. 2–21, available at <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/111609> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>24</sup> 'Discussion between Soviet Marshal V. V. Kuznetsov and the SED Politburo' (1963) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, SAPMO BA, J IV 2/2-900, pp. 2–21, available at <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/111609> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>25</sup> Timerbaev, Roland (1999) *Russia and Nuclear Non-Proliferation. 1945–1968*. Moscow: Nauka, pp. 216–217.

<sup>26</sup> 'The Rapacki Plan' (1971) The proposed European security conference 1954–1971. Brief prepared by Mr. E. Nessler, Rapporteur. Paris: Western European Union Assembly (General Affairs Committee. Seventeenth Ordinary Session), available at

that initiative because the removal of nuclear weapons would have only enhanced its superiority in conventional forces.<sup>27</sup>

In any event, U.S. overtures intended to legitimize multilateral nuclear arrangements within NATO were flatly rejected by the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrei Gromyko during the meeting with Rusk referred to above. Instead, the Soviet Union, in consultation with allies, proposed, in a memorandum to the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament (ENDC), its own set of principles that included a prohibition of 'the transfer of nuclear weapons through military alliances to states that do not yet dispose of nuclear weapons'.<sup>28</sup>

In the meantime, the MLF proposal was facing ever-stronger resistance in Europe. In spite of the cautions by William Foster that the MLF could decrease the chances of reaching an agreement on nuclear nonproliferation, President Johnson decided to continue the discussion over the MLF with allies. A special working group led by Ambassador Finletter was established in Paris to educate NATO members about the benefits of a NATO nuclear missile-bearing fleet, but the push did not succeed. Since the end of October 1964, Paris began to lobby against the MLF and pressured West Germany to prevent it from joining the nuclear force; the French threat to withdraw from NATO gave Paris particularly strong leverage in that respect. Concerned that such actions would further harm the MLF's appeal, George Ball suggested to 'design a specific plan of campaign to demonstrate to the Germans and the other nations of NATO who [were] worried by French threats, that [the United States was] making every possible effort to bring France into the MLF'.<sup>29</sup>

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[https://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/the\\_rapacki\\_plan\\_warsaw\\_14\\_february\\_1958-en-c7c21f77-83c4-4ffc-8cca-30255b300cb2.html](https://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/the_rapacki_plan_warsaw_14_february_1958-en-c7c21f77-83c4-4ffc-8cca-30255b300cb2.html) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>27</sup> 'The Rapacki Plan' (1971) The proposed European security conference 1954-1971. Brief prepared by Mr. E. Nessler, Rapporteur. Paris: Western European Union Assembly (General Affairs Committee. Seventeenth Ordinary Session), available at [https://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/the\\_rapacki\\_plan\\_warsaw\\_14\\_february\\_1958-en-c7c21f77-83c4-4ffc-8cca-30255b300cb2.html](https://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/the_rapacki_plan_warsaw_14_february_1958-en-c7c21f77-83c4-4ffc-8cca-30255b300cb2.html) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>28</sup> 'Discussion between Soviet Marshal V. V. Kuznetsov and the SED Politburo' (1963) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, SAPMO BA, J IV 2/2-900, pp. 2-21, available at <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/111609> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>29</sup> 'Memorandum from the Under Secretary of State (Ball) to Secretary of State Rusk' (1964) Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Volume XI, Arms Control and Disarmament, available at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v13/d49> (17 May, 2021).

Eventually, NATO members started to seek alternatives to the MLF. In December 1964, the United Kingdom proposed an idea to create the Atlantic Nuclear Force (ANF) which was supposed to be multinational, rather than multilateral. France originated the idea of creating the European Nuclear Force, in contrast to the MLF or the ANF.<sup>30</sup>

At the same time, the Soviet Union continued to reject the MLF concept. In December 1964, during a meeting with Secretary Rusk, Andrei Gromyko pointed out that the Soviet Union was not convinced by the U.S. statements 'regarding some separate arrangements between the U.S. and the FRG which allegedly removed the threat to the Soviet Union'.<sup>31</sup> Secretary Rusk, in response, said that 'if the Soviet objections to the MLF were based on non-dissemination, he wished to repeat that under the MLF arrangements, we would not permit the transfer of nuclear weapons or of nuclear weapons technology to any non-nuclear member of the force'.<sup>32</sup> Nonetheless, it was clear that MLF was becoming a serious hindrance to the NPT, which was the overriding U.S. interest, and Rusk asked for an authorization to take a message to Gromyko expressing the readiness of the United States to make concessions concerning the MLF in return for the Soviet assistance in preventing China from acquiring nuclear weapons.<sup>33</sup>

On November 25, 1964, President Johnson assembled the Task Force on Nuclear Non-Proliferation led by Roswell Gilpatric that prepared a report that outlined the development of U.S. nonproliferation policy. The report encouraged the conclusion of the NPT and the initiation of U.S.-Soviet strategic arms reduction talks. The report did not constitute an immediate shift in U.S. policy, but many of its

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30 Timerbaev, Roland (1999) *Russia and Nuclear Non-Proliferation, 1945-1968*. Moscow: Nauka, p. 218; 'Discussion between Soviet Marshal V. V. Kuznetsov and the SED Politburo' (1963) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, SAPMO BA, J IV 2/2-900, pp. 2-21, available at <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/111609> (17 May, 2021).

31 'Memorandum of Conversation' (1964) Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964 - 1968, Volume XI, Arms Control and Disarmament, available at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v11/d53> (17 May, 2021).

32 'Memorandum of Conversation' (1964) Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964 - 1968, Volume XI, Arms Control and Disarmament, available at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v11/d53> (17 May, 2021).

33 Wheeler, Michael (2006) 'International Security Negotiations: Lessons Learned from Negotiating with the Russians on Nuclear Arms,' INSS Occasional Paper 62, p. 37; 'Memorandum for the Record' (1964) National Security Archive, available at [http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB1/nhch1\\_1.htm](http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB1/nhch1_1.htm) (17 May, 2021).

elements later became guidelines for the U.S. stance on nonproliferation.<sup>34</sup>

MLF also caused serious opposition in the United States. On January 18, 1966, Senator John O. Pastore introduced a resolution focusing on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons. Mohammed Shaker, one of the leading NPT negotiators, explained that 'the debate had also shown that the Senate would not allow United States' nuclear weapons to be transferred to any proposed MLF'.<sup>35</sup> In addition, it also became clear in the process of the Senate's consideration of that resolution that 'no amendment to the Atomic Energy Act's strictures on the transfer of nuclear weapons was likely to get through the Joint Committee'.<sup>36</sup>

All this contributed to NATO ceasing serious discussions on the MLF proposal by December 1964, although the United States did not officially reject the idea until 1966 while Washington alternative arrangements for NATO's nuclear policy were being discussed. At a meeting of the North Atlantic Council in May 1965, U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara put forward a proposal to establish a Nuclear Planning Group (NPG), a special body tasked with discussing nuclear policy issues. Italy, the United Kingdom, the United States, and West Germany were intended to be permanent members; the other three NPG seats were to be allotted for eligible nations on a one-year rotational basis.<sup>37</sup>

The United States did not anticipate objections from the Soviet Union because McNamara's Plan did not foresee direct access by Germany to nuclear weapons. Yet, the initial response by the Kremlin was negative. Thomas L. Hughes, an Assistant Secretary of State

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<sup>34</sup> 'National Security Action Memorandum No. 320' (1964) Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Volume XI, Arms Control and Disarmament, available at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v11/d51> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>35</sup> Shaker, Mohammed (1980) 'The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Origin and Implementation 1959 – 1979. Volume I,' U.S.: Oceana Publications, p. 100; Bunn, George (1992) *Arms Control by Committee: Managing Negotiations with the Russians*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 73.

<sup>36</sup> Bunn, George (1992) *Arms Control by Committee: Managing Negotiations with the Russians*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 73.

<sup>37</sup> North-Atlantic Treaty Organization (2020) Nuclear Planning group. NATO, available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/ro/natohq/topics\\_50069.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/ro/natohq/topics_50069.htm) (17 May, 2021); Timerbaev, Roland (1999) *Russia and Nuclear Non-Proliferation. 1945-1968*. Moscow: Nauka, pp. 221-222; Krepon, Michael (2009) 'The Gilpatric Committee Report,' *Arms Control Wonk*, 11 June, available at <http://www.armscontrolwonk.com/archive/402344/the-gilpatric-committee-report/> (17 May, 2021).



for Intelligence and Research, pointed out that, 'the Soviet strictures against the MLF and ANF applied equally to the McNamara proposal for a Select Committee on nuclear affairs in NATO'.<sup>38</sup> The United States, however, stood firm on its new position. George Bunn, one of the NPT negotiators, made a statement to Soviet diplomats saying that 'NATO consultations and two-key arrangements were sacrosanct — <...> no agreement would ever be possible if the Soviets retained the offending language in their draft'.<sup>39</sup> Effectively, the United States sought to make a concession (not just to the Soviet Union, but also to some of its European allies), but Moscow deemed that concession insufficient. The deadlock continued as did the negotiations between the two countries.<sup>40</sup>

On August 17, 1965, the United States submitted to the ENDC the first draft of nonproliferation treaty banning the transfer of nuclear weapons 'into the national control of any non-nuclear State, either directly or indirectly, through a military alliance, and each undertakes not to take any other action which would cause an increase in the total number of States and other organizations having independent power to use nuclear weapons'.<sup>41</sup> The Soviet Union pointed out a loophole in the U.S. draft treaty that would allow to 'pass unobstructed no less than a whole multilateral fleet equipped with hundreds of nuclear-tipped missiles'.<sup>42</sup> On September 24, the Soviet delegation presented its own NPT draft, which envisaged a much stricter prohibition on the transfer of nuclear weapons:

In any form — directly or indirectly, through third States or groups of States — to the ownership or control of States or groups of States not possessing nuclear weapons and not to accord to such States or groups of States the right to participate in the ownership, control or use of nuclear weapons. The said Parties to the Treaty shall not transfer nuclear weapons, or control over them or over their

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<sup>38</sup> 'Soviet Conditions About Western Nuclear Arrangements for a Nondissemination Treaty' (1965) Document Cloud, available at <https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/2830720/Document-18A-Thomas-L-Hughes-to-the-Secretary.pdf> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>39</sup> Bunn, George (1992) *Arms Control by Committee: Managing Negotiations with the Russians*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 74.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> 'United States Proposal Submitted to the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee: Draft Treaty to Prevent the Spread of Nuclear Weapons,' *Documents on Disarmament* (1965). P. 347.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

emplacement and use, to units of the armed forces or military personnel of States not possessing nuclear weapons, even if such units or personnel are under the command of a military alliance.<sup>43</sup>

Based on the two draft treaties, the UN passed a resolution on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons. The key provision of the Resolution was that 'the treaty should be void of any loop-holes which might permit nuclear or non-nuclear Powers to proliferate, directly or indirectly, nuclear weapons in any form'.<sup>44</sup>

President Johnson, in his message to the ENDC, expressed willingness to comply with the resolution. 'We are prepared to agree that these things should not be done directly or indirectly, through third countries or groups of countries, or through units of the armed forces or military personnel under any military alliance',<sup>45</sup> he said. And so, in the beginning of 1967, Johnson made a final decision to forgo the idea of MLF in one form or another for the sake of concluding the NPT.<sup>46</sup>

## Drafting of Articles I and II of the Non-Proliferation Treaty

At the time of the aforementioned Pastore hearings, the Soviet Union made a statement at the ENDC calling the MLF 'the principal obstacle to agreement on nonproliferation'.<sup>47</sup> Moscow announced that if the draft treaty were to prohibit the transfer of nuclear weapons to 'a multilateral group within a military alliance',<sup>48</sup> it would not have problems signing the treaty. That was clearly a message that offered a compromise: while on the surface it seemed a restatement of the previous Soviet position, it de facto allowed for more limited forms of NATO cooperation with regard to nuclear deterrence. According

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<sup>43</sup> 'Soviet Draft Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, September 24, 1965,' Documents on Disarmament (1965). P. 443.

<sup>44</sup> Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons. United Nations, <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/217/91/IMG/NR021791.pdf?OpenElement> (accessed May 15, 2021).

<sup>45</sup> Johnson, Lyndon B. 'Message to the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee on Its Reconvening in Geneva,' The American Presidency Project, available at <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=27704> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Bunn, George (1992) Arms Control by Committee: Managing Negotiations with the Russians, Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 74.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

to George Bunn, Washington perceived it as a hint that if the United States stopped promoting the MLF, the Soviet Union would soften its position regarding NATO nuclear sharing arrangements.<sup>49</sup>

The United States finished a new revisited draft treaty in March 1966. Ambassador Llewellyn Thompson insisted on having a discussion with the Soviet Union on the draft 'even though [the] language [would] probably not be acceptable to the Soviet Union'.<sup>50</sup> As expected, the Soviet Union remained unsatisfied and reiterated the necessity to incorporate specific language in the treaty to prohibit the transfer of nuclear weapons 'into the control of any non-nuclear-weapon State, or into the control of any group of states'.<sup>51</sup>

In the fall of 1966 at the opening of the General Assembly in New York, which was attended by Minister Gromyko and Secretary Rusk, the United States and the Soviet Union began a series of bilateral discussions in parallel to negotiations at the ENDC in Geneva.<sup>52</sup>

Following his meeting with Gromyko, Rusk reported to President Johnson that 'there was some closing of the gap in non-proliferation language',<sup>53</sup> but 'we [were] not home on this'.<sup>54</sup> Walt Rostow in his memorandum to the President echoed this sentiment and also pointed out that 'time [was] running out on [that] subject,' and therefore it was necessary 'to resolve the remaining differences'.<sup>55</sup> As a sign that the matter was not closed, both parties expressed opti-

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<sup>49</sup> Bunn, George (1992) *Arms Control by Committee: Managing Negotiations with the Russians*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 74..

<sup>50</sup> 'Memorandum from the Ambassador at Large (Thompson) to Secretary of State Rusk' (1966) *Foreign Relations of the United States 1964-1968, Volume XIV, Soviet Union*. U.S. Department of State Archive, available at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v14/d184> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>51</sup> Khalessi, Daniel (2015) 'Strategic Ambiguity: Nuclear Sharing and the Secret Strategy for Drafting Articles I and II of the Nonproliferation Treaty,' *The Nonproliferation Review* 22 (3-4): 433.

<sup>52</sup> 'Telegram from the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the Department of State,' *Foreign Relations of the United States 1964-1968, Volume XIV, Soviet Union*. U.S. Department of State Archive, available at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v14/d185> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>53</sup> 'Editorial Note' (1966) *Foreign Relations of the United States 1964-1968, Volume XIV, Soviet Union*. U.S. Department of State Archive, available at <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/johnsonlb/xiv/1383.htm> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> 'Memorandum for President Johnson' (1966) *Memos to the President* – Walt W. Rostow, Vol. XIV. U.S. Department of State Archive, available at <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/johnsonlb/xiv/1383.htm> (17 May, 2021).

mism about the prospects for an agreement. During a meeting with Rusk, President Johnson said that 'he felt that [the U.S.] relations with the Soviet Union were better at present than they [had] ever been since he assumed the Presidency',<sup>56</sup> and 'was very gratified at the progress made in Rusk-Gromyko discussions and wanted a formula to be found which would reflect those discussions'.<sup>57</sup>

A working group consisting of three U.S. diplomats (William Foster, Samuel De Palma, and George Bunn), as well as three Soviet diplomats (Alexei Roshchin, Roland Timerbaev, and Vladimir Shustov), was tasked to elaborate the language of Articles I and II of the future treaty. These consultations began in the fall of 1966 on the margins of the General Assembly in New York. The negotiators developed several alternatives for the draft of Article I of the NPT. The first option prohibited the transfer of nuclear weapons directly or indirectly to any NNWS, military alliance, or group of states. The second 'did not specify to whom there would be transfer'.<sup>58</sup> According to the third one, nuclear weapons would be prohibited from being transferred to 'any recipient whatsoever'.<sup>59</sup> The first alternative was rejected by President Johnson and his advisors almost immediately, but Gromyko continued to insist that the text of the treaty had to explicitly prohibit the transfer or control of nuclear weapons to a military alliance.<sup>60</sup>

At the end of September, after a series of mutual concessions, the group finally agreed on a consensus language prohibiting the transfer of 'nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosives or control over such weapons or explosives to a non-nuclear-weapon State directly

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<sup>56</sup> 'Memorandum of Conversation' (1966) U.S. Department of State Archive, available at <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/johnsonlb/xiv/1383.htm> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>57</sup> 'Telegram from the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the Department of State,' Foreign Relations of the United States 1964-1968, Volume XIV, Soviet Union. U.S. Department of State Archive, available at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v14/d185> (17 May, 2021); 'Memorandum for President Johnson' (1966) Memos to the President – Walt W. Rostow, Vol. XIV. U.S. Department of State Archive, available at <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/johnsonlb/xiv/1383.htm> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>58</sup> Bunn, George (1992) *Arms Control by Committee: Managing Negotiations with the Russians*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 77.

<sup>59</sup> Timerbaev, Roland (1999) *Russia and Nuclear Non-Proliferation. 1945-1968*. Moscow: Nauka, p. 260.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

or indirectly, either individually or collectively with other members of a military alliance or group of States'.<sup>61</sup>

Clearly, the United States reached the limit of its concessions. 'Those in the State Department concerned about the German affairs and about preserving some multilateral force option'<sup>62</sup> would not budge any further in search of the NPT. Ambassador Foster stated that if the Soviet Union was not going to stop the attempts to force the prohibition of nuclear sharing into the text of the NPT, then Washington would refuse to sign the treaty. The Soviet side realized it and Gromyko agreed to soften the Soviet position. He proposed language that envisaged the prohibition of transfer of nuclear weapons or control over such weapons, 'to any recipient whatsoever'.<sup>63</sup>

The end result was 'an agreement to disagree'<sup>64</sup> on whether nuclear sharing arrangements were regulated by the NPT. The U.S. side argued that since the NPT dealt only with matters that were prohibited rather than what was permitted (a typical approach to writing international treaties), nuclear sharing arrangements remained *de jure* not in violation of the treaty, and the deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons on their allies' territory did not constitute a transfer of nuclear weapons to non-nuclear weapon states as those weapons remained in U.S. custody at all times.<sup>65</sup>

Shortly after, the United States provided Moscow with its interpretation of Articles I and II of the NPT presented in a question-and-answer manner. Moscow firmly responded that it would not be bound by any one-sided interpretations of the treaty and was assured that this indeed would not happen. The United States also added that it was fully responsible for one-sided interpretations given to its allies.<sup>66</sup>

On August 24, 1967, the United States and the Soviet Union presented to the ENDC two identical drafts of the NPT and six months

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<sup>61</sup> Bunn, George (1992) *Arms Control by Committee: Managing Negotiations with the Russians*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 75.

<sup>62</sup> Bunn, George (1992) *Arms Control by Committee: Managing Negotiations with the Russians*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 78.

<sup>63</sup> 'Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons' (1968) United Nations, Office for Disarmament Affairs, available at <https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/nuclear/npt/text> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>64</sup> Gill, David (2014) *Britain and the Bomb: Nuclear Diplomacy, 1964-1970*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 149.

<sup>65</sup> Nazarkin, Yuri (2017) Personal Interview, 9 August.

<sup>66</sup> Timerbaev, Roland (1999) *Russia and Nuclear Non-Proliferation. 1945 – 1968*. Moscow: Nauka, p. 266, 271.

later, on March 11, 1968, they proposed a joint draft treaty. The negotiations were approaching the final stage and the parties seemed to come to reach a consensus on the main points of the treaty.<sup>67</sup>

Shortly before the NPT was signed, U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Nitze in his address to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said that the United States reaffirmed to its allies that the treaty was not going to 'interfere with any existing nuclear arrangements'.<sup>68</sup> He also pointed out that the negotiated text of the NPT would not constrain NATO nuclear planning and the deployment of nuclear weapons on the territory of NATO members as long as this did not involve the transfer of nuclear weapons or control over them to NNWSs.<sup>69</sup>

In the end, the successful conclusion of negotiations on Articles I and II of the NPT resulted from the strong commitment of both the United States and the Soviet Union to the policy of preventing proliferation of nuclear weapons and their willingness to seek compromise. For the United States, that involved difficult negotiations with some of its NATO allies and revision of an existing policy (creation of MLF). Success was facilitated by a change in West Germany's leadership: the new chancellor, Willy Brandt, abandoned many of the ambitions of the post-World War II governments, including against 'holding up a non-proliferation treaty for a sometime allied nuclear force'.<sup>70</sup> The Soviet Union, for the sake of the future treaty, agreed to depart from its original position, foresaw very strict language, and de facto accepted the weakened nuclear arrangements for NATO.

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<sup>67</sup> 'Statement by ACDA Deputy Director Fisher to the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee: Draft Nonproliferation Treaty' (1968) Documents on Disarmament, p. 11; 'Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons' (1968) United Nations, Office for Disarmament Affairs, available at <https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/nuclear/npt/text> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>68</sup> 'Statement by Deputy Secretary of Defense Nitze to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee: Nonproliferation Treaty' (1968) Documents on Disarmament, p. 511.

<sup>69</sup> 'Report by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, September 26, 1968,' Documents on Disarmament (1968), pp. 644 – 645.

<sup>70</sup> Bange, Oliver (2007) 'NATO and the Non-Proliferation Treaty Triangulations between Bonn, Washington, and Moscow,' Ostpolitik and the CSCE, available at <http://www.detente.de/csce/publications/download/article8.pdf> (17 May, 2021); Bunn, George (1992) Arms Control by Committee: Managing Negotiations with the Russians, Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 80; Nazarkin, Yuri (2017) Personal Interview, 9 August.

All in all, that experience demonstrated that as long as the two parties shared an important commitment to an equal degree, they could find a solution, which, although not perfect, allowed conclusion of an important treaty.<sup>71</sup>

## **Revival of the Nuclear Sharing Issue after the End of the Cold War**

The interpretation that allowed to reconcile nuclear sharing with NPT obligations was offered shortly after the signing of the treaty, in 1969, by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Earle Wheeler. According to that interpretation, the transfer of nuclear weapons would only take place during wartime, when the treaty would have ceased to be valid. Obviously, such an interpretation, while sound in the context of the narrow interpretation of the text of the NPT, still raises questions because non-nuclear members of NATO are expected to retain nuclear-capable delivery vehicles (dual-capable aircraft, or DCA) and train pilots to deliver and release these weapons, which can be construed as a violation of the spirit of the NPT.<sup>72</sup>

This apparent contradiction remained dormant and was not questioned for a long time, until the 1985 NPT Review Conference, which called for prohibiting the proliferation of nuclear weapons 'under any circumstances'.<sup>73</sup> In the run-up to the 2000 NPT Review Conference, the New Agenda Coalition (NAC) proposed that 'all

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<sup>71</sup> Timerbaev, Roland (1999) *Russia and Nuclear Non-Proliferation. 1945 – 1968*. Moscow: Nauka, p. 268 – 269.

<sup>72</sup> Goldblat, Jozef (2002) *Arms Control: The New Guide to Negotiations and Agreements*. SAGE, p.102; Burroughs, John (2006) 'The Legal Framework for Non-Use and Elimination of Nuclear Weapons,' *The Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy*, available at <http://lcnp.org/disarmament/Gpeacebrfpaper.pdf> (17 May, 2021); 'NGO Presentations to the second session of the Preparatory Committee of the 2010 NPT Review Conference 28 April – 9 May 2008,' United Nations, available at <https://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/WMD/Nuclear/NPT2010Prepcom/PrepCom2008/NGO-Pres-Written.pdf> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>73</sup> Butcher, Martin and Otfried Nassauer, Tanya Padberg, Dan Plesh (2000) 'Questions of Command and Control: NATO, Nuclear Sharing and the NPT,' Berlin Information-Center for Transatlantic Security, available at <http://www.bits.de/public/pdf/00-1command.pdf> (17 May, 2021).

the articles of the NPT are binding on all States Parties and at all times and in all circumstances'.<sup>74</sup>

The nuclear sharing arrangements in NATO underwent only marginal changes after the end of the Cold War, however, NATO's 1991 Strategic Concept proclaimed nuclear weapons a 'supreme guarantee'<sup>75</sup> of the alliance's security. The 1999 Concept used the same wording, but at the same time also mentioned that NATO was now planning to 'radically [reduce] its reliance on nuclear forces'.<sup>76</sup> The documents stated that 'nuclear forces [were] no longer targeted against any country' and that 'the circumstances in which their use might have to be contemplated [were] considered to be extremely remote'.<sup>77</sup>

The work of the NPG also underwent some adjustments. 'The rotational membership of the NPG was ended in 1979 in recognition of the increasing importance to all members of NATO's nuclear policy and posture'.<sup>78</sup> In addition, NATO began to hold joint nuclear missions on the territory of the new member states of the alliance.<sup>79</sup> It did not help the situation that non-nuclear NATO members, namely, Belgium, Germany, Italy and Netherlands participated in

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<sup>74</sup> Goldblat, Jozef (2002) *Arms Control: The New Guide to Negotiations and Agreements*, SAGE, p.102; Burroughs, John (2006) 'The Legal Framework for Non-Use and Elimination of Nuclear Weapons,' The Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy, available at <http://lcnp.org/disarmament/Gpeacebrfpaper.pdf> (17 May, 2021); 'NGO Presentations to the second session of the Preparatory Committee of the 2010 NPT Review Conference 28 April – 9 May 2008,' Geneva. United Nations, available at <https://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/WMD/Nuclear/NPT2010Prepcom/PrepCom2008/NGOPres-Written.pdf> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>75</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization (2009) 'The Alliance's Strategic Concept,' NATO, available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_27433.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_27433.htm?selectedLocale=en) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>76</sup> Weitz, Richard (2010) 'The Future if NATO's Tactical Nuclear Weapons,' Second Line of Defense, available at <https://sldinfo.com/2010/12/the-future-of-natos-tactical-nuclear-weapons/> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization (2020) 'Nuclear Planning Group,' NATO, available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_50069.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_50069.htm) (17 May, 2021); Roberts, Guy (2010) 'How do Nuclear Changes Look to NATO,' NATO, available at [http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2010/Nuclear\\_Proliferation/Guy\\_Roberts/EN/index.htm](http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2010/Nuclear_Proliferation/Guy_Roberts/EN/index.htm) (17 May, 2021); North Atlantic Treaty Organization (2012) 'Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation adopted by Heads of State and Government in Lisbon,' NATO, available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_68580.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_68580.htm) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>79</sup> Oswald, Rachel (2014) 'U.S. Tactical Nuclear Arms Mission Could Shift Among NATO Jets,' NTI, available at <http://www.nti.org/gsn/article/aircraft-could-be-given-nato-tactical-nuclear-arms-mission/> (17 May, 2021).



the NATO's Support of Nuclear Operations with Conventional Air Tactics (SNOWCAT) program using nuclear-capable aircraft.<sup>80</sup>

Russia strongly objected to the retention of NATO's nuclear missions in the post-Cold War environment. Now that the military confrontation characteristic of the Cold War was absent and its nuclear weapons were based exclusively within the national territory, it insisted that the arrangements made in earlier years were no longer justified and, in fact, could generate unnecessary tensions and suspicions.<sup>81</sup>

In 2009, President Barack Obama gave a speech in Prague about the U.S. commitment to the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. The speech received strong feedback in Germany's political circles particularly with regard to its stance on NATO nuclear force. Shortly after the speech, Germany proposed the withdrawal of non-strategic nuclear weapons from Europe, sparking unprecedented debates among NATO member states. Indeed, U.S. officials told their European counterparts that they were prepared to withdraw non-strategic nuclear weapons if that is what other NATO members wanted. Furthermore, the U.S. military considered these weapons presenting such operating and security concerns that it regarded their full withdrawal advisable. Making the decision, however, proved to be difficult and in the end, the status quo was preserved.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Kristensen, Hans (2017) 'NATO Nuclear Exercise Underway With Czech and Polish Participation,' Federation of American Scientists, available at: <https://fas.org/blogs/security/2017/10/steadfast-noon-exercise/> (25 July, 2021).

<sup>81</sup> Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2017) 'Comment by the MFA of Russia on the U.S. Department of State's Annual Report on Adherence to and Compliance with Arms Control, Nonproliferation, and Disarmament Agreements and Commitments', available at [http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/kommentarii\\_predstavitelya/-/asset\\_publisher/MCZ7HQUMdqBY/content/id/2740264?p\\_p\\_id=101\\_INSTANCE\\_MCZ7HQUMdqBY&\\_101\\_INSTANCE\\_MCZ7HQUMdqBY\\_languageId=en\\_GB](http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/kommentarii_predstavitelya/-/asset_publisher/MCZ7HQUMdqBY/content/id/2740264?p_p_id=101_INSTANCE_MCZ7HQUMdqBY&_101_INSTANCE_MCZ7HQUMdqBY_languageId=en_GB) (17 May, 2021); MFA of the Russian Federation: NATO Nuclear Missions Are Incompatible with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (2014), TASS, available at: <https://tass.ru/politika/1494874> (25 July, 2021); MFA of the Russian Federation Accused the United States of Training Non-Nuclear Countries to Use Nuclear Weapons (2015), available at: <https://www.rbc.ru/rbcfreenews/551172a99a794799f5131659> (25 July, 2021).

<sup>82</sup> U.S. Air Force (2008) 'Air Force Blue Ribbon Review of Nuclear Weapons Policies and Procedures,' available at <http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/usa/doctrine/usaf/BRR-2008.pdf> (17 May, 2021); Maettig, Thomas (2008) 'Tactical Nuclear Weapons in Germany: Time for Withdrawal?' NTI, available at <http://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/tactical-nuclear-weapons-germany/> (17 May, 2021); 'Nuclear Disarmament NATO (2019) NTI, available at <http://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/nato-nuclear-disarmament/> (17 May, 2021).

In their attitude toward the presence of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe and, more generally, the nuclear mission of NATO, the non-nuclear members of the Alliance came to be split into three groups. The first, including some of the basing countries (Germany, Netherlands, and Belgium) clearly preferred to see these weapons gone, at least from their soil and better from Europe. In February 2010, Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Norway sent a joint letter to NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen urging discussion on the withdrawal of nuclear weapons during the upcoming NATO ministerial meeting in Tallinn.<sup>83</sup>

The second group was represented by some former members of the Warsaw Pact and argued in favor of the continued presence of non-strategic nuclear weapons in Europe and, accordingly, the nuclear sharing arrangements. These states expressed fear towards Russia and Iran's nuclear capabilities and pointed out the symbolic nature of the weapons reinforcing the long-held commitments of the United States to the alliance. Estonia, the home of a critical NATO ministerial meeting, adopted a more visible position 'looking for the U.S. confirmation that sub-strategic nuclear weapons would remain in Europe as a symbol of the U.S. commitment to NATO'.<sup>84</sup> Indeed, U.S. Secretary of State Hilary Clinton reaffirmed at this meeting that 'as long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO [was to] remain a nuclear alliance,' and 'as a nuclear alliance, widely sharing nuclear risks and responsibilities [was] fundamental'.<sup>85</sup> The third one, which consisted of France and the United Kingdom, tended to keep low profile and promote the status quo.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> 'Council Decision 2010/212/CFSP of 29 March 2010 relating to the position of the European Union for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Working paper submitted by Spain on behalf of the European Union' (2010) United Nations, available at [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=NPT/CONF.2010/WP.31](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=NPT/CONF.2010/WP.31) (17 May, 2021).; Muller, Harald (2011) 'Flexible Responses. NATO Reactions to the U.S. Nuclear Posture Review,' *The Nonproliferation Review* 18: 105

<sup>84</sup> Muller, Harald (2011) 'Flexible Responses. NATO Reactions to the U.S. Nuclear Posture Review,' *The Nonproliferation Review* 18: 110; Pomper, Miles and Nikolai Sokov, Meghan Warren (2012) 'Delaying Decisions: NATO's Deterrence and Defense Posture Review,' *NTI*, available at <http://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/delaying-decisions-natos-deterrence-and-defense-posture-review/> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>85</sup> 'NATO Clings to Its Cold War Nuclear Relics,' (2010) Arms Control Association, Issue Brief 1 (1), 27 April, available at <https://www.armscontrol.org/issuebriefs/NATORElics> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

Facing a split in the Alliance and the apparent reluctance of those members, favoring the withdrawal, to take initiative, the Obama administration chose a time-honored route of creating a bipartisan commission, which came to be known after its co-chairmen: Bill Perry and James Schlesinger. The commission recommended a cautious approach, which, by default, leaned toward the views of the second group: as long as some members of NATO thought the presence of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe was essential for the common defense, these should remain in Europe. 'All allies depending on the U.S. nuclear umbrella should be assured that any changes in its [nuclear] forces do not imply a weakening of the U.S. extended nuclear deterrence guarantees,' stated the final report. 'They could perceive a weakening if the United States (and NATO) does not maintain other elements of the current arrangement than the day-to-day presence of U.S. nuclear bombs'.<sup>87</sup>

The intense debate concluded with the adoption of a new Security Concept at the 2010 Lisbon summit of NATO and to conduct an extensive Deterrence and Defense Posture Review (DDPR). The 2010 Security Concept linked any changes in NATO's nuclear posture to reductions of non-strategic nuclear weapons by Russia urging it to, 'relocate [nuclear] weapons away from the territory of NATO members'.<sup>88</sup>

Concluded in May 2012, the DDPR reiterated NATO's nuclear status and provided for the 'broadest possible participation of Allies concerned in their nuclear sharing arrangements'.<sup>89</sup> However, for the first time in history, NATO's strategic concept did not define nuclear weapons as, 'an essential political and military link between

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<sup>87</sup> Perry, William J. and James R. Schlesinger (2009) 'America's Strategic Posture: The Final Report of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States,' United States Institute of Peace, p. 68, available at [http://www.usip.org/strategic\\_posture/final.html](http://www.usip.org/strategic_posture/final.html) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>88</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization (2010) Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO, available at [https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf\\_publications/20120214\\_strategic-concept-2010-eng.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_publications/20120214_strategic-concept-2010-eng.pdf) (17 May, 2021); Muller, Harald (2011) 'Flexible Responses. NATO Reactions to the U.S. Nuclear Posture Review,' *The Nonproliferation Review* 18: 109.

<sup>89</sup> Meier, Oliver and Paul Ingram (2012) 'The NATO Summit: Recasting the Debate Over U.S. Nuclear Weapons in Europe,' Arms Control Association, available at <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2012-05/nato-summit-recasting-debate-over-us-nuclear-weapons-europe> (17 May, 2021); NATO (2012) 'Deterrence and Defence Posture Review', available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_87597.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_87597.htm) (17 May, 2021).

the European and the North American members of the Alliance'.<sup>90</sup> Still, it firmly anchored nuclear weapons in the NATO defense policy by saying that the security of the Alliance rested on an 'appropriate mix'<sup>91</sup> of nuclear, conventional, and defense capabilities.<sup>92</sup>

While the conclusion of the DDPN ended the active phase of debates in NATO, nuclear sharing arrangements continued to be addressed in other fora, in particular during the 2010 and 2015 NPT Review Conferences. In 2010, these arrangements were criticized by the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), which sought to prohibit them. Eleven European states (Austria, Belgium, Finland, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden, and Switzerland) sought to include into the 2010 Action Plan language that would have explicitly prohibited nuclear sharing arrangements, but, in the end, nuclear sharing was mentioned only indirectly as a part of a plan to 'reduce and eventually eliminate,'<sup>93</sup> all nuclear weapons 'regardless of their type and location'.<sup>94</sup>

During the 2015 Review Conference, the debate became more heated. The Russian representative, Director of the Department for Non-Proliferation and Arms Control Mikhail Ulyanov, openly accused the United States of violating Article I of the NPT and referred to the situation when 'servicemen from NATO non-nuclear-weapon States [are] trained to use nuclear weapons and participate in the nuclear planning process'.<sup>95</sup> In the course of subsequent discussions, he elaborated on the issue of NATO's nuclear missions that according to the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs included the 'elements of nuclear planning and training focused on the practical use of nuclear weapons involving aircraft, their crews, airfield

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<sup>90</sup> Pifer, Steven (2011) 'NATO, Nuclear Weapons and Arms Control,' Brookings, Arms Control Series Paper 1, available at [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/0719\\_arms\\_control\\_pifer.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/0719_arms_control_pifer.pdf) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Muller, Harald (2012) 'The NPT Review Process and Strengthening the Treaty: Disarmament,' Nonproliferation Paper 10, SIPRI, available at <https://www.sipri.org/publications/2012/eu-non-proliferation-papers/npt-review-process-and-strengthening-treaty-disarmament> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> 'Statement by Mikhail I. Uliyanov Acting Head of the Delegation of the Russian Federation at the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (General debate)' (2015) United Nations, available at [http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2015/statements/pdf/RU\\_en.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2015/statements/pdf/RU_en.pdf) (17 May, 2021).

infrastructure, and ground support services in non-nuclear-weapon NATO countries'.<sup>96</sup>

Ulyanov's statement represented a marked toughening of the Russian rhetoric with regard to the NATO nuclear mission and the presence of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe. Previously, the language had not been as harsh and generally, Moscow avoided openly and directly accusing Washington and NATO of violating the NPT, but did criticize the Alliance for its plans to deploy nuclear-capable fighters near the Russian border.<sup>97</sup> The immediate cause of that change in behavior was clearly the accusation, which the United States filed against Russia, of violation of the 1987 INF Treaty. Furthermore, the overall atmosphere of deep crisis in the U.S.-Russian relationship made Moscow less inclined to hide its displeasure behind the diplomatic language. It can be said that once the need in politeness passed, the true extent of Russian irritation with nuclear sharing arrangements and the continued presence of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe was revealed.<sup>98</sup>

The members of the NAM once again expressed their concerns about NATO's security concept, which '[justified] the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and [maintained] unjustifiably the concept of security based on nuclear military alliances and nuclear deterrence policies'.<sup>99</sup> In the recommendations for the Conference's final document, NAM Members called for the prevention of nuclear proliferation 'including through nuclear weapon-sharing with other States under any kind of security and military arrangements or alliances'.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (2015) 'Statement by the Head of the Russian Delegation, Director of the Department of Non-Proliferation and Control of Armaments at the Russian Foreign Ministry Mikhail Ulyanov at the 2015 NPT Review Conference (Cluster I, Nuclear Nonproliferation)', available at [http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/vystuplenia-zaavlenia/-/asset\\_publisher/97FOfHiV2r4j/content/id/1252188](http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/vystuplenia-zaavlenia/-/asset_publisher/97FOfHiV2r4j/content/id/1252188) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>97</sup> Mukhin, Vladimir (2004) 'Sergei Ivanov Hits Back at NATO,' *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 26 March, available at [https://www.ng.ru/world/2004-03-26/6\\_nato.html](https://www.ng.ru/world/2004-03-26/6_nato.html) (29 July, 2021).

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> 'Nuclear disarmament Working paper submitted by the Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,' 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, United Nations, available at <http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/documents/WP13.pdf> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>100</sup> 'Substantive recommendations for incorporation into the final document of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of

The same idea was also articulated in the individual working papers submitted by the delegations of Egypt and Iran.<sup>101</sup>

Following the adoption of the new Strategic Concept and the conclusion of DDPR, NATO continued to stick to its existing policy and refined the arguments in support of its maintenance. It claimed, first, that nuclear sharing had been established prior to the NPT. Second, by the time of the NPT conclusion, it was fully addressed and all signatories accepted the arrangements. Third, further arms control treaties (e.g. SALT, INF, and START) limiting nuclear weapons 'were signed without affecting NATO's nuclear arrangement'.<sup>102</sup>

The official position of NATO is that nuclear weapons in Europe remain vital for the provision of security and act as a guarantor of stability in a progressively more dangerous and less predictable world. They are supposed to act as 'transatlantic glue',<sup>103</sup> and serve as a part of the so-called nuclear burden and risk sharing. After a period of rather divisive and acrimonious debates, NATO appears to have reached a consensus that no member of the Alliance seems prepared to challenge, at least in the foreseeable future. The dividing lines in the international community have been drawn with considerable clarity, but no party is prepared to budge.<sup>104</sup>

Opposition to the status quo persists, including in Europe and even in some basing countries. Some experts have called nuclear sharing and, more generally the nuclear mission of NATO 'a relic of

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Nuclear Weapons. Working paper submitted by the Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,' 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, United Nations, available at <http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/documents/WP24.pdf> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>101</sup> 'Nuclear Disarmament. Working Paper Submitted by Egypt' (2015) United Nations, 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, available at [https://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2015/pdf/NPT-CONF2015-WP.39\\_E.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2015/pdf/NPT-CONF2015-WP.39_E.pdf) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>102</sup> Alberque, William (2017) 'The NPT and the Origins of NATO's Nuclear Sharing Arrangements,' Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, available at <http://vcdnp.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Alberque-Briefing-NPT-Nuclear-Sharing-Arrangements.pdf> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>103</sup> Ingram, Paul (2011) 'Revising NATO's Nuclear Deterrence Posture: Prospects for Change,' BASIC, available at <https://basicint.org/news/events/2011/revising-nato%E2%80%99s-nuclear-deterrence-posture-prospects-change> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>104</sup> Shea, Jamie (2012) 'Lecture 1. Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons: How Should International Community React,' NATO, available at [https://www.nato.int/cps/ru/natolive/opinions\\_84762.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/ru/natolive/opinions_84762.htm) (17 May, 2021).

the Cold War'.<sup>105</sup> Oliver Meier, the Deputy Head of Research Division at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs, argued that 'political, technical, and financial reasons, maintenance of the nuclear status quo [in the alliance] is not feasible'.<sup>106</sup> Still, these voices remain isolated at the moment and, at least for the time being, will hardly cause NATO to once again engage in a lengthy and difficult process of reviewing its nuclear policy. Instead, NATO is moving to replace existing B-61 gravity bombs versions (B61-3, – 4, 7, – 10) stored in Europe with a new modification, B-61-12. The new weapon will feature new capabilities, which were not featured in the DDPR debates. As Hans Christensen commented, 'The capability of the new B61-12 nuclear bomb seems to continue to expand, from a simple life-extension of an existing bomb to the first U.S. guided nuclear gravity bomb, to a nuclear earth-penetrator with increased accuracy'.<sup>107</sup> The widely expected result of that program is the enhancement of the nuclear capability of NATO, which will likely further enhance Russian opposition and strengthen the accusations of violation of the NPT. The investment in the replacement of old weapons will also probably decrease the probability of a major policy revision on the part of NATO. In other words, the conflict over the interpretation of Articles I and II of the NPT may worsen even further.<sup>108</sup>

## Conclusions

The level of cooperation and the readiness to compromise achieved by the United States and the Soviet Union during the negotiations on Articles I and II of the NPT will be difficult – if, perhaps, impossible – to restore. That cooperation was determined by genuinely deep concern about the risk of proliferation of nuclear weapons and

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<sup>105</sup> Schulte, Paul (2010) 'Is NATO's Nuclear Deterrence Policy a Relic of the Cold War?' Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, available at [http://carnegieendowment.org/files/NATO\\_nuke\\_deterrence.pdf](http://carnegieendowment.org/files/NATO_nuke_deterrence.pdf) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>106</sup> Meier, Oliver and Paul Ingram (2012) 'The NATO Summit: Recasting the Debate Over U.S. Nuclear Weapons in Europe,' Arms Control Association, available at <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2012-05/nato-summit-recasting-debate-over-us-nuclear-weapons-europe> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>107</sup> Kristensen, Hans (2016) 'Video Shows Earth-Penetrating Capability of B61-12 Nuclear Bomb,' Federation of American Scientists, available at [https://fas.org/blogs/security/2016/01/b61-12\\_earth-penetration/](https://fas.org/blogs/security/2016/01/b61-12_earth-penetration/) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*

the parties were prepared to abandon or modify their policies to ensure the successful conclusion of the NPT. These conditions are no longer present, at least not to the same extent.

The current situation is different from the 1960s in the following respects:

- The NPT has become a well-established international norm and only needs maintenance, which requires (or is perceived to require) less effort than its achievement. Consequently, motivation for concessions is far weaker than was the case in the 1960s.
- Since NATO nuclear sharing arrangements have become an equally established policy and were not seriously challenged for several decades, they have acquired a high degree of legitimacy in the United States and key NATO countries. Opposition to them faces an uphill battle against an established and broadly supported policy. The proponents of nuclear sharing in the United States and Europe play the role of defenders of the status quo while those who advocate the removal of U.S. nuclear weapons from Europe play the part of revisionists, whose job is by definition considerably more difficult.
- There is little, if any, shared space in the U.S. and the Russian positions. In the 1960s, the presence of nuclear weapons outside national territories was not an issue because both had a large number of those in the territories of their allies. The difference was in the degree to which allies were allowed to engage in the nuclear policy of their respective alliances (none in the East and some in the West). Hence, only one issue was under negotiation and required a compromise. Today, Russia does not have nuclear weapons outside its borders, and prospects for such deployment are non-existent. Thus, not only there are two issues, on which positions diverge, but there are literally no grounds for a compromise: Russia does not have motives to modify its insistence on the withdrawal of U.S. nuclear weapons and termination of nuclear sharing, while NATO is completely unwilling to modify (weaken) these policies. Despite there being precedents of the United States withdrawing its nuclear weapons from the allies' territory, the chances of that happening again — with all of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpiles in Western Europe — are not promising.



- In contrast to the 1960s, when the United States provided strong leadership within NATO with regard to nuclear policy and only had to modify its initiatives as necessary to account for European response, today Washington appears reluctant to lead. As the story with the Perry-Schlesinger Commission demonstrated, the United States appears satisfied with the lowest common denominator principle. It will wait until consensus in Europe forms in favor of a change in policy and only then will act. Given the deep divisions among European countries, prospects of European members of NATO reaching consensus are dim, at best.
- Without decisive impetus NATO is not likely to renegotiate its approach to nuclear sharing. The process of consultations and of finding a consensus is so time- and effort-consuming that the Alliance needs to take time after each attempt. Since DDPR was completed only in 2012, a similar effort can hardly take place any time soon.
- The conditions of a deep crisis in international relations and especially in Europe, first and foremost in relations between Russia and the West, coupled with the modernization of NATO's nuclear capability (or, rather, modernization of U.S. nuclear weapons assigned to NATO as well as the replacement of NATO DCA)<sup>109</sup> helps keep NATO nuclear policy on the same track for a long time.

All this leads to a conclusion that conflict over the key articles of the NPT, I and II, will continue unabated and perhaps will even worsen as relations between the United States and Russia remain strained and maybe even worsen. The issue of nuclear sharing is hardly the most visible or fundamental challenge to the stability of the nuclear nonproliferation regime. Yet, it concerns the core obligations under the Treaty and, combined with other, more acute challenges, could present a problem, especially since conditions for cooperation and the willingness to compromise are virtually absent.

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<sup>109</sup> Tétrais, Bruno (2008) 'The Coming NATO Nuclear Debate (ARI),' Elcano Royal Institute, 26 September, available at [http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano\\_en/contenido?WCM\\_GLOBAL\\_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano\\_in/zonas\\_in/defense+security/ari117-2008](http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano_en/contenido?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_in/zonas_in/defense+security/ari117-2008) (29 July, 2021).

## CHAPTER 2

# NEGOTIATIONS ON WITHDRAWAL CLAUSE OF NPT

*Daria Selezneva*

Article X of the NPT – a ‘procedural’ article that contains provisions on the duration of and withdrawal from the Treaty – was integral to the conclusion of the NPT. To some extent, the inclusion of this article helped to reduce imbalances in the rights of nuclear-weapon states (NWSs) and non-nuclear-weapon states (NNWSs). It contained mechanisms available for the NNWSs to manifest their dissatisfaction with the lack of progress in fulfilling the Treaty’s goal of achieving general and complete disarmament, namely, by withdrawing from the Treaty and influencing the decision on the Treaty’s extension.

### **Article X**

1. Each Party shall in exercising its national sovereignty have the right to withdraw from the Treaty if it decides that extraordinary events, related to the subject matter of this Treaty, have jeopardized the supreme interests of its country. It shall give notice of such withdrawal to all other parties to the Treaty and to the United Nations Security Council three months in advance. Such notice shall include a statement of the extraordinary events it regards as having jeopardized its supreme interests.
2. Twenty-five years after the entry into force of the Treaty, a conference shall be convened to decide whether the Treaty shall continue in force indefinitely, or shall be extended for an additional fixed period or periods. This decision shall be taken by a majority of the Parties to the Treaty.

The negotiations of the withdrawal clause that took place in the 1960s at the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament (ENDC) were surrounded with sensitivities. Concerned with protecting their

sovereign rights, the two main negotiating parties, the United States and the Soviet Union, strove to arrive at a text that would not limit their ability to withdraw from the Treaty if they ever felt the need to do so. The U.S. position was also affected by its desire to accommodate the interests of its allies, namely Italy and Germany that strove to secure themselves a hassle-free withdrawal in case NATO was to disappear bringing an end to NATO nuclear sharing arrangements.

In the course of the NPT negotiations at the ENDC, the possibility of a state's withdrawal from the Treaty was not a major concern for the negotiating parties. Rather than identifying specific grounds for withdrawal or finding other ways to prevent a state from withdrawing from the Treaty in bad faith, the United States and the Soviet Union decided to opt for an already existing admission that any state had a right to withdraw in case it decided that 'extraordinary events, related to the subject matter of the treaty' had jeopardized its supreme interests. The NPT withdrawal clause was drafted based on that of the Partial Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (PTBT) with addition that states had to give notice with a reasoning for withdrawal to other parties and the United Nations Security Council.

Not until two decades after the NPT entered into force, the possibility of a state party withdrawing from the Treaty in bad faith was considered in earnest. When the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) announced its withdrawal — first in 1993 and then in 2003 — it became clear that the Treaty was unable to prevent Pyongyang from both reaching 'nuclear pregnancy' and terminating its obligations under the Treaty to continue pursuing its nuclear weapons program in the open. It came as a surprise to the international community and brought to the surface some of the long-standing challenges to the international non-proliferation regime, such as the lack of progress on disarmament, impasse at the Conference on disarmament, creeping legitimization of the possession of nuclear weapons by non-NPT states, and the lack of negative security assurances to NNWSs. All this combined led to frustration among some of the NPT state parties who voiced their doubts regarding the adequacy and validity of the Treaty. Several state parties even argued that in hindsight the indefinite extension of the treaty has proven to be a bad decision.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Pobedash, D. (2017) *Mezhdunarodnyi Rezhim Nerasprostraneniya Yadernogo Oruzhiya — Noviye Riski I Vysovy In*: E. Mikhailenko (ed.) *Yadernyi mir novye vyzovy rezhimu yadernogo nerasprostraneniya* Ekaterinburg : Izd-vo Ural, pp. 17-43.

This encouraged the United States and Russia to engage in the search to prevent further abuse of the NPT withdrawal provision. The discussions had been held both bilaterally and within the framework of the Six Party Talks that also included China, Japan and South Korea until the events in Crimea occurred and the two states suspended their cooperation in most areas. The recent spike of hostility fueled by mutual U.S.-Russia allegations concerning, *inter alia*, the alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria and the United Kingdom, 2016 U.S. presidential elections meddling, non-compliance with international arms control and non-proliferation agreements suggests that the atmosphere of trust and mutual confidence appears to have been snuffed out.

## Negotiating History of the Withdrawal Provision

Under international law any country has a sovereign right to withdraw from an international treaty, even if the treaty itself does not contain provisions expressly stipulating specific conditions for withdrawal. However, for international treaties dealing with nuclear weapons, withdrawal clauses are very common; sometimes referred to as 'extraordinary events' clauses, they contain several conditions and proceedings for the withdrawal.

For over 50 years, the withdrawal clause of the PTBT has served as an inspiration for the majority of treaties dealing with arms control and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. During the PTBT negotiations, the United States and the Soviet Union had a lengthy discussion regarding the need to include the grounds for withdrawal. Washington actively insisted on detailing 'extraordinary events,' the way it was done in the U.K.-U.S. PTBT draft, which stated that withdrawal would be possible if any party determined:

- a. that any other party has not fulfilled its obligations under this Treaty;
- b. that nuclear explosions have been conducted by a State not a Party to this Treaty under circumstances which might jeopardize the determining [withdrawing] Party's national security (the U.S. apparently had China in mind);
- c. that nuclear explosions have been concluded by a state not a party to this Treaty under circumstances which might jeopardize the determining Party's national security, or

- d. nuclear explosions have occurred under circumstances in which it is not possible to identify the State conducting the explosions and that such explosions, if conducted by a Party to this Treaty, would violate the Treaty or, if not conducted by a Party, might jeopardize the determining Party's national security...<sup>2</sup>

William Averell Harriman, a prominent U.S. politician, who came to Moscow to negotiate the PTBT, argued that such specificity was necessary to ensure U.S. Senate's approval and ratification of the Treaty. Meanwhile, Minister Andrei Gromyko was advocating for a more general wording: instead of listing acts by third parties as a reason for withdrawal from the Treaty, he suggested to refer to states' right to withdraw from a treaty 'in exercising its national sovereignty'. As the Soviet NPT negotiator Roland Timerbaev posits, the Soviet Union was not vehemently opposed to the idea of defining circumstances that would cause a state party to withdraw from the Treaty in the exercise of its national sovereignty<sup>3</sup> however, it was 'reluctant to include "nuclear explosions" as the ground for withdrawal from the NPT, bearing in mind potential nuclear-weapon states,'<sup>4</sup> namely China. A consensus decision was to use the wording 'extraordinary events, related to the subject matter of this Treaty' that later was used in the final draft of the PTBT.<sup>5</sup>

First NPT draft to include a withdrawal provision was submitted by the United States on August 17, 1965. It followed much of the PTBT's language, but also contained new language that was intended to 'provide an additional brake on hasty withdrawal action'.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Documents on Disarmament. (1962) Anglo-American Proposal Submitted to the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee: Draft Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in All Environments, August 27, 1962, [http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/publications/documents\\_on\\_disarmament/1962\\_V\\_II/DoD\\_1962%20VOL\\_II.pdf](http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/publications/documents_on_disarmament/1962_V_II/DoD_1962%20VOL_II.pdf), accessed 15 July 2017.

<sup>3</sup> Timerbaev, R. (1999) *Rossiya i yadernoe nerazprostranenie 1945-1968*. Moscow: Nauka.P. 319.

<sup>4</sup> Vovchok, Z. (2010) *The Role of the United Nations Security Council in the Strengthening of the Withdrawal Clause of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*. PhD dissertation, Universita degli studi di Trento, Trento, Trentino-Alto Adige, Italy, [http://eprints-phd.biblio.unitn.it/305/1/PhD\\_dissertation\\_Zoryana\\_VOVCHOK\\_4\\_May\\_2010\\_SIS.pdf](http://eprints-phd.biblio.unitn.it/305/1/PhD_dissertation_Zoryana_VOVCHOK_4_May_2010_SIS.pdf), accessed 21 February 2018.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Documents on Disarmament. (1965) Statement by AGDA Director Foster to the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee: Nondissemination of Nuclear

The additional obligations required a withdrawing state to give a three months' notice to the UN Security Council and other state parties about intended withdrawal. Additionally, the notice was supposed to include 'a statement of the extraordinary events it regards as having jeopardized its supreme interests'.<sup>7</sup> As was the case with the PTBT, the United States asserted that the use of that specific language was necessary to ensure Senate ratification.

The Soviet Union opposed the U.S. proposal, arguing that because states inherently had sovereign right to withdraw from a treaty, the inclusion of a clause specifying the requirements for withdrawal, might be interpreted as negating or limiting state parties' sovereign right to withdraw. They stated that 'any special termination and revision clauses would generally further the assumption that a treaty can be denounced only in the way provided, and not in any other way'.<sup>8</sup> On September 24, 1965, the Soviet Union presented its own draft to the ENDC. The withdrawal clause of the draft was entirely based on the similar article in the PTBT and did not contain any reference to the notice of withdrawal being given to the Security Council or other parties to the NPT.<sup>9</sup>

The United States and the Soviet Union spent the following two years working towards finding a mutually acceptable language for the Treaty's withdrawal provision. According to George Bunn, the U.S. position regarding the issue was greatly affected by the efforts to accommodate the views of its allies, namely Italy and West Germany, the strongest proponents establishing multilateral nuclear force (MLF).<sup>10</sup> The main concerns of Germany and Italy were threefold:

- a. maintaining 'the option for the acquisition of nuclear weapons by a multilateral European institution;'
- b. avoiding any indefinite promise not to acquire nuclear weapons; and

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Weapons, [http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wpcontent/uploads/assets/publications/documents\\_on\\_disarmament/1964/DoD\\_1964.pdf](http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wpcontent/uploads/assets/publications/documents_on_disarmament/1964/DoD_1964.pdf), accessed 13 July 2017.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Nielsen, J. and Simpson, J. (2004) The NPT Withdrawal Clause and Its Negotiating History. MCIS NPT Issue Review, [https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/39771/1/withdrawal\\_clause\\_NPT\\_nielsen%2526simpson\\_2004.pdf](https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/39771/1/withdrawal_clause_NPT_nielsen%2526simpson_2004.pdf), accessed 16 February 2018.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> See Chapter 1 for more detail

- c. avoiding a treaty with an 'unlimited duration without undertakings by the haves to disarm that might forever divide the world into "haves" and have-nots'.<sup>11</sup>

In case MLF proposal would not come to fruition or NATO was to be dissolved, Germany and Italy wished to reserve the opportunity to be able to withdraw from the NPT to pursue their national military nuclear programs.<sup>12</sup>

The compromise was ultimately reached. The agreed language included 'both the idea that withdrawal was conditional, but at the same time [started] with the recognition of the existence of the unconditional right of a state to withdraw in exercising its national sovereignty'.<sup>13</sup> It became part of the two identical NPT drafts submitted by the United States and the Soviet Union on 24 August 1967, and subsequently of the joint NPT draft and the final NPT draft.<sup>14</sup>

During the NPT negotiations in Geneva, the U.S.-Soviet draft was generally accepted by most delegations; however, several countries expressed their concerns related to different provision of the Treaty, including the withdrawal provision.

The Romanian delegation submitted two proposals to reconsider the necessity of the obligation to inform the UN Security Council and other parties to the Treaty about withdrawal. The Romanian representative asserted that, 'every State is exclusively competent to decide which events jeopardize its supreme interests, and no other State or international body may open a discussion — still less take a decision — on a matter belonging to the State's sovereign right'.<sup>15</sup>

The U.S. representative to the ENDC Samuel De Palma explained in response that 'since withdrawal would be a step of such vital impor-

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<sup>11</sup> Nielsen, J. and Simpson, J. (2004) *The NPT Withdrawal Clause and Its Negotiating History*. MCIS NPT Issue Review, [https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/39771/1/withdrawal\\_clause\\_NPT\\_nielsen%2526simpson\\_2004.pdf](https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/39771/1/withdrawal_clause_NPT_nielsen%2526simpson_2004.pdf), accessed 16 February 2018.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Documents on Disarmament. (1968) Statement by the Romanian Representative (Ecobesco) to the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee: Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, March 11, 1968, [http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/publications/documents\\_on\\_disarmament/1968/DoD\\_1968.pdf](http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/publications/documents_on_disarmament/1968/DoD_1968.pdf), accessed 21 February 2018.

tance, other Parties to the treaty would have a strong and legitimate reason in knowing why such action has been taken'.<sup>16</sup> This statement was echoed by the Soviet representative Roshchin, who pointed out that in case any state decided to withdraw from the NPT, the other Parties must receive an explanation, 'not from any other source, but from the State itself that withdraws from the Treaty. Receipt by the Security Council of such notice together with a statement of the reasons directly from the State concerned would help the Security Council to fulfill its functions more effectively'.<sup>17</sup> Further Ambassador Roshchin stressed that providing reasons for withdrawal was in no way in conflict with a state's sovereign right to withdraw from the Treaty and pointed out that similar requirements for the procedure of withdrawal were stipulated in Article 30 of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Tlatelolco Treaty).<sup>18</sup>

Several delegations at the ENDC noted the need to establish grounds for withdrawal. The delegation of Nigeria submitted a working paper stipulating the following circumstances that could serve as a justification for withdrawal from the Treaty:

- failure to meet the aims of the Treaty;
- non-compliance with the Treaty by a state or group of states threatening balance of power and global security;
- any other extraordinary events, related to the subject matter of this Treaty, <...> [that jeopardize] the supreme interests of its country.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Documents on Disarmament. (1968) Statement by the United States Representative (De Palma) to the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee: Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, February 21, 1968 at [http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/publications/documents\\_on\\_disarmament/1968/DoD\\_1968.pdf](http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/publications/documents_on_disarmament/1968/DoD_1968.pdf), accessed 31 January 2018.

<sup>17</sup> Documents on Disarmament. (1968) Statement by the Soviet Representative (Roshchin) to the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee: Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, March 12, 1968 [http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/publications/documents\\_on\\_disarmament/1968/DoD\\_1968.pdf](http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/publications/documents_on_disarmament/1968/DoD_1968.pdf), accessed 6 January 2018.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Documents on Disarmament. (1967) Nigerian Working Paper Submitted to the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee: Additions and Amendments to the Draft Nonproliferation Treaty, November 2, 1967 at [http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/publications/documents\\_on\\_disarmament/1967/DoD\\_1967.pdf](http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/publications/documents_on_disarmament/1967/DoD_1967.pdf), accessed 5 January 2018.



Later on, the working paper received amendments that envisaged that, 'grounds for withdrawal were not only the "extraordinary events" but also other "important international developments" which "have jeopardized, or are likely to jeopardize, the national interests" of the country'.<sup>20</sup> However, according to Mohammed Shaker, a prominent Egyptian diplomat, international lawyer and member of his country's delegation to the Geneva Disarmament Conference during most of the 1960s, 'neither the United States nor the Soviet Union were committed to determine the exact boundaries of the "extraordinary events, related to the subject matter of the treaty,"<sup>21</sup> and, therefore, the Nigerian proposal did not receive traction'.<sup>22</sup>

Even though the definition of 'extraordinary events, related to the subject matter of the Treaty' was deliberately excluded from the final text of the Treaty, the possible options were given multiple times by various diplomats including the representatives of the United States, who gave 'prominence to violation of, or non-compliance with, the Treaty by other parties as qualifying grounds for withdrawal. Other specific qualifying grounds mentioned by U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk were the dissolution of NATO and the eruption or wars'.<sup>23</sup>

The delegation of Brazil suggested making an additional reference to the circumstances that 'may arise'<sup>24</sup> that would affect the supreme interests of a Party. The proposed amendment was rejected by the United States Ambassador De Palma made a statement accounting such a change to be undesirable, 'because it could be interpreted as justifying withdrawal decisions based upon remote or purely hypothetical contingencies'.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Nielsen, J. and Simpson, J. (2004) The NPT Withdrawal Clause and Its Negotiating History. MCIS NPT Issue Review, [https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/39771/1/withdrawal\\_clause\\_NPT\\_nielsen%2526simpson\\_2004.pdf](https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/39771/1/withdrawal_clause_NPT_nielsen%2526simpson_2004.pdf), accessed 16 February 2018.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Documents on Disarmament. (1968) Statement by the United States Representative (De Palma) to the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee: Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, February 22, 1968, [http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/publications/documents\\_on\\_disarmament/1968/DoD\\_1968.pdf](http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/publications/documents_on_disarmament/1968/DoD_1968.pdf), accessed 5 January 2018.

<sup>25</sup> Documents on Disarmament. (1968) Statement by the United States Representative (De Palma) to the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee: Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, February 22, 1968, [http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/publications/documents\\_on\\_disarmament/1968/](http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/publications/documents_on_disarmament/1968/)

Significant attention was given to the interlinkages between the right to withdraw from the Treaty and the implementation of disarmament obligations by the NWSs. The NNWSs asserted that 'if it is manifest at a review conference that the intentions of the treaty to achieve cessation of the nuclear arms race and to obtain nuclear disarmament have in reality been blatantly disregarded, parties to the treaty may come to regard this an extraordinary event jeopardizing their own supreme interests'.<sup>26</sup> Proposals were introduced to formally establish the lack of on disarmament as a valid ground for withdrawal from the NPT. For example, Burma suggested revising 'the withdrawal clause to make failure to fulfil in good faith the provisions of the article on nuclear disarmament a basis for withdrawal'.<sup>27</sup> Concerned with possible lack of zeal of the NWSs in disarmament efforts, Japan argued that 'states should have an opportunity to reconsider their position, including the possibility of withdrawal, five years after the treaty's entry into force'.<sup>28</sup> However, none of these proposals were incorporated 'into the superpowers' second draft and were not pushed in this session'.<sup>29</sup>

Alongside the withdrawal provisions, states also discussed the issue of a treaty's duration, which was subsequently laid down in Article X.2 of the NPT. In order to compel the nuclear weapons states to comply with their disarmament commitments, non-nuclear-weapon states began promoting the idea that the NPT should remain in force for a set number of years, after which the member states would need to decide whether to extend the Treaty further at the end of that period. Negotiation of the NPT's extension provision was a slow and arduous process and resulted in painstakingly crafted compromise

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DoD\_1968.pdf, accessed 5 January 2018; Documents on Disarmament. (1968) Statement by the Swedish Representative (Myrdal) to the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee: Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, March 5, 1968, [http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/publications/documents\\_on\\_disarmament/1968/DoD\\_1968.pdf](http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/publications/documents_on_disarmament/1968/DoD_1968.pdf), accessed 5 January, 2018.

<sup>26</sup> Shaker, M. (1980) *The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Origin and Implementation. 1959 – 1979. Volume II.* James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, [http://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/mohamed\\_shaker\\_npt\\_vol\\_2.pdf](http://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/mohamed_shaker_npt_vol_2.pdf), accessed 29 January 2018.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Harries, M. (2013) *The Role of Article VI in Debates About the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty*, PhD dissertation, King's College London, London, England, United Kingdom, [https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/files/77084896/2014\\_Harries\\_Matthew\\_Edward\\_0964413\\_thesis.pdf](https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/files/77084896/2014_Harries_Matthew_Edward_0964413_thesis.pdf), accessed 23 March 2018.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

that "twenty-five years after the entry into force of the Treaty, a conference shall be convened to decide whether the Treaty shall continue in force indefinitely, or shall be extended for an additional fixed period or periods."<sup>30</sup>

In response to the disarmament-related concerns raised by NNWSs, the United States asserted that 'if their security is jeopardized by the failure of the nuclear powers to disarm, then of course [they] can withdraw. Thus, if USSR fails to come to agreement with U.S. to cut back nuclear weapons and seriously threatens Western Europeans with these weapons, then of course they can withdraw'.<sup>31</sup> William Foster in his statement to the ENDC in 1966, also asserted that 'the United States draft would permit a non-nuclear weapon State to withdraw if the development of nuclear weapons by a particular nuclear weapon State had proceeded so far that, under all the circumstances, the supreme interests of the non-nuclear weapon State were jeopardized; or if the policies of a particular nuclear weapon State became so hostile and menacing that the non-nuclear weapon State concluded, under all relevant circumstances, that its supreme interests were jeopardized, it could then withdraw'.<sup>32</sup> In the meantime, he emphasized that the 'recourse to a withdrawal clause would be an extreme measure. Before it took place, many other developments could occur'.<sup>33</sup>

The negotiations records show that the issues of withdrawal and extension provisions 'were controversial and some key concepts remained unclear'.<sup>34</sup> As Ambassador Mohammed Shaker posits 'the issue was clearly a sensitive one and the exercise of this right by any state would clearly have major international implications' that

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<sup>30</sup> 'Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons' (1968) United Nations, Office for Disarmament Affairs, available at <https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/nuclear/npt/text> (17 May, 2021); Timerbaev, R. (1999) *Rossiia i yadernoe neraspstranenie 1945-1968*. Moscow: Nauka. P. 320.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>32</sup> Documents on Disarmament. (1966) Statement by ACDA Director Foster to the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee: Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, June 28, 1966, [http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/publications/documents\\_on\\_disarmament/1966/DoD\\_1966.pdf](http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/publications/documents_on_disarmament/1966/DoD_1966.pdf), accessed 20 July 2017.

<sup>33</sup> Arbor, A. (2005) Final Verbatim Record of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament [Meeting 268]. Michigan: University of Michigan, <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/encd/4918260.0268.001?view=toc>, accessed 26 January 2018.

<sup>34</sup> Nielsen, J. and Simpson, J. (2004) The NPT Withdrawal Clause and Its Negotiating History. MCIS NPT Issue Review, [https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/39771/1/withdrawal\\_clause\\_NPT\\_nielsen%2526simpson\\_2004.pdf](https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/39771/1/withdrawal_clause_NPT_nielsen%2526simpson_2004.pdf), accessed 16 February 2018.

is why 'the provisions of the withdrawal clause [were] carefully and intentionally worded'.<sup>35</sup> At the same time, it should be noted that the negotiations record shows that two main scenarios under discussion included the possibility of withdrawal in response to the actions taken by states non-parties to the Treaty or non-compliance by a state party. 'There appears to have been little thought given to situations where a state within the Treaty was to withdraw in the absence of such events'.<sup>36</sup>

During the debates at the ENDC, *de facto* withdrawal was not regarded as a realistic prospect. Therefore, there was no sense of urgency to work on the ways to outline possible grounds for withdrawal. Proposed withdrawal conditions presented by NNWSs were perceived as excessive and impairing the right of withdrawal. For that reason, the DPRK's decision to withdraw from the Treaty came as a great surprise to the international community.

## North Korea's Withdrawal from the NPT and Further Efforts to Strengthen Article X. 1 of the Treaty

The underlying tension between the sovereign right to withdrawal and certain — albeit rather vague — limitations on that right contained in the Treaty came to the fore when the DPRK announced its withdrawal.

### NPT Depositaries Meeting – September 13, 1991

8. REGIONAL ISSUES - NORTH KOREA. THE DEPOSITARIES BRIEFLY DISCUSSED NEXT STEPS WITH RESPECT TO NORTH KOREA. THE SOVIETS ASKED POINTEDLY WHETHER THERE WAS ANYTHING THE U.S. COULD DO BILATERALLY TO HELP RESOLVE THE PROBLEM. U.S. REP GORDON ASSURED THE SOVIETS THAT THE USG WAS SEIZED AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS WITH THE PROBLEM OF THE DPRK'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM AND WAS LOCKING AT WAYS TO RESOLVE IT. THE U.S. ADAMANTLY REFUSES TO ACCEPT ANY LINKAGE, HOWEVER, BETWEEN NORTH KOREA'S SAFEGUARDS AGREEMENT AND U.S. SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS IN THE REGION. MAYORSKY SAID THE SOVIET ABILITY TO REASON WITH THE DPRK WILL BE SERIOUSLY DIMINISHED IN THE NEAR FUTURE. ALL AGREED THAT JAPAN REPRESENTED A MOST IMPORTANT LEVER TO ANY RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

The DPRK gave its first notice of withdrawal from the NPT on 12 March 1993, after questions were raised about whether it was covertly reprocessing plutonium for nuclear weapons. The reasons for withdrawal given by the DPRK included Korean-U.S. military exercises and IAEA inspectors' prejudice. The three depository governments of the NPT – the United Kingdom, the United States and Russia – immediately responded to the DPRK's notice of withdrawal by issuing a statement questioning whether 'the DPRK's stated reasons for withdrawing from the Treaty constitute extraordinary events relating to the subject-matter of the Treaty'.<sup>37</sup>

Russia together with the United States and many other NPT States Parties did not accept the DPRK's withdrawal from the NPT, this had even led to the talks about the possibility of invalidating state's notice of withdrawal on the grounds of other parties' refusal to acknowledge its notice of withdrawal.<sup>38</sup>

Concerned with the disclosed violations of the Treaty committed by the DPRK and the Treaty's universality being undermined, the NPT depositories began the search for measures to convince the DPRK to retract its withdrawal notice – they discussed the idea of increasing the UN Security Council's involvement in addressing the DPRK's withdrawal and compelling it to stay within the NPT 'at least for the time being, while the controversy was being discussed in capitals and in the Security Council';<sup>39</sup> however, China expressed strong disagreement with the rest of the NWSs. 'All that was agreed was that the Council would call upon North Korea to permit IAEA inspections. North Korea refused to accept this call. The Council took no further action after North Korea refused'.<sup>40</sup>

The United States then decided to take a different approach to the issue and engaged in a series of bilateral talks with the DPRK 'centered around international inspections of North Korea's nuclear

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<sup>37</sup> Vovchok, Z. (2010) *The Role of the United Nations Security Council in the Strengthening of the Withdrawal Clause of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*. PhD dissertation, Università degli studi di Trento, Trento, Trentino-Alto Adige, Italy, [http://eprints-phd.biblio.unitn.it/305/1/PhD\\_dissertation\\_Zoryana\\_VOVCHOK\\_4\\_May\\_2010\\_SIS.pdf](http://eprints-phd.biblio.unitn.it/305/1/PhD_dissertation_Zoryana_VOVCHOK_4_May_2010_SIS.pdf), accessed 21 February 2018.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Timerbaev, R. and Bunn, G. (2005) *The Right to Withdraw from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT): The Views of Two Negotiators*. Stanford University, [https://fsi.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/Bunn\\_Timerbaev.pdf](https://fsi.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/Bunn_Timerbaev.pdf), accessed 15 March 2018.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

facilities, nuclear waste sites, and its announced withdrawal'.<sup>41</sup> The negotiations resulted in Pyongyang pulling back its notice of withdrawal one day before it was due to take effect. Extensive discussions and U.S.-DPRK negotiations further continued and culminated in the signing of the Agreed Framework on October 21, 1994. In the Agreed Framework, the United States made a commitment to help the DPRK build two light water nuclear reactors, in exchange for a freeze and an eventual dismantlement of its nuclear reactors. Pyongyang also agreed to allow IAEA inspectors to monitor the implementation process.<sup>42</sup>

Russia expressed concern at the U.S. efforts to go alone in addressing the issue. Russia argued that the conclusion of the Agreed Framework resulted in IAEA comprehensive safeguards implementation being postponed for 4-5 years. Moscow stressed that such arrangements might set a bad precedent for other countries and encourage them to beg for benefits in exchange for not withdrawing from the Treaty. It appeared later, that the Agreed Framework might have also influenced the standards applied by other nations to their nuclear trade and technology transfer.<sup>43</sup>

A significant milestone in the development of the situation revolving around DPRK's nuclear issue took place in October 2002, when the Agreed Framework collapsed 'due to alleged violations from both sides'.<sup>44</sup> A month later, the IAEA issued a resolution urging the DPRK to return to compliance with its non-proliferation obligations and called for talks on safeguards. Pyongyang disrupted the safeguards equipment and made a request to remove IAEA inspectors from the DPRK territory.<sup>45</sup>

In January 2003, the DPRK gave a second notice of withdrawal from the NPT saying that it 'was acting in self-defense because it was

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<sup>41</sup> Collins, L. (n.d.) 25 Years of Negotiations and Provocations: North Korea and the United States. CSIS. Beyond Parallel, <https://beyondparallel.csis.org/25-years-of-negotiations-provocations/>, accessed 13 March 2018.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> May, M. (2001) Verifying the Agreed Framework. Center for Global Security Research, Stanford University, <https://fsi.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/VAF-June.pdf>, accessed 15 March 2018.

<sup>44</sup> Davenport, K. (2017) The Six Party Talks at a Glance, Arms Control Association, <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/6partytalks>, accessed 31 January 2018.

<sup>45</sup> International Atomic Energy Agency. (2017) IAEA and DPRK: Chronology of Key Events, <https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:n0hNo9IsZX0J:https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/focus/dprk/chronology-of-key-events+&cd=2&hl=ru&ct=clnk&gl=ru>, accessed 4 February 2018.

"most seriously threatened" by the United States'.<sup>46</sup> It also claimed that 'it was only resurrecting its prior notice';<sup>47</sup> and therefore, only one day of notice was required, which created a necessity for additional legal clarifications. France, Russia, the United States and the United Kingdom tried to address the DPRK's intention of withdrawal through engaging with the UN Security Council; however, China once again opposed the idea of taking severe actions against the DPRK to bring it into compliance, and instead insisted on negotiations with Pyongyang. These negotiations, commonly referred to as 'Six-Party talks,' began shortly after, in April of 2003, and involved China, Japan, Russia, the United States and the South Korea. They included not only multilateral talks but also a series of one on one meetings between senior officials from participating countries. In the course of the Six Party talks the head of the Russian delegation, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Alexander Losyukov had multiple bilateral meetings with the U.S. representatives, including James Kelly, Christina Rocca and Thomas Fingar, aimed at identifying ways to reach the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.<sup>48</sup>

The DPRK's announcement of withdrawal from the NPT caused its members to discuss a closely related issue of 'irreversibility' of the NPT commitments. Many states were inspired to 'take a second look at the three-months-notice withdrawal provision'<sup>49</sup> and began working on the development and implementation of conditions and procedures that would prevent an abuse of the withdrawal right.<sup>50</sup>

However, the 2003 Preparatory Committee for the 2005 NPT Review Conference (PrepCom) primarily avoided discussing both the DPRK's announcement and Article X.1. The Chair of the PrepCom,

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<sup>46</sup> Mydans, S. (2003) North Korea Assailed for Withdrawing from Arms Treaty, *The New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/10/international/north-korea-assailed-for-withdrawing-from-arms-treaty.html>, accessed 1 February 2018.

<sup>47</sup> Bunn, G. and Rhinelander, J. (2008) The Right to Withdraw from the NPT: Article X Is Not Unconditional. Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy, <http://www.acronym.org.uk/old/dd/dd79/79gbjr.htm>, accessed 30 January 2018.

<sup>48</sup> V Vashingtone Nachalis Rossiisko-Amerikanskiye Konsultatsii po Yadernoy Probleme KNDR (2003) RIA Novosti, <https://sakhalin.info/news/20404>, accessed 19 March 2018.

<sup>49</sup> Dhanapala, J. and Rydell, R. (2005) Multilateral Diplomacy and the NPT: An Insider's Account, <http://www.unidir.org/files/publications/pdfs/multilateral-diplomacy-and-the-npt-an-insider-saccount-323.pdf>, accessed 8 April 2018.

<sup>50</sup> Dhanapala, J. and Rydell, R. (2005) Multilateral Diplomacy and the NPT: An Insider's Account, <http://www.unidir.org/files/publications/pdfs/multilateral-diplomacy-and-the-npt-an-insider-saccount-323.pdf>, accessed 8 April 2018.

Ambassador Laszlo Molnar explained that 'the decision to opt out from discussing withdrawal was motivated by the idea that differing views of State Parties on that issue would be unlikely to lead to a constructive dialogue'.<sup>51</sup> Many also expected the DPRK to retract its announcement of withdrawal as it did in 1993. Only a handful of states decided to address the DPRK's announced withdrawal and its non-compliance with the Treaty obligations. For example, the NAM requested in its statement that 'parties concerned resolve, through dialogue and negotiations, all issues related to the withdrawal of the DPRK from the NPT as an extension of their goodwill'.<sup>52</sup> The United States in its address to the Committee expressed its willingness to 'end the North Korea's threat through peaceful diplomatic means'.<sup>53</sup>

In 2004 it was clear that the DPRK was not going to go back on its announcement of withdrawal from the NPT. The PrepCom of 2004 began to discuss ways to address the situation. In the course of deliberations, Germany argued that a state should be denied the right to withdraw from the Treaty in case it 'is alleged to be in non-compliance with the Treaty'<sup>54</sup> adding that, 'in accordance with international law, a state withdrawing from the NPT is still accountable for breaches or acts of non-compliance committed while still ... a party to the NPT ... [and] will continue to be subject to decisions of the relevant international institutions such as the IAEA and the UNSC [United Nations

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<sup>51</sup> Du Preez, J. and Schroeder, E. (2003) 2003 NPT Preparatory Committee: Business as Usual? <https://www.nonproliferation.org/2003-npt-preparatory-committee-business-asusual/>, accessed 5 February 2018.

<sup>52</sup> Reaching Critical Will. (2003) Statement by H.E. Ambassador Rastam Mohd. Isa Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations, New York, on Behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons at the General Debate of the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Geneva, 28 April 2003, [http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmamentfora/npt/prepcom03/2003statements/28April\\_Malaysia.pdf](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmamentfora/npt/prepcom03/2003statements/28April_Malaysia.pdf), accessed 14 March 2018.

<sup>53</sup> Reaching Critical Will. (2003) Statement by Assistant Secretary of State John S. Wolf Representative of the United States of America to the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, [http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmamentfora/npt/prepcom03/2003statements/28April\\_U.S..pdf](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmamentfora/npt/prepcom03/2003statements/28April_U.S..pdf), accessed 14 March 2018.

<sup>54</sup> Bunn, G. and Rhineland, J. (2005) The Right to Withdraw from the NPT: Article X Is Not Unconditional. Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy, <http://www.acronym.org.uk/old/dd/dd79/79gbjr.htm>, accessed 30 January 2018.



Security Council]'.<sup>55</sup> Germany also proposed 'that a state wishing to withdraw from the treaty would have to give prior notice to all NPT parties setting out its concerns, and engage in consultations to explore ways to address the concerns and avoid its withdrawal'.<sup>56</sup>

France made a related argument that, 'a nation that has announced that it is withdrawing from the NPT should not be permitted to make use of nuclear materials, facilities, equipment or technology acquired while it was a party to the NPT'.<sup>57</sup> Many states pointed to the need for diplomatic and peaceful means to resolve the issue and showed their support for the ongoing Six-Party talks.<sup>58</sup> 'Such proposals are gathering interest, but face a central problem that enforcing them would take the IAEA far beyond its established powers or require a level of management and decision-making that the Security Council is not equipped to perform'.<sup>59</sup>

The DPRK's announcement of withdrawal also generated a lot of discussion about its subsequent legal status under the Treaty. The United States and the United Nations Security Council accepted its withdrawal, while Russia did not, citing the fact that Pyongyang violated Article X.1 of the NPT. DPRK's unique status remains a contested issue even to this date.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Johnson R. (2004) Is the NPT up to the Challenge of Proliferation? Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy, [www.acronym.org.uk/old/archive/npt/unidir.pdf](http://www.acronym.org.uk/old/archive/npt/unidir.pdf), accessed 14 March 2018.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Bunn, G. and Rhinelander, J. (2005) The Right to Withdraw from the NPT: Article X Is Not Unconditional. Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy, <http://www.acronym.org.uk/old/dd/dd79/79gblr.htm>, accessed 30 January 2018.

<sup>58</sup> Reaching Critical Will. (2004) Chairman's Summary. Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons <http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom04/chairsum.pdf>, accessed 1 February 2018.

<sup>59</sup> Johnson, R. (2004) Is the NPT up to the Challenge of Proliferation? Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy, [www.acronym.org.uk/old/archive/npt/unidir.pdf](http://www.acronym.org.uk/old/archive/npt/unidir.pdf), accessed 14 March 2018.

<sup>60</sup> Hamidi, Sidra (2019) What's in a Name? North Korea and the Contested Politics of 'Nuclear Weapons States,' War on the Rocks, March 6, available at <https://warontherocks.com/2019/03/whats-in-a-name-north-korea-and-the-contested-politics-of-nuclear-weapons-states/> (30 July, 2019); 'Director of the Foreign Ministry Department for Non-Proliferation and Arms Control Mikhail Ulyanov's interview with the newspaper Kommersant' (2017) Embassy of the Russian Federation in the United States, 13 September, available at [https://washington.mid.ru/en/press-centre/news/director\\_of\\_the\\_foreign\\_ministry\\_department\\_for\\_non\\_proliferation\\_and\\_arms\\_control\\_mikhail\\_ulyanov\\_s/](https://washington.mid.ru/en/press-centre/news/director_of_the_foreign_ministry_department_for_non_proliferation_and_arms_control_mikhail_ulyanov_s/) (30 July, 2021).

Discussion of potential abuse of the NPT withdrawal clause had gathered momentum and became one of the key issues during the 2005 NPT Review Conference. Even though the Review Conference was not successful in producing a final document, NPT state parties made many proposals regarding their understanding of Article X.1 of the NPT. A large portion of them referred to Article 71 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (VCLT) and international customary law, that a state withdrawing from a treaty remained responsible for violations committed prior to withdrawal.<sup>61</sup>

In its national report on the implementation of the NPT submitted in 2005, Russia stressed 'the exceptional sensitivity'<sup>62</sup> of the issue of the withdrawal from the NPT. As a measure to strengthen the NPT, Russia suggested, 'enhancing the responsibility of States for making a decision to withdraw from the Treaty in accordance with article X <...> through the adoption of a number of political measures and procedures'<sup>63</sup> with the stipulation that 'such actions would not lead to revision of the provisions of the NPT'.<sup>64</sup>

The United States submitted to the 2005 Review Conference a working paper that stressed that withdrawal from the Treaty should not exempt a state from being accountable for violations committed prior to withdrawal and consequences of those actions. It 'called on state parties to consider different methods to dissuade a State Party from withdrawal' and underlined the indispensable role of the UN Security Council and the IAEA Board of Governors in restoring compliance by a state party contemplating withdrawal from the Treaty. The United States proposed further stringent measures following a withdrawal and also an announcement of intention to withdraw from the NPT. These related to nuclear supplies and actions to prevent clandestine transfers. The United States deemed that nuclear supplies to states that had withdrawn from the NPT and were

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<sup>61</sup> United Nations Organization. (2010) Final Document. 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=NPT/CONF.2010/50%20\(VOL.I\)](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=NPT/CONF.2010/50%20(VOL.I)), accessed 31 January 2018.

<sup>62</sup> United Nations Organization. (2005) National Report on the Implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons by the Russian Federation. 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N05/340/74/PDF/N0534074.pdf?OpenElement>, accessed 15 February 2018.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

pursuing nuclear activities without safeguards, or were seeking a nuclear weapon capability should cease. Even the announcement of an intention to withdraw from the Treaty should be sufficient to halting nuclear supplies. Moreover, the United States argued that such States should be denied the ability to use imported nuclear supplies and materials while they were still Parties to the NPT, as their ability to obtain such supplies and materials stemmed from their professed commitment to the Treaty and acceptance of IAEA safeguards.<sup>65</sup> All the subsequent documents submitted by the United States in the course of the NPT review process were built upon that working paper.<sup>66</sup>

Not all NPT states parties supported the U.S. approach based on 'stringent mechanisms of withdrawal' and 'harsh consequences of such actions'. The Arab States in the statement delivered by Qatar asserted that tightening of the withdrawal procedure would 'not only entail a long ratification process by the national institutions of each State Party, but could also have negative impact on universalization by giving States non-parties additional reasons not to accede'.<sup>67</sup> The NAM furthermore stated that all proposals went 'beyond the provision of the NPT' and stressed that 'the right of "withdrawal" of member States from treaties or conventions should be governed by international treaty law'.<sup>68</sup> At the following review conferences and preparatory committees the NAM did not deviate from its position and continued to oppose attempts of other state parties to the Treaty to review Article X in any way.<sup>69</sup>

The U.S. allies who had a certain impact on the Article X.1 negotiations in the 1960s also made their statements to the Review Conference. Italy, for example, characterized 'both the withdrawal from the NPT and the inconclusive results of the past preparatory

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<sup>65</sup> Vovchok, Z. (2010) *The Role of the United Nations Security Council in the Strengthening of the Withdrawal Clause of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*. PhD dissertation, Università degli studi di Trento, Trento, Trentino-Alto Adige, Italy, [http://eprints-phd.biblio.unitn.it/305/1/PhD\\_dissertation\\_Zoryana\\_VOVCHOK\\_4\\_May\\_2010\\_SIS.pdf](http://eprints-phd.biblio.unitn.it/305/1/PhD_dissertation_Zoryana_VOVCHOK_4_May_2010_SIS.pdf), accessed 21 February 2018.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> *Reaching Critical Will*. (2008) Statement by H.E. Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja Ambassador/Charge d'affaires a.i. of the Republic of Indonesia to the United Nations, WTO, and other International Organizations <http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom08/statements/NAMApril28.pdf>, accessed 19 March 2018.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

process as an institutional weakness in the Treaty'.<sup>70</sup> Germany stressed that the situation around the DPRK called for consideration of the enforcement of the Treaty and echoed other states' views of the role of the UN Security Council in examining possible implication of a withdrawal. Germany argued that a notification of withdrawal should 'at the same time trigger an immediate consultation process to explore ways and means to address the issue'.<sup>71</sup> It also echoed other states' conviction that a 'state contemplating withdrawal [should be] aware of the consequences of such a decision'.<sup>72</sup>

The issue was repeatedly raised during the preparation phase for the upcoming NPT Review Conference by various states. At the 2009 PrepCom, the representative of Russia suggested including in the Final document of the 2010 Review Conference the following understanding of the obligations contained in Article X:

- a 'notice of withdrawal' has to be given in writing, the usual format being a note verbal to the governments of all States Parties to the Treaty and the President of the Security Council;
- this note verbal has to be given three months in advance of an intended withdrawal and shall include the statement of the required extraordinary events the country regards as having jeopardized its supreme interests; the statement should be as detailed and specific as possible;
- the three-month period starts with the date of transmission of the note verbal to the governments of all States Parties to the Treaty and the President of the Security Council. Any other declarations, public statements or letters of intention are in no way valid to shorten this period.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Vovchok, Z. (2010) *The Role of the United Nations Security Council in the Strengthening of the Withdrawal Clause of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*. PhD dissertation, Università degli studi di Trento, Trento, Trentino-Alto Adige, Italy, [http://eprints-phd.biblio.unitn.it/305/1/PhD\\_dissertation\\_Zoryana\\_VOVCHOK\\_4\\_May\\_2010\\_SIS.pdf](http://eprints-phd.biblio.unitn.it/305/1/PhD_dissertation_Zoryana_VOVCHOK_4_May_2010_SIS.pdf), accessed 21 February 2018.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Reaching Critical Will. (2008) Statement by H.E. Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja Ambassador/Charge d'affaires a.i. of the Republic of Indonesia to the United Nations, WTO, and other International Organizations <http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom08/statements/NAMApril28.pdf>, accessed 19 March 2018.

<sup>73</sup> Reaching Critical Will. (2010) Statement by the Delegation of the Russian Federation at the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Article X of the Treaty, <http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/>

Russia noted that despite its support for strengthening the role of the UNSC in the context of withdrawal from the NPT, it did not 'believe that any withdrawal poses a threat to peace and international security and is subject to consideration by the UNSC as a matter of urgency'<sup>74</sup> stressing that 'in accordance with Article 39 of the Charter of the United Nations, nobody but the UN Security Council can make a decision on the matter'.<sup>75</sup>

In 2009, the NWSs began a series of private meetings dedicated to the discussion of progress achieved during the NPT review process. The NWSs shared their view on how to respond to notifications of withdrawal from the Treaty. 'The discussion included modalities under which NPT states party could respond collectively and individually to a notification of withdrawal, including through arrangements regarding the disposition of equipment and materials acquired or derived under safeguards during NPT membership. The NWSs agreed that states remain responsible under international law for violations of the treaty committed prior to withdrawal'.<sup>76</sup>

The most contentious discussion of the 2010 NPT Review Conference 'focused on strengthening the criteria to be met by a state in the event of its withdrawal from the NPT, international cooperation on the transfer of nuclear materials and technologies, and the review process'.<sup>77</sup> According to Jayantha Dhanapala and Tariq Rauf, 'no agreement was achieved on strengthening the withdrawal provisions or on changing the review process beyond what was agreed on these issues at the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences'.<sup>78</sup> Apart from reiterating state party's support for denying NPT membership

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documents/Disarmament-foa/npt/prepcom09/statements/11MayX\_Russia.pdf, accessed 15 March 2018.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Kimball, D. and Crail, P. (2011) Original Nuclear Weapons States Need to Walk the Walk and Fulfill Their NPT Disarmament and Nonproliferation Commitments, <https://www.armscontrol.org/blog/2011-07-01/original-nuclear-weapons-states-need-walkwalk-fulfill-their-npt-disarmament>, accessed 31 January 2018.

<sup>77</sup> Dhanapala, J. and Rauf, T. (2017) Reflections on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Review Conferences and the Future of the NPT. SIPRI, <https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/Reflections-on-treaty-on-non-proliferation-of-nuclear-weapons.pdf>, accessed 4 February 2018.

<sup>78</sup> Dhanapala, J. and Rauf, T. (2017) Reflections on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Review Conferences and the Future of the NPT. SIPRI, <https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/Reflections-on-treaty-on-non-proliferation-of-nuclear-weapons.pdf>, accessed 4 February 2018.

benefits to any withdrawing party, Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference noted 'divergent views regarding its interpretation with respect to other relevant international law'.<sup>79</sup>

The 2010 Review Conference witnessed a case of Russia's cooperation with its allies from the Commonwealth of Independent States on the non-proliferation-related issue when it presented proposals for building stronger barriers for the withdrawals in bad faith developed jointly with Ukraine. Similarly, they, like the United States, emphasized the need for the active involvement of the UNSC and IAEA's Board of Governors in deterring and responding to withdrawals, and called on state parties to carry out consultations with a state contemplating withdrawal.<sup>80</sup>

After the 2012 Conference on establishing a MEWMDFZ was postponed, many states became more vocal in their discontent with the effectiveness of the NPT and the 1995 decision to extend the Treaty indefinitely. At the 2013 PrepCom, Egypt decided to withdraw from the second week of the talks in protest against the lack of the progress on the implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East free of nuclear weapons, which led to the discussion among non-proliferation experts about possible actions that disgruntled NPT state parties might take to develop momentum in the creation of a MEWMDFZ. Some commentators argued that withdrawal might become a bargaining chip that NNWSs would use to get the NWSs to address this or other challenges of the non-proliferation regime.<sup>81</sup>

In April of 2013 following the P5 conference 'On the Way to the 2015 NPT Review Conference,' China, France, Russia, the United

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<sup>79</sup> Reaching Critical Will. (2010) 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Final Document. Volume I. Part I, <http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2010/FinalDocument.pdf>, accessed 1 February 2018.

<sup>80</sup> Reaching Critical Will. (2010) Working paper prepared by Ukraine and the Russian Federation regarding recommendations on the procedures for, and consequences of, possible exercise by a State of the right to withdraw from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (Working paper No. 2) <http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmamentfora/npt/revcon2010/documents/WP2.pdf>, accessed 24 February 2018.

<sup>81</sup> Shaker, M. (1980) *The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Origin and Implementation. 1959 – 1979. Volume II.* James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, [http://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/mohamed\\_shaker\\_npt\\_vol\\_2.pdf](http://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/mohamed_shaker_npt_vol_2.pdf), accessed 29 January 2018.

Kingdom and the United States presented a joint statement announcing that

the P5 shared their views on how to prevent abuse of NPT withdrawal (Article X). The discussion included modalities under which a NPT state party could respond collectively and individually to a notification of withdrawal, including arrangements regarding the disposition of equipment and materials acquired or derived under safeguards during NPT membership. They resolved to make efforts to broaden consensus among NPT state parties on the latter issue at the 2014 PrepCom, thus making a further contribution to the NPT Review Process.<sup>82</sup>

In 2014, the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) submitted its first working paper on Article X expressing support for the formulation of specific principles regarding the exercise of the right of withdrawal by a state party. Mikhail Uliyanov, Head of the Delegation of the Russian Federation gave a statement expressing interest in the NPDI's working paper and highlighted the language that said

The [NPT] Review Conference has authority to address specifically what might be done to strengthen the implementation of the provisions of the Non-Proliferation Treaty using the mandate to look forward decided upon at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference. The Initiative proposes to achieve such regulation within the framework of the Treaty and under the authority of the Review Conference.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Permanent Mission of the United States of America to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva. (2013) Joint Statement: Fourth P5 Conference: On the Way to the 2015 NPT Review Conference, <https://geneva.usmission.gov/2013/04/19/joint-statement-fourth-p5-conference-on-the-way-to-the-2015-npt-review-conference/>, accessed 20 February 2018.

<sup>83</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. (2014) Statement by Mikhail I. Uliyanov, Head of the Delegation of the Russian Federation at the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (Article X of the NPT – withdrawal from the Treaty), New York, May 6, 2014, [http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/adernoen-nerasprostranenie/-/asset\\_publisher/JrcRGi5UdnBO/content/id/61514](http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/adernoen-nerasprostranenie/-/asset_publisher/JrcRGi5UdnBO/content/id/61514), accessed 1 February 2018; Reaching Critical Will. (2014) Exercise of the right of withdrawal contained in article X Working paper submitted by

In the statement presented to the 2014 Preparatory Committee, Russia expressed hope that the outcome document of the 2015 Review Conference would provide specific recommendations concerning possible measures and principles to be applied in case of a state's withdrawal from the NPT. The statement echoed the NPDI's suggestion for holding consultations with a view to persuade a withdrawing party to reconsider its decision and proposed these consultations to focus on the assessment of the effects of such withdrawal, taking into consideration the IAEA's conclusion on the withdrawing party's safeguards compliance.

The 2015 NPT Review Conference gave rise to active discussions of Article X.1. 35 countries, including the United States and Russia, submitted a working paper addressing withdrawal from the NPT. The working paper featured the understanding of the withdrawal provision provided by Russia in its working paper in 2009. It also contained suggestions earlier made by multiple state parties to the NPT, including the United States and Russia, regarding the expansion of the role the UN Security Council and the IAEA Board of Governors in addressing a Party's withdrawal from the NPT, the consultations with a withdrawing party, and the halt to the transfer of nuclear materials, equipment, technologies, and facilities established for peaceful purposes to a withdrawing party. The NWSs agreed to make efforts to 'broaden consensus among NPT State Parties on issues of procedures and consequences of withdrawal at the 2015 [Review Conference]'.<sup>84</sup>

The outcome documents of the review process suggest that the United States and Russia maintained a similar position with regards to the issue of withdrawal from the NPT. Both parties argued the necessity to strengthen Article X.1 of the NPT through the introduction of a more stringent mechanism of withdrawal and harsh

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the members of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (Australia, Canada, Chile, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Nigeria, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Poland, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates), <http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom14/documents/WP13.pdf>, accessed 19 March 2018.

<sup>84</sup> Reaching Critical Will. (2015) Statement by the People's Republic of China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America to the 2015 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, [http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/statements/30April\\_UKJoint.pdf](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/statements/30April_UKJoint.pdf), accessed 12 March 2018.



consequences for it. All the efforts of the United States and Russia to introduce new principles and measures to govern the process of withdrawal from the NPT have been continually facing rejection from NAM and the Arab Group, which both have been insisting that all the attempts to reinterpret the Treaty's provisions should be presented in a form of amendments. However, neither the United States nor Russia seek to make changes to the existing provisions of the Treaty via amendments. There is an understanding between the NPT depository states that the use of amendments would be akin to opening a Pandora's box that has the potential to entail revision of other Treaty's provisions and further complicate already difficult situation of the NPT.

Progressive deterioration of U.S.-Russia relations particularly as a result of the events that took place in Crimea led to the termination of constructive bilateral discussions on Article X of the NPT.<sup>85</sup> In the course of the deliberations at the first and second sessions of the 2020 NPT PrepCom neither the United States nor Russia addressed the issue of the abuse of Article X.1. or tried to engage in the dialogue on the issue, rather they chose to continue trading accusations and refraining from further discussions on the issue. Against this backdrop, it is sad to note that the prospect of resumed dialogue between the United States and Russia currently remains elusive. The trend towards the increased hostility between the two depositors of the NPT poses a grave danger to the whole non-proliferation regime — especially now with the sharp increase in discontent of NNWSs with the lack of commitment to Article VI obligations from NWSs.

The adoption of measures to strengthen Article X.1. of the NPT has become particularly pertinent in the light of the Trump Administration's announcement about its decision to withdraw from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Actions and reimpose sanctions against Iran. Even the theoretical possibility of Iran withdrawing from the NPT and acquiring nuclear weapons constitutes a grave threat to the future of the NPT and a frightening possibility of a nuclear arms race in the Middle East involving Iran, Israel, Saudi Arabia and possibly other countries in the region.

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<sup>85</sup> Einhorn, R. (2016) Prospects for U.S.-Russian Nonproliferation Cooperation. Brookings, <https://www.brookings.edu/research/prospects-for-u-s-russian-nonproliferation-cooperation/>, accessed 11 March 2018.

## Conclusions

At the Geneva Disarmament Committee NPT negotiations in the 1960s, the United States and the Soviet Union quickly arrived at a consensus regarding the withdrawal provision of the treaty. They agreed that the treaty should not limit a state party's right to determine which 'extraordinary events' jeopardize its supreme interests. In case any state party decided to withdraw from the NPT, the United Nations Security Council was supposed to serve as a final arbiter and keep or restore international peace and security by taking necessary measures.

After the DPRK announced its withdrawal from the NPT, the question arose as to how to prevent a state from abusing Article X.1 without affecting its sovereign right to withdraw from the Treaty. In the course of the NPT review process, States Parties proposed a variety of measures to strengthen the NPT's withdrawal clause.

Following the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) in 2017, there was a concern that NPT member states might decide to leave the NPT for the TPNW. And while definitely possible, that scenario appears to be unlikely, and would be a result of profound dissatisfaction with the perceived lack of progress on the disarmament front rather than anything else. It should be noted that the report by the Norwegian Academy of International Law in 2018 confirmed that the accession to the TPNW does not "offer states a legal pretext to exit from the NPT,"<sup>86</sup>

The prospects for U.S.-Russia cooperation on prevention of abuse of the NPT withdrawal provision now appear slim for a number of reasons, inter alia:

- General deterioration of relations between the United States and Russia due to the disagreement over the status of Crimea;
- Problems relating to strengthening of the role of the UNSC and the IAEA Board of Governors that would 'take the IAEA far beyond its established powers or require a level of management and decision-making that the Security Council is not equipped to perform';

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<sup>86</sup> Nystuen, Gro and Kjølv Egeland Torbjørn Graff Hugo (2018) 'The TPNW: Setting the record straight,' Norwegian Academy of International Law, available at <http://intl.no/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/TPNW-Setting-the-record-straight-Oct-2018-WEB.pdf> (July 29, 2021).

- Despite certain concerns about NPT member states potentially deciding to withdraw from the NPT, today it appears that no country is in a rush to leave the NPT – whether out of frustration over stalled nuclear disarmament or for any other reason;
- The opposition from the members of the NAM Caucus, who have been asserting that they would not accept any addition of the Treaty's provisions as legally binding unless it is enacted through the formal amendment procedure set out in Article VIII of the NPT;
- The existence of other serious challenges to the non-proliferation regime and the NPT that might require more consideration from two depositories of the NPT.

## CHAPTER 3

# **RUSSIAN-AMERICAN COOPERATION ON NPT EXTENSION: LESSONS LEARNED**

*Daria Selezneva*

The Eighteen-Nation Committee's negotiations on the duration of a future Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) resulted in broad consensus and compromise that 25 years after its entry into force a conference on the extension of the Treaty would be convened to decide 'whether [it] shall continue in force indefinitely or shall be extended for an additional fixed period or periods'.<sup>1</sup>

The 1995 Review and Extension Conference (NPTREC), as the name implies, had the dual task of reviewing the NPT and deciding upon its extension. It took place from April 17 to May 12, 1995 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York and resulted in the adoption of a 'package deal' that also came to be known as 'indefinite extension plus' or 'permanence with accountability'. The package deal comprised three decisions (on 'strengthening the review process for the Treaty'; 'principles and objectives for nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament'; and 'indefinite extension') and the Resolution on the Middle East.

As U.S. Special Representative for Arms Control, Nonproliferation, and Disarmament Ambassador Thomas Graham argues, 'the consensus decision to extend the NPT indefinitely and without conditions was a team effort that required numerous contributions'.<sup>2</sup> The contribution to the achievement of the NPT extension made by the United States and Russia is hard to underestimate. Their

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<sup>1</sup> 'Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons' (1968) United Nations, Office for Disarmament Affairs, available at <https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/nuclear/npt/text> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>2</sup> Graham, Thomas Jr. (1995) 'Speech at the Woodrow Wilson Center,' U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Arms Control Text, available at <https://www.thom-asgraham.info/Speech%2347May1995.pdf> (18 May, 2021).

concerted efforts to achieve the indefinite extension of the NPT were fueled by their shared interest in halting the proliferation of nuclear weapons proliferation, and hence preserving the NPT. It should be noted that, at the time, the two countries enjoyed generally good relations and closely collaborated on a number of issues and activities, including nuclear-related. In 1991, the United States and Russia signed the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), which became the first agreement to practically reduce strategic arms on both sides. Later the same year, Washington and Moscow agreed to start a Cooperative Threat Reduction Program (CTR), better known as the 'Nunn-Lugar program' – it was designed to achieve the dismantlement and destruction of weapons of mass destruction in the former Soviet republics and ensure safety and security of Russian nuclear infrastructure.

Ambassador Jayantha Dhanapala, President of the 1995 NPTREC, provided considerable assistance in their endeavor. His fundamental objective was to ensure that 'the decision [will] be unanimous, or [...] at least a parliamentary consensus decision'.<sup>3</sup> In order to achieve consensus on the Treaty extension, he established a President's Consultation Group made up of representatives from different regions of the world, including representatives from the United States and Russia.

Canada and South Africa also played a significant part in the indefinite extension of the NPT, serving as a 'bridge' between the nuclear-weapon states (NWSs), who supported the indefinite extension of the Treaty, and the non-nuclear-weapon states (NNWSs) – the majority of them being the NAM states – who originally opposed it.<sup>4</sup>

Lastly, one cannot fail to mention the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), negotiations on which commenced in January 1994. Many NNWSs disgruntled by the lack of progress in the area of nuclear disarmament had high hopes about the future of

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<sup>3</sup> 'Oral History Interview with Thomas Graham,' (2017) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Contributed to NPIHP by Michal Onderco, Wilson Center, available at <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/177539.pdf?v=1819499f04e42170c2d9c6014deadcda> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>4</sup> Krieger, David (2019) 'Participation in the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference,' Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, available at <https://www.wagingpeace.org/participation-in-the-1995-npt-review-and-extension-conference/> (18 May, 2021).

the CTBT and were looking forward to the Treaty being concluded. Without it, NNWSs would certainly be less inclined to support the indefinite extension of the NPT.

## **In the Lead-Up to the 1995 Review and Extension Conference**

### *States Parties' Positions Prior to the NPTREC*

In the early 1990s, the majority of the NPT member-states remained uncertain about how they were going to vote at the NPTREC. It was estimated that the number of the conference participants was going to be around 170, of which at least 86 would be necessary for any extension option to win. Since the cold war era NPT states parties remained conditionally divided into two groups: 'Western' and 'Eastern'. The Western Group comprised the United States and its allies – NATO states, Australia, and Japan – around 25 states in total. The Eastern Group consisted of about 20 states loosely associated with the former Soviet Union and its allies. As Ambassador Dhanapala points out,

Given that many of the states in this Group wished to become, and in fact later became, members of NATO and/or the European Union, it was not at all surprising that the Western and Eastern Groups worked closely together throughout the NPTREC deliberations. They collaborated often.<sup>5</sup>

In 1992, the Center for Security and Technology Studies Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory held NPT Extension Conference Workshop that was intended to recall the lessons learned from the previous review conferences and develop a strategy for the NPTREC. The workshop concluded that the achievement of a successful outcome would be virtually impossible without U.S. leadership. The head of the U.S. delegation was meant to have sufficient stature that 'nonproliferation issues are raised in high-level

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<sup>5</sup> Dhanapala, Jayantha and Randy Rydell (2005) 'Multilateral Diplomacy and the NPT: An Insider's Account,' United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, available at [https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/122090/2005\\_MultilateralDiplomacy\\_en.pdf](https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/122090/2005_MultilateralDiplomacy_en.pdf) (18 May, 2021).

discussions with states that are pivotal to the success of the NPT Conference'.<sup>6</sup>

The workshop participants also noted the importance of 'face-to-face contacts' with other states. Special significance was attached to 'establishing key allies,' *inter alia* Russia, China, Mexico, and Egypt, and working out major nuclear-related issues prior to the NPTREC. Building good rapport with China was important due to its considerable influence on the NAM States; Mexico and Egypt, due to their leadership position among the NAM States and the Arab States respectively.

The results of the initial surveys carried out by the United States and Canada before the 1995 NPTREC, suggested that about 80 states preferred indefinite extension to any other option and another 15–16 were leaning towards it.<sup>7</sup> The United States, Russia, Japan, the European Union, and most of the rest of Europe came out firmly in favor of an indefinite extension. They were also joined by the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, NATO, the G7, the South Pacific Forum, and the Secretary-General of the United Nations.<sup>8</sup>

China maintained publicly that it wanted 'a smooth extension' of the NPT but was hesitant to join the other NWSs in their collective endeavors to achieve indefinite extension. At that point, it was trying to disassociate itself from other nuclear-weapon states by pretending that it was 'a non-nuclear-weapon state, which has acquired some nuclear weapons by chance'.<sup>9</sup>

The opposition to indefinite extension came from countries concerned about the lack of progress on disarmament that did not

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<sup>6</sup> Chrzanowski, Paul (1993) Preparation for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Extension Conference in 1995. Workshop summary, U.S. Department of Energy Office of Scientific and Technical Information, available at <https://www.osti.gov/biblio/10181832> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>7</sup> Ottoway, David and Steve Coll (1995) 'A Hard Sell for Treaty Renewal,' Washington Post, 14 April, available at [https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1995/04/14/a-hard-sell-for-treaty-renewal/51a544fc-5f73-43e5-af69-90d3e7280a9a/?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.b4d44bc1567c](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1995/04/14/a-hard-sell-for-treaty-renewal/51a544fc-5f73-43e5-af69-90d3e7280a9a/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.b4d44bc1567c) (18 May, 2021).

<sup>8</sup> Bunn, George (1994) 'Viewpoint: The NPT and Options for Its Extension in 1995,' The Nonproliferation Review (Winter), available at <https://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/npr/bunn12.pdf> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>9</sup> Orlov, Vladimir and Roland Timerbaev, Anton Khlopkov (2002) Nuclear Non-proliferation in U.S.-Russia Relations: Challenges and Opportunities, PIR Library Series, available at <https://ru.scribd.com/document/258766334/13464048280-pdf> (18 May, 2021).

want to give up their leverage over nuclear-weapon states, mainly members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), which at the time were about 110 strong.<sup>10</sup> The NAM Conference took place in Tehran, Iran, from August 26 to 31, 1992, concluded that the nuclear weapon states failed to 'demonstrate a genuine commitment with regard to complete nuclear disarmament within a time-bound framework under Article VI of the NPT'.<sup>11</sup>

Nigeria suggested there should be a one-time extension for 10–15 years.<sup>12</sup> Miguel Marin-Bosch, Mexico's chief nonproliferation negotiator, who became one of the biggest proponents of the 'rollover extension' option among the NAM member states, thought the Treaty 'should be extended for a relatively short period, perhaps 10 years, during which the "haves" should achieve a worldwide ban on nuclear weapons'.<sup>13</sup> Jean Du Preez, a member of South Africa's delegation to the NPTREC, also posits that Mexico was floating around the so-called 'red light' approach that 'there should be another extension conference after 25 years to decide not to [continue with the treaty]'.<sup>14</sup>

Some NAM members, avid supporters of the CTBT, suggested that if the NPTREC was to fail, the NPT could be extended for a short period of time, e.g. two years and then a new extension conference would have to be held to decide the future of the Treaty, 'assuming that the CTBT had been achieved in some form by

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<sup>10</sup> Preston, Julia and Jeffrey Smith (1995) 'The Nuclear Treaty: Product of Global Full-Court Press by the U.S.,' *The Washington Post*, 14 May, available at [https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1995/05/14/the-nuclear-treaty-product-of-global-full-court-press-by-us/12c033a4-37ac-4b0d-aeb5-d7f941d6141b/?utm\\_term=.6278ca354d0e](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1995/05/14/the-nuclear-treaty-product-of-global-full-court-press-by-us/12c033a4-37ac-4b0d-aeb5-d7f941d6141b/?utm_term=.6278ca354d0e) (18 May, 2021).

<sup>11</sup> 'Final Document of the Tenth Conference of Heads of State of Government of NAM – Letter from Indonesia' (1992), United Nations, available at <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-179754/> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>12</sup> 'Oral History Interview with Jean duPreez' (2018) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Contributed to NPIHP by Michal Onderco, Wilson Center, available at <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/177632.pdf?v=f8f6e59812906060aa639fc71a0f674a> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>13</sup> Ottoway, David and Steve Coll (1995) 'A Hard Sell for Treaty Renewal,' *The Washington Post*, 14 April, available at [https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1995/04/14/a-hard-sell-for-treaty-renewal/51a544fc-5f73-43e5-af69-90d3e7280a9a/?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.b4d44bc1567c](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1995/04/14/a-hard-sell-for-treaty-renewal/51a544fc-5f73-43e5-af69-90d3e7280a9a/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.b4d44bc1567c) (18 May, 2021).

<sup>14</sup> 'Oral History Interview with Jean duPreez' (2018) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Contributed to NPIHP by Michal Onderco, Wilson Center, available at <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/177632.pdf?v=f8f6e59812906060aa639fc71a0f674a> (18 May, 2021).



1997'.<sup>15</sup> This idea, however, did not get much traction, namely because the language of Article X.2 of the NPT provided for only one extension conference.<sup>16</sup>

In his 1994 article, one of the NPT negotiators George Bunn claimed that the majority of state- parties to the NPT would be naturally drawn towards the rolling extensions option. He argued that the main motivations for states to choose this option would be to gain advantage over NWSs to press them towards disarmament and to not be conditioned to give up any right to ever pursue a military nuclear weapons program.

Prior to the NPTREC, South Africa was hesitant to commit itself to any extension option. According to the South African Foreign Ministry, that position was supposed to allow the country to stay flexible and serve as a mediator for supporters of the indefinite extension and the members of NAM.<sup>17</sup> Peter Goosen, Chief Director for Peace and Security of the South African Department of Foreign Affairs, identified 'the main risk as coming from those advocating for an indefinite extension, such as the United States, Russia, and U.S. allies'. His vision of South Africa's position was to 'build a bridge away from indefinite extension'.<sup>18</sup>

In January 1995 at the fourth and last Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) for the NPTREC, South Africa came forward with a so-called 'third option' for the Treaty extension. The proposal was to have a 'rolling extension of successive fixed periods which would extend the Treaty in perpetuity, but where a positive vote would be required between each of the succeeding periods to initiate the start of the following period'.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Bunn, George (1994) 'Viewpoint: The NPT and Options for Its Extension in 1995,' *The Nonproliferation Review* (Winter), available at <https://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/npr/bunn12.pdf> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>17</sup> Onderco, Michal and Anna-Mart van Wyk (2019) 'Birth of a Norm Champion: How South Africa Came to Support the NPT's Indefinite Extension,' *The Non-Proliferation Review* 26 (1-2), available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10736700.2019.1591771?af=R> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>19</sup> 'Oral History Interview with Jean duPreez' (2018) *History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive*, Contributed to NPIHP by Michal Onderco, Wilson Center, available at <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/177632.pdf?v=f8f6e59812906060aa639fc71a0f674a> (18 May, 2021).

## Preparations for the Review and Extension Conference

Beginning as early as 1991, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States began a series of consultations in preparation for the NPTREC to develop a common strategy.<sup>20</sup> Later they were joined by French diplomats. China did not participate in the consultations.<sup>21</sup> Dr. Lewis Dunn, former U.S. Ambassador to the Review Conference to the NPT, characterized them as 'real conversations among equal states,' adding that 'over the time, genuine trust, confidence, and strong professional and personal relationships built up, including via coordination and cooperation in the preparatory process for the 1995 Conference'.<sup>22</sup> Ambassador Grigory Berdennikov, then-Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, posits that the cooperation between the United States and Russia on the indefinite extension of the NPT mostly taking place within the P5 format.<sup>23</sup>

Russia's initial belief was that the deliberations on the NPT extension at the NPTREC would go quickly and smoothly and that the voting process would be a breeze. Therefore, Russia made a proposal to put the decision on the Treaty extension to vote on the first day of the NPTREC before the review of the Treaty implementation. The United States, however, did not share the optimism — U.S. diplomats were not convinced that the indefinite extension would be agreed upon easily. Their preferred strategy was to place the vote closer to the end of the agenda to allow themselves enough time to determine participants' views on the extension and attempt to sway those who would hesitate to take their side.<sup>24</sup> Even though the results of the U.S. intelligence estimates predicted high chances of the indefinite extension option receiving a majority of votes at the NPTREC, the U.S. officials worried that a thin majority 'would

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<sup>20</sup> Orlov, Vladimir (1995) Soviet/Russian – American Cooperation on Negotiating, Drafting (1966-1967), Signing (1968), and Indefinitely Extending (1995) of the NPT,' PIR Center, available at <http://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/13/14811505840.pdf> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>23</sup> Berdennikov, Grigory (2019) Personal Interview, 17 September.

<sup>24</sup> Orlov, Vladimir (1995) Soviet/Russian – American Cooperation on Negotiating, Drafting (1966-1967), Signing (1968), and Indefinitely Extending (1995) of the NPT,' PIR Center, available at <http://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/13/14811505840.pdf> (18 May, 2021).

not provide the NPT with the political and moral authority necessary to curb the spread of nuclear arms'.<sup>25</sup>

The third session of the PrepCom for the NPTREC, which took place from September 12 to 16, 1994, became a cause of concern to the United States. As Ambassador Graham points out, the United States had serious doubts that the Treaty would be extended indefinitely. At that time, Washington estimated the number of supporters of the indefinite extension at 50 – 60 states, which would not be enough to win the vote.

In December 1994, Russia put forward a 'two-fold initiative' suggesting that the NWSs should draft a short (without a preamble) resolution advocating for indefinite extension. The rationale behind skipping out the preamble was to avoid as much as possible any kind of debate over the document. The United Kingdom was the only state to back up the Russian initiative. The United States opposed the proposal due to its concerns that NAM might 'issue a collective resolution in response and put it to a vote first'.<sup>26</sup> Russia completely rejected this rationale, as it believed that the existing differences among the NAM members would not allow them to present a unified front against the NWSs.<sup>27</sup>

Canada suggested taking more 'cautious and gradual actions before and during the Conference' and gradually work towards bringing the critics of the indefinite extension and undecided states over one by one.<sup>28</sup> Russia was initially not a proponent of this idea but eventually it came around.

During 1994 and 1995, the U.S. and Russian officials held a plethora of bilateral meetings to round up votes for the indefinite extension of the NPT. They were joined by like-minded states, including Australia, Canada, France, and Japan.

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<sup>25</sup> Ottoway, David and Steve Coll (1995) 'A Hard Sell for Treaty Renewal,' *The Washington Post*, 14 April, available at [https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1995/04/14/a-hard-sell-for-treaty-renewal/51a544fc-5f73-43e5-af69-90d3e7280a9a/?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.b4d44bc1567c](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1995/04/14/a-hard-sell-for-treaty-renewal/51a544fc-5f73-43e5-af69-90d3e7280a9a/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.b4d44bc1567c) (18 May, 2021)

<sup>26</sup> Orlov, Vladimir (1995) *Soviet/Russian – American Cooperation on Negotiating, Drafting (1966-1967), Signing (1968), and Indefinitely Extending (1995) of the NPT*, PIR Center, available at <http://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/13/14811505840.pdf> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*.

### Views on the NPT's extension before the 1995 Conference



Source: Estimate by the Campaign for the Non-Proliferation Treaty (published before the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference).

In order to round-up votes for the NPT extension, Ambassador Graham travelled to more than 50 countries. According to *Washington Post* reporting, his argument for the indefinite extension of the Treaty was based on the language of the statement issued at the end of the meeting between U.S. President Bill Clinton and India's Prime Minister P.V. Narashima Rao. The statement concluded with a declaration that the two countries 'offered their strong support'<sup>29</sup> for efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons 'with the goal of eliminating such weapons'.<sup>30</sup> In the negotiations with diplomats, he cited this statement as evidence of U.S. commitment to Article VI of the NPT. The newspaper described U.S. efforts to secure the votes for the indefinite extension of the NPT as 'creative arms twisting'<sup>31</sup> resembling 'an election campaign more than a typical U.S. foreign policy exercise'.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Ottoway, David and Steve Coll (1995) 'A Hard Sell for Treaty Renewal,' *The Washington Post*, 14 April, available at [https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1995/04/14/a-hard-sell-for-treaty-renewal/51a544fc-5f73-43e5-af69-90d3e7280a9a/?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.b4d44bc1567c](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1995/04/14/a-hard-sell-for-treaty-renewal/51a544fc-5f73-43e5-af69-90d3e7280a9a/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.b4d44bc1567c) (18 May, 2021)

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>31</sup> Preston, Julia and Jeffrey Smith (1995) 'The Nuclear Treaty: Product of Global Full-Court Press by the U.S.,' *The Washington Post*, 14 May, available at [https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1995/05/14/the-nuclear-treaty-product-of-global-full-court-press-by-us/12c033a4-37ac-4b0d-aeb5-d7f941d6141b/?utm\\_term=.6278ca354d0e](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1995/05/14/the-nuclear-treaty-product-of-global-full-court-press-by-us/12c033a4-37ac-4b0d-aeb5-d7f941d6141b/?utm_term=.6278ca354d0e) (18 May, 2021).

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*.

Aware of the threat that NAM countries' opposition posed to the U.S. efforts to achieve indefinite extension, Ambassador Graham sought to bring as many 'non-aligned states' to its side as possible by conducting a series of bilateral consultations with the NAM states. The idea behind these visits was to avoid discussing NPT extension with the NAM as a block but rather face them individually. Among the states who were in opposition to the indefinite extension option one of the most influential and powerful actors was Egypt. Egypt, as many other states of the Middle East, was highly concerned by the fact that Israel was remaining outside of the NPT. Ambassador Graham visited Egypt multiple times in order to obtain its support for the indefinite extension of the NPT; however, each time Egypt was deliberately steering the negotiations towards the subject of Israel's accession to the NPT.<sup>33</sup>

One of the states that the United States saw as a potentially powerful ally for the promotion of the indefinite extension option was South Africa. Ambassador Graham began his attempts to get South Africa on the U.S. side as early as in the summer of 1994, when he visited Pelindaba, South Africa, to discuss the issue of the NPT extension with local diplomats. The U.S. President Bill Clinton and General Colin Powell (the U.S. National Security Advisor from 1987 to 1989) both spoke directly to President Nelson Mandela trying to bring him on board.<sup>34</sup> In the meanwhile, U.S. Vice President Al Gore succeeded in establishing 'a special link' with South African Vice President Thabo Mbeki, securing South Africa's support for an indefinite extension of the NPT.<sup>35</sup>

Moscow also attached great importance to South Africa's support in promoting the indefinite extension. Therefore, on the eve of the NPTREC Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev sent a letter

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<sup>33</sup> 'Oral History Interview with Thomas Graham,' (2017) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Contributed to NPIHP by Michal Onderco, Wilson Center, available at <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/177539.pdf?v=1819499f04e42170c2d9c6014deadcda> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>34</sup> Preston, Julia and Jeffrey Smith (1995) 'The Nuclear Treaty: Product of Global Full-Court Press by the U.S.,' *The Washington Post*, 14 May, available at [https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1995/05/14/the-nuclear-treaty-product-of-global-full-court-press-by-us/12c033a4-37ac-4b0d-aeb5-d7f941d6141b/?utm\\_term=.6278ca354d0e](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1995/05/14/the-nuclear-treaty-product-of-global-full-court-press-by-us/12c033a4-37ac-4b0d-aeb5-d7f941d6141b/?utm_term=.6278ca354d0e) (18 May, 2021).

<sup>35</sup> 'The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy,' Ed. by Cooper, Andrew F. and Jorge Heine, and Ramesh Thakur (2013), available at <https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199588862.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199588862> (18 May, 2021).

to South African Foreign Minister Alfred Nzo endorsing his initiative to support the indefinite option at the NPTREC. A similar letter was also sent to Minister Nzo by the U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.<sup>36</sup>

The other NAM member that the NWS actively lobbied was Benin; French diplomats played the key role in this process.<sup>37</sup> Those efforts borne immense fruit; South Africa and Benin effectively managed to bridge the gap between the NWS and the NAM at the NPTREC.

Moscow had fewer 'special relationships' with other countries than the United States; nevertheless, it discussed the NPT extension with about 50 states, including newly independent states and Iran. As Ambassador Timerbaev pointed out, the United States at the time was more powerful than it even is now, so it was fairly easy for it to bring undecided states over to its side. Nevertheless, as Ambassador Graham points out, '[the Russians] were definitely very helpful. <...> Berdennikov first, and then Kislyak, and we have remained very good friends ever since'.<sup>38</sup>

According to Ambassador Berdennikov, Russian diplomats approached many representatives from different countries trying to persuade them to support the indefinite extension.<sup>39</sup> The negotiations records show that during the NPTREC the Russian Federation had to work closely with the Ukrainian diplomats in order to convince them to co-sign the resolution on the extension of the NPT — 'Kiyv demanded that some provisions concerning security assurances be included in the succinct text of the resolution'. Russia was not going to allow that to happen because if Kiyv's demands were accepted, other states might also begin to propose their amendments. Russia had also to exert some pressure on the Moldavian and Azerbaijani delegations at different stages of the Conference. However, 'the two states did not have any particular interests at the Conference and their uncompromising policy did not last long'.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Orlov, Vladimir (1995) Soviet/Russian – American Cooperation on Negotiating, Drafting (1966-1967), Signing (1968), and Indefinitely Extending (1995) of the NPT,' PIR Center, available at <http://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/13/14811505840.pdf> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>37</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>38</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>39</sup> Berdennikov, Grigory (2019) Personal Interview, 17 September.

<sup>40</sup> Orlov Vladimir, Timerbaev Roland, Khlopkov Anton. Nuclear Non-Proliferation in U.S.-Russia Relations: Challenges and Opportunities, <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/54962/nuclear%20nonproliferation.pdf> (accessed July 13, 2019).

Following the conclusion of the fourth and last PrepCom meeting in mid-January 1995, Canada recognized that, while the indefinite extension was by far the leading option, the number of states in favor still fell short of a legal majority and was not growing quickly enough. Based on consultations with friends and allies, and on reporting from posts, Canada identified a list of 74 states to be 'lobbied' during March and April. This group included: 28 states, 'undecided'; 19 states, 'leaning against'; and 27 states, 'leaning for' indefinite extension.

The idea of finding some mechanism to demonstrate tangible support for indefinite extension was first broached by Russian Ambassador Berdennikov at a meeting of the Western Group plus Russia on March 21, 1995. At a Mason Group meeting in Geneva on April 6, the United Kingdom provided language on an unadorned decision to be put forward by this Group at the 1995 NPT Conference. The draft decision read, 'the Conference of States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held in accordance with Article X.2 of the Treaty, decides that the Treaty shall continue in force indefinitely'.<sup>41</sup> It was agreed that the Group would consolidate broad-based support for this draft decision at the Conference. Canada was asked to play a leading role and 'to exercise custodianship of a list of co-sponsors'.<sup>42</sup>

In March 1995, the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) presented a white paper titled 'The NPT. Problems of Extension'.<sup>43</sup> The document estimated that at the time there were 70 states in favor of the indefinite extension, 38 states were ready to accept it under certain conditions, and three (Venezuela, Yemen, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea) were firmly against it. It outlined four scenarios for the Treaty extension at the NPTREC:

- indefinite extension;
- extension for a long additional period;

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<sup>41</sup> 'Indefinite Extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty: Risks and Reckonings,' ACRONYM Report No. 7, (1995), available at <http://www.acronym.org.uk/old/archive/acrorep/a07ext.htm> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>42</sup> Rauf, Tariq and Rebecca Johnson (1995) After the NPT's Indefinite Extension: The Future of the Global Nonproliferation Regime, *The Nonproliferation Review* (Fall), available at <https://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/npr/raufjo31.pdf> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>43</sup> Orlov, Vladimir (1995) Soviet/Russian – American Cooperation on Negotiating, Drafting (1966-1967), Signing (1968), and Indefinitely Extending (1995) of the NPT,' PIR Center, available at <http://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/13/14811505840.pdf> (18 May, 2021).

- rollover extension periods (5-10 years) with each extension being linked to the fulfillment of specific obligations under the Treaty by the nuclear-weapon states;
- no positive outcome.

SVR experts argued the first option to be the most preferable. The second option, while less appealing compared to the first option, was also considered acceptable. The last two options were not considered viable.<sup>44</sup>

China who initially saw the whole indefinite extension initiative as a conspiracy, eventually switched from firmly opposing to supporting it. In April 1995, ambassadors from all the P5 countries – the United States, the United Kingdom, Russia, China, and France – met for a private discussion to ponder on the necessity of a collective statement on the ultimate future of nuclear weapons. At the meeting, Ambassador Berdennikov proposed to release 'a coordinated statement' on the pledge to eliminate nuclear weapons arguing that it would be an important contribution for the NPTREC.<sup>45</sup>

On April 5, 1995, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation made a statement offering security assurances to NNWSs. Consequently, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and China also made similar statements. Upon the request from Russia, the item entitled 'Proposal by China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America on security assurances' was inscribed on the agenda of the 3514<sup>th</sup> meeting of the UN Security Council.<sup>46</sup> The meeting that took place on April 11 adopted UNSCR 984, which took note of five statements made by NWS. This

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<sup>44</sup> Foreign Intelligence Service of the Russian Federation (1995) 'Possible Scenarios: Do All of them Lead to the Goal,' Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Extension Challenges, available at <http://svr.gov.ru/material.htm> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>45</sup> 'Understanding Chinese Nuclear Thinking' (2016) Eds. Zhao Tong, Bin Li, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, available at [https://carnegieendowment.org/files/ChineseNuclearThinking\\_Final.pdf](https://carnegieendowment.org/files/ChineseNuclearThinking_Final.pdf) (30 July, 2021).

<sup>46</sup> 'The Proposal by China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America on Security Assurances,' United Nations, Repertoire, 12th Supplement (1993-1995): Chapter VIII, available at <https://www.un.org/french/docs/cs/repertoire/93-95/CHAPTER%208/GENERAL%20ISSUES/32.%20Proposal%20by%20China,%20France,%20Russia,%20UK%20US%20on%20Security%20assurances.pdf> (18 May, 2021).



was all part of an attempt to gain favor with the NNWSs in the run-up to the NPTREC.<sup>47</sup>

One month prior to the NPTREC the Security Council of the Russian Federation convened a meeting to agree on the overall strategy regarding the extension of the NPT and provide instructions for the Russian delegation.<sup>48</sup> They decided that Russia should strive to achieve an indefinite extension of the NPT, with the option of 25-year rolling periods being its fallback option.<sup>49</sup>

## Deliberations

The President of the NPTREC Ambassador Jayantha Dhanapala recalls that 'in the months leading up to the opening of the NPTREC, and indeed even well into the event itself, nobody could comfortably have predicted the precise outcome'.<sup>50</sup> According to the participants, debates that took place at the NPTREC were 'fundamentally different to all debates at previous review conferences'.<sup>51</sup>

Experts give different opinions regarding the backdrop against which the NPT extension took place. According to Tariq Rauf, former Director of the International Organizations and Nonproliferation Project of the Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Monterey Institute of International Studies<sup>52</sup>, and Dr. Rebecca Johnson<sup>53</sup>,

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<sup>47</sup> 'Resolution 984 (1995) Adopted by the Security Council at its 3514th meeting, on 11 April 1995, UN Digital Library, available at <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/176507?ln=ru> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>48</sup> Orlov, Vladimir (1995) *Soviet/Russian – American Cooperation on Negotiating, Drafting (1966-1967), Signing (1968), and Indefinitely Extending (1995) of the NPT*, PIR Center, available at <http://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/13/14811505840.pdf> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>49</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>50</sup> Dhanapala, Jayantha and Randy Rydell (2005) 'Multilateral Diplomacy and the NPT: An Insider's Account', United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, available at [https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/122090/2005\\_MultilateralDiplomacy\\_en.pdf](https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/122090/2005_MultilateralDiplomacy_en.pdf) (accessed January 13, 2019).

<sup>51</sup> 'Programme for Promoting Nuclear Non-Proliferation, NPT Conference 17/4/95-12/5/95, "Darryl's Meeting with Sven Jurchewsky [SIC] 145/95"', (1995) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Special Collections, Hartley Library, University of Southampton, Programme for Promoting Nuclear Non-Proliferation MS424 A3079/1/1/19f1, available at <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/176511> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>52</sup> Rauf, Tariq (2019) Personal Interview, 2 April.

<sup>53</sup> Johnson, Rebecca (2019) Personal Interview, 2 April.

the founder of the Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy, the political climate in 1995 was 'propitious' for a successful outcome of the NPTREC. As they point out, since the previous 1990 NPT Review Conference (RevCon), a lot of positive developments took place: the Cold War confrontation had ended, the two Strategic Arms Reduction treaties (START I and START II) had been signed. What might have been even more significant — 'important progress [had been] made at the Geneva-based CD on negotiating a CTBT'.<sup>54</sup>

The NPTREC opened on April 17, 1995. The Conference was attended by 178 states parties.<sup>55</sup> In order to ensure an indefinite extension of the Treaty, its supporters now had to secure at least 90 votes and not 86, as it had been predicted earlier. The main question to arise before the NPT states parties at the outset of the Conference had to do with the rule 28.3, 'which dealt with the adoption of the decision on the extension'.<sup>56</sup> It took participants of the Conference an extraordinary amount of time to arrive at a consensus on how the voting procedure was going to be held. According to Ambassador Dhanapala and Dr. Rauf, 'this matter took up an extraordinary amount of time, and ultimately proved to be moot, since the three final decisions and the Middle East resolution were adopted without a vote'.<sup>57</sup>

In the course of the month-long deliberations at the NPTREC in New York, the P5 had regular meetings to discuss the progress on the indefinite extension. According to a member of the Russian delegation Grigory Berdennikov, these meetings were held two times a week in an informal setting.

During the general debate, several proposals were advanced for the extension of the Treaty, namely:

- indefinite;
- a single fixed period (proposed by Nigeria);

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<sup>54</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>55</sup> Smirnov Aleksandr and Aleksandr Botov (1995) 'Protsedurnyye izyski vokrug atomnoy bomby [Procedural Frills Around the Nuclear Bomb],' *Kommersant* 71, 19 April, available at <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/107037> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>56</sup> Dhanapala, Jayantha and Randy Rydell (2005) 'Multilateral Diplomacy and the NPT: An Insider's Account,' United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, available at [https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/122090/2005\\_MultilateralDiplomacy\\_en.pdf](https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/122090/2005_MultilateralDiplomacy_en.pdf) (accessed January 13, 2019).

<sup>57</sup> Dhanapala, Jayantha and Tariq Rauf (2016) Reflections on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, SIPRI, available at [https://mafiadoc.com/reflections-on-the-treaty-on-the-non-sipri\\_597a1f961723dd93e84db30b.html](https://mafiadoc.com/reflections-on-the-treaty-on-the-non-sipri_597a1f961723dd93e84db30b.html) (18 May, 2021).

- a rollover of 25 years with options for further extension (proposed by Venezuela);
- a rolling extension of successive, but as yet unspecified, fixed periods (proposed by Indonesia, Myanmar, and Papua New Guinea);
- suspension of the conference to be reconvened at a later date (suggested by Egypt and Syria).<sup>58</sup>

80 speakers in the general debate supported the indefinite extension and 10 strongly opposed it. As Ambassador Berdennikov claims, opponents of the indefinite extension '[portrayed it] as a sort of a radical, even an extreme solution favored by a minority of influential participants',<sup>59</sup> which naturally raised concerns among its supporters, the United States in particular. 'Compromise' and 'middle-ground' solutions, such as the ones proposed by Venezuela and Mexico, could potentially swing undecided voters away from the indefinite extension option.<sup>60</sup> In order to deal with the two 'problematic' delegations, the United States resorted to 'strong-arm tactics' and pressure.<sup>61</sup> In 1995, both Venezuela and Mexico's economic situation was similarly dire and they both relied on the United States to alleviate it. Early that year the Clinton administration provided Mexico with a \$20 billion loan, which further exacerbated its dependency on the United States.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> 'Russia's Kozyrev Urges Permanent Extension of NPT' (1995) Collection of remarks by Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev and representatives from other nations regarding the extension of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Federation of American Scientists, available at <https://fas.org/nuke/control/npt/news/950424-388652.htm> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>59</sup> 'Oral History Interview with Grigory Berdennikov' (2016) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Contributed to NPIHP by Michal Onderco, Wilson Center, available at <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/177422> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>60</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>61</sup> 'Oral History Interview with Jayantha Dhanapala' (2017) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Contributed to NPIHP by Michal Onderco, Wilson Center, available at <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/177429> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>62</sup> Preston, Julia and Jeffrey Smith (1995) 'The Nuclear Treaty: Product of Global Full-Court Press by the U.S.,' *The Washington Post*, 14 May, available at [https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1995/05/14/the-nuclear-treaty-product-of-global-full-court-press-by-us/12c033a4-37ac-4b0d-aeb5-d7f941d6141b/?utm\\_term=.6278ca354d0e](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1995/05/14/the-nuclear-treaty-product-of-global-full-court-press-by-us/12c033a4-37ac-4b0d-aeb5-d7f941d6141b/?utm_term=.6278ca354d0e) (18 May, 2021); Lewis, Patricia (2019) Personal Interview, 18 September.

Eventually, the U.S. efforts paid off and Venezuela reversed its position on the extension of the Treaty and decided to co-sponsor the Canadian draft decision for indefinite extension. At the same time, Ambassador Adolfo Taylhardat resigned from his position as the head of the Venezuelan delegation. Ambassador Graham admits that the United States was also seeking to remove the head of the Mexican delegation Ambassador Bosch from his position but to no avail. Ambassador Bosch stated that in his recollection Ambassador Graham never mentioned any 'aid pack' to him overtly; however, he insinuated that if the NPT was to endure (read 'extended indefinitely'), it would 'be better for bilateral nuclear cooperation purposes'.<sup>63</sup>

The results of the general debate left the United States and Russia feeling anxious about the future of the NPT extension and pushed them towards a more proactive approach with regards to the promotion of the indefinite extension. The plan that they came up with was to approach one of the NNWSs and ask them to table a proposal for the indefinite extension. They believed that this would make them more likely to subscribe to this option. They choose Canada because it had good rapport with the United States and had an impeccable track record of nonproliferation. Ambassador Graham then approached the Canadian delegation and asked them to sponsor a resolution on the indefinite extension, which they agreed to do because it had been a common practice between the two states.

The delegation of South Africa played an important role in promoting the indefinite extension and the Canadian resolution. South African Foreign Minister Alfred Nzo expressed his country's commitment to the indefinite extension 'without any preconditions or linkage to other nuclear disarmament measures such as CTBT',<sup>64</sup> also adding that that fixed period extension 'would erode confidence in the NPT, endangering the nonproliferation regime' — the argument actively promoted by the United States and Russia.

One month prior to the NPTREC Vice President Gore sent a letter to South Africa's Deputy President Thabo Mbeki assuring him of

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<sup>63</sup> Welsh, Susan (1995) 'Delegate Perspectives on the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference,' *The Nonproliferation Review* (Spring/Summer), available at <https://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/npr/welsh23.pdf> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>64</sup> Lee, Donna and Ian Taylor, and Paul Williams (2006) *The New Multilateralism in South African Diplomacy*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, available at [https://books.google.ru/books?id=C51\\_DAAAQBAJ&pg=PA1&hl=ru&source=gbs\\_toc\\_r&cad=4#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.ru/books?id=C51_DAAAQBAJ&pg=PA1&hl=ru&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=4#v=onepage&q&f=false) (18 May, 2021).

the U.S. commitment towards strengthening the NPT review process, while also stressing, 'that efforts to strengthen the review process [should] not unintentionally encumber the Treaty or in any way put it at risk, or cloud its duration'.<sup>65</sup> In his recollection, Ambassador Graham said that could not 'remember anything in the Statement of Principles and Objectives that was a big problem for [the United States]'.<sup>66</sup>

In order to facilitate negotiations on the extension of the Treaty, Ambassador Jayantha Dhanapala established President's Consultation Group. The idea of President's Consultations was based on a similar practice used in the 1985 RevCon. The Group 'included all the conference office-holders, the five NWS in the NPT, the chairs of the political groups, and key delegations selected by the president. It was conceived as an "inner cabinet," a focus group, or more accurately, a laboratory to discuss the all-important extension issue which transcended the normal business of the main committees'.<sup>67</sup> In order to ensure transparency regarding the Group's decisions its members 'were encouraged to report back to their groups regularly and seek their endorsement on the decisions being taken'.<sup>68</sup> One of the main topics discussed among the members of the Group was the Principles for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament put forward by South Africa.

During the third week of the NPTREC, an important NAM ministerial meeting was held in Bandung, Indonesia. The meeting took place from 25 to 27 April and adjourned without a consensus NAM position on the extension of the NPT, which played directly into the hands of the indefinite extension supporters. However, as Ambassador Dhanapala points out, at that point he still had doubts as to whether the indefinite extension option had amassed enough supporters to be adopted without a formal vote. He was so adamant

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<sup>65</sup> 'Letter, Al Gore to Thabo Mbeki' (1995) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Archive of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa, Wilson Center, available at <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/208589> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>66</sup> 'Oral History Interview with Thomas Graham,' (2017) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Contributed to NPIHP by Michal Onderco, Wilson Center, available at <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/177539.pdf?v=1819499f04e42170c2d9c6014deadcda> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>67</sup> 'The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy,' Ed. by Cooper, Andrew F. and Jorge Heine, and Ramesh Thakur (2013), available at <https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199588862.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199588862> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>68</sup> *Ibidem*.

about avoiding a vote on the extension because he felt strongly 'that a divided for an indefinite extension would be bad for the treaty – given the vital international security interests involved'.<sup>69</sup>

## Negotiation of the 'Package Deal'

Ambassador Dhanapala, along with the United States and Russia, understood that in order to achieve indefinite extension without a vote it would have to be accompanied by another decision, or decisions, that would serve the interests of the opponents of the indefinite extension. In order to further explore the concept of the 'indefinite-plus' option, he decided to continue with the President's Consultations Group meetings. The 'indefinite-plus' included two proposals: on the strengthened review process and principles and objectives for nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament. The first one was first elaborated by Canada in early 1995, while the second one was put forward by South Africa. Ambassador Dhanapala seized upon these ideas 'as a way of fulfilling the [...] dominant requirements that had emerged from the general debate and his own discussions'.<sup>70</sup>

After extensive consultations with the Consultations Group, he presented three documents, namely a draft decision on strengthening the review process for the Treaty (NPT/CONF.1995/L.4); a draft decision on principles and objectives for nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament, as contained in the document (NPT/CONF.1995/L.5); and a draft decision on the extension of the Treaty, as contained in the document (NPT/CONF.1995/L.6). Thus, was born the concept of a 'package deal' that came to include the Middle East Resolution and three decisions: on indefinite extension; strengthened review process and principles and objectives for nonproliferation and disarmament.

One by one the opponents of the indefinite extension began to soften their stand. As Ambassador Bosch claims, by the end of April 1995 demonstrable majority of the NPT states parties were in favor of

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<sup>69</sup> Dhanapala, Jayantha and Randy Rydell (2205) 'Multilateral Diplomacy and the NPT: An Insider's Account,' United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, available at [https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/122090/2005\\_MultilateralDiplomacy\\_en.pdf](https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/122090/2005_MultilateralDiplomacy_en.pdf) (18 May, 2021).

<sup>70</sup> Rauf, Tariq and Rebecca Johnson (1995) *After the NPT's Indefinite Extension: The Future of the Global Nonproliferation Regime*, The Nonproliferation Review (Fall), available at <https://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/npr/raufjo31.pdf> (18 May, 2021).

indefinite extension, which would make attempts to oppose it akin to political suicide. Eventually, Mexico gave up on the 25-year roll-over extension option in favor of the 'indefinite-plus'.<sup>71</sup>

The President, while recognizing that a clear majority existed for indefinite extension, did not overtly favor any particular option, and chose to table language on an extension decision in his Consultations only after an agreement had been reached on the 'principles' and 'strengthened review'.<sup>72</sup>

## Negotiation of the Resolution on the Middle East

One of the thorniest problems that the NPTREC had to debate was the nuclear status of Israel. Arab States – many of which were in fact against indefinite extension – claimed that Israel not being a Party to the NPT was eroding their belief in the Treaty as being able to guarantee them proper security. They viewed Israel's nuclear disarmament as a priority and looked forward to the NPTREC taking a decision in this regard. However, as was the case with the NAM, Arab States suffered from the lack of unanimity and were unable to build a unified front against the supporters of indefinite extension.

Upon coming to the realization that in order to achieve indefinite extension of the NPT without a vote, the United States was ready to go to great lengths, Egypt decided to take advantage of the situation. Cairo stated that it would support indefinite extension only if the NPTREC came up with a decision with regard to the establishment of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East, which would naturally require Israel to forgo its nuclear-weapons program. After the United States failed to change Egypt's position the way it was done with Mexico and Venezuela earlier, an effort was made to find a mutually acceptable compromise.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> 'Mexico: Draft Resolution' (1995) United Nations Digital Library, available at <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/199290?ln=ru> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>72</sup> Rauf, Tariq and Rebecca Johnson (1995) After the NPT's Indefinite Extension: The Future of the Global Nonproliferation Regime, *The Nonproliferation Review* (Fall), available at <https://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/npr/raufjo31.pdf> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>73</sup> Orlov, Vladimir (1999) 'Konferentsiya 1995 goda po rassmotreniyu i prodleniyu sroka deystviya dogovora o nerasprostraneni yadernogo oruzhiya: osobennosti, rezul'taty, uroki [1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons: Characteristics, Outcomes and Lessons],'

Egypt and 13 other Arab States sponsored a draft resolution that called on Israel to join the NPT and place all of its nuclear facilities under the IAEA safeguards and invited the P5 to provide security assurances to all states of the region that are Parties to the NPT. The United States and Russia could not support this draft; however, Russia advised against dismissing it completely and instead proposed to work towards creating conditions for an 'exchange'.<sup>74</sup>

The consultations that ensued were highly charged not least the fact that the time to find consensus on this issue was extremely limited. As a result of the negotiations, the text of the Resolution was somewhat watered-down to accommodate for the interests of the United States and Russia. References to Israel and the P5 obligation to provide security assurances to the states of the region disappeared from the draft text. Some of the Arab States, including Egypt, Iran, and Syria, were not completely on board with all the changes; however, they realized that if they had continued to push for a stronger language, they would have stood accused of blocking a consensus.<sup>75</sup>

Ambassador Dhanapala posits that 'the Conference would [not] have adopted the indefinite extension without a vote if the resolution issue had not been settled as it was' despite the fact that 'the "package" of the three decisions and the resolution were technically separate'.<sup>76</sup>

The legally binding draft Decision on the Extension of the Treaty was crafted by the President was finalized and was ready for adoption on Wednesday, May 10, and was adopted without a vote on May 11. As David Krieger, President of Nuclear Age Peace Foundation and participant of the NPTREC, recollects, 'the U.S. and other nuclear-armed countries were ecstatic'.<sup>77</sup> Ambassador Berdennikov described the results of the Conference as 'a very significant achievement and contribution both to stability and to further progress in

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Scientific Reports 11, PIR Center, available at <http://pircenter.org/media/content/files/9/13464238930.pdf> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>74</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>75</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>76</sup> Dhanapala, Jayantha and Randy Rydell (2005) 'Multilateral Diplomacy and the NPT: An Insider's Account,' United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, [https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/122090/2005\\_MultilateralDiplomacy\\_en.pdf](https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/122090/2005_MultilateralDiplomacy_en.pdf) (18 May, 2021).

<sup>77</sup> Krieger, David (2019) 'Participation in the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference,' Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, available at <https://www.wagingpeace.org/participation-in-the-1995-npt-review-and-extension-conference/> (18 May, 2021).



arms control'.<sup>78</sup> The Honorable Lawrence Scheinman, Assistant Director, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, posited that the United States, 'felt comfortable with all three elements of the package that was put forward by the President' and that they were 'good,' 'sound,' and 'pointed in the right direction'.<sup>79</sup>

The cooperation between the United States and Russia contributed significantly to extending the NPT without a vote. It was permeated with goodwill and a general spirit of partnership. Dr. Dunn points out that the effectiveness of the U.S.-Russia cooperation could be attributed to the following factors: them having shared interest in preserving the NPT through its indefinite extension; the absence of specific tough NPT-related issues between them that needed to be resolved; and the fact that U.S. and Russian representatives had 'robust professional and personal relations'. He further adds that the success of their efforts had been bolstered by the divisions among NNWS, especially NAM, as was evident from the outcomes of the 1995 Bandung Conference.<sup>80</sup> Unlike the NWS led by the United States and Russia, the NAM states did not have a strong campaign for creating the conditions for the extension of the Treaty, 'including specific demands for nuclear reductions or freer transfers of peaceful nuclear technology'.<sup>81</sup>

'Resolution on the Middle East proved to be the only major irritator in U.S.-Russian approaches during this Conference'.<sup>82</sup> However, Russia shared Ambassador Dhanapala's insistence on the NPT extension without a vote and, therefore, agreed to support the watered-down language of the Resolution on the Middle East that did not

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<sup>78</sup> Welsh, Susan (1995) 'Delegate Perspectives on the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference,' *The Nonproliferation Review* (Spring/Summer), available at <https://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/npr/welsh23.pdf> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>79</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>80</sup> Dunn, Lewis A. (2016) 'Three NPT Snapshots – and Some Lessons and Implications for Rebuilding U.S.-Russian Cooperation,' PIR Center, available at <http://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/13/14813159450.pdf> (18 May, 2021).

<sup>81</sup> Preston, Julia and Jeffrey Smith (1995) 'The Nuclear Treaty: Product of Global Full-Court Press by the U.S.,' *The Washington Post*, 14 May, available at [https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1995/05/14/the-nuclear-treaty-product-of-global-full-court-press-by-us/12c033a4-37ac-4b0d-aeb5-d7f941d6141b/?utm\\_term=.6278ca354d0e](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1995/05/14/the-nuclear-treaty-product-of-global-full-court-press-by-us/12c033a4-37ac-4b0d-aeb5-d7f941d6141b/?utm_term=.6278ca354d0e) (18 May, 2021).

<sup>82</sup> Orlov, Vladimir (1995) *Soviet/Russian – American Cooperation on Negotiating, Drafting (1966-1967), Signing (1968), and Indefinitely Extending (1995) of the NPT*, PIR Center, available at <http://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/13/14811505840.pdf> (18 May, 2021).

even mention Israel, let alone called for its disarmament. Together with the United States and the United Kingdom, it became a co-sponsor of the Resolution.<sup>83</sup>

## Conclusions

During the NPTREC, the United States and Russia developed a concerted approach aimed at reaching the indefinite extension of the NPT. They made coordinated efforts to bring as many NNWS as possible to their side through persuasion, pressure and, at times, even blackmail. Although Russia had less leverage and capacity to influence NNWS' decision with regards to the NPT extension, it still managed to effectively convince former Soviet republics, Iran, and a few other NPT state parties to support the indefinite option.

The United States and Russia, as members of the President's Consultations Group, made full and active contribution to the negotiation of the package of decisions, which led to the indefinite extension of the NPT. For them, the adoption of the Middle East Resolution and decisions on strengthening the review process for the Treaty, and principles and objectives for nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament was a small price to pay for getting the NPT extended indefinitely and without a vote.

Despite not being entirely satisfied with the language of the final version of the Middle East Resolution that was almost entirely written by the United States and did not contain any specific mention of Israel and its military nuclear program, Russia agreed to co-sponsor the Resolution. Similar to the President of the NPTREC and the United States it was seeking to ensure that the NPT was extended without a vote, as the voting procedure could create potential difficulties and lead to undesirable consequences such as walkouts and even withdrawals.

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<sup>83</sup> Ibidem.

CHAPTER 4

**DYNAMICS OF THE SOVIET / RUSSIAN  
LEADERSHIP ATTITUDE TOWARDS  
COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED STATES  
ON NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION  
(1970–1999)**

*Aleksandr Kolbin*

The chapter argues that one of the main factors enabling successful cooperation between Russia and the United States on nuclear nonproliferation is a relative equality of capabilities and resources available to both states to prevent or solve a nonproliferation problem. Since 1970, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has been one of the few international agreements forcing both the Soviet Union / Russia and the United States to take cooperative actions to prevent further nuclear proliferation as well as to pursue nuclear arms control measures. However, when it comes to the practical implementation of the NPT and cooperation in this area between the Soviet Union / Russia and the United States, their national approaches towards such cooperation are not so unequivocal and undergo certain changes.

This chapter deals with the main ways of and the reasons for the evolution of the Soviet / Russian approaches to the cooperation with the United States on the NPT from 1970 till 1999.

### **Methodology and Periodization**

Potter argued in 1985 that:

The Soviet (as well as the U.S.) nonproliferation behavior has not always conformed closely to declaratory policy. This is not surprising, given the different functions (symbolic, political, and military) that nonproliferation policy performs and the different security risks (real or perceived) posed by various

Nth countries. One would hardly expect the Soviet Union, for example, to adopt a posture on nonproliferation that failed to distinguish among the threats posed by West German, Iraqi, Cuban, and Indian possession of nuclear weapons.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, we should consider several internal and external factors while analyzing the Soviet / Russian approaches towards cooperation with the United States in the field of nuclear nonproliferation. This work will rely upon Waltz's methodology of the analysis of international relations, which implies three levels of analysis of states' international behavior – the level of the international system, the level of the state itself (considering domestic makeup of the state, including the decision-making process), and personal level (the nature of particular statesmen and political leaders).<sup>2</sup> In addition, this work will refer to five types of proliferation drivers – security, prestige, domestic politics, technology, and economics.

The link between disarmament and nonproliferation enshrined in the NPT has always found its reflection in the Soviet / Russian foreign policy. One can say that the reliance upon the provisions of the NPT and the IAEA safeguards to limit the nuclear threat to itself and its allies has always been the central part of the Soviet / Russian nonproliferation policy.

At the same time, the very concept of 'nuclear nonproliferation' has always occupied a much less important place in the Soviet / Russian foreign policy discussions. While in the United States, the development of nuclear nonproliferation discourse has led to the establishment of what Craig and Ruzicka have labeled as 'non-proliferation complex',<sup>3</sup> in the Soviet Union the official approaches to this issue have always been dependant on the state of strategic relations between the two superpowers, as well as on the ability of the Soviet Union / Russia to cooperate with the United States in this area on an equal footing.

I agree with Potter who claims that the Soviet attitude to nuclear nonproliferation represented a pendulum between the situation when

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<sup>1</sup> Potter, William C. (1985) 'Nuclear Proliferation: U.S.-Soviet Cooperation', *The Washington Quarterly* 8(1): 141 – 154.

<sup>2</sup> Waltz, Kenneth N. (2001) *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis* Revised Edition by (Author), New York: Columbia University Press

<sup>3</sup> Craig, Campbell and Jan Ruzicka (2013) 'The Nonproliferation Complex', *Ethics & International Affairs* 27(3): 329 – 348.

the Soviet \ Russian concern with nonproliferation 'was clearly peripheral to the major strategic objectives of countering the U.S. nuclear weapons advantage and competing with the United States internationally for friends and allies' and the situation when the United States 'found it easier to gain support from the Soviet Union than its Western allies [...] for its efforts to tighten nuclear export controls'.<sup>4</sup>

While agreeing with Potter that politics have always played an important role in the cooperation between the two countries, I believe that the decisive role in the success and robustness of the cooperation has always been played by the ability of the Soviet Union / Russia to work together with the United States on an equal basis and to provide its independent and unique input into the solution of one or another proliferation problem. In those cases where the resources and capabilities available for the cooperation were considerably unequal, the cooperation was less successful. Thus, I argue that the conditional periodization of the Soviet/Russian cooperation with the United States on the NPT depends mainly on the dynamics of the Soviet / Russian ability to cooperate with the United States on an equal basis. Accordingly, one might distinguish between the following four periods of cooperation: 1970 – 1985, 1985 – 1991, 1991 – 1999, the beginning of the 2000s – till present. The chapter addresses only the first three periods and stops when President Putin came into power.

A clear distinction between these conditional periods is questionable since the transitions from one period to another did not occur in a moment, were influenced by the changes on several levels (labeled in accordance with Waltz's methodology. Nevertheless, there are considerable differences between the factors which influenced the Soviet / Russian readiness to cooperate with the United States in the 1970s, during the times of Yeltsin, and in the current post-Crimean context.

## **1970–1985. From Brezhnev to Chernenko**

In 1970 – 1985, the attitude of the Soviet leadership towards the cooperation with the United States on the NPT developed within the context of the 'Cold War'. Among the main factors that contributed to the cooperation between the two countries were the threat (to both

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<sup>4</sup> Potter, William C. (1985) 'Nuclear Proliferation: U.S.-Soviet Cooperation', *The Washington Quarterly* 8(1): 141-154.

the United States and the Soviet Union) of becoming entangled in regional conflicts having a potential for escalation into nuclear confrontation, as well as concerns about greater complexity and uncertainty which possible spread of nuclear weapons could introduce into global power politics. In fact, the confrontation between the two countries, as well as the existence of their spheres of influence, promoted their cooperation in the nonproliferation realm during that period.

The Soviet view of the NPT at the time was summarized as follows: 'The Non-Proliferation Treaty reflects the interests of all countries – large and small, nuclear and non-nuclear, developed and developing – and there is no alternative to the NPT in the contemporary world'.<sup>5</sup>

Potter notes that 'since 1974, the United States and the Soviet Union often have worked closely together in international fora to tighten nuclear export restraints and to gain greater adherence to the Non-Proliferation Treaty'.<sup>6</sup> The Soviet Union and the United States cooperated closely at the London Suppliers Group meetings, at meetings of the IAEA, the NPT Review Conferences, at sessions of the UN General Assembly on nonproliferation, at the Zangger Committee meetings, as well as through high-level ad hoc consultations on nonproliferation issues.

In 1974, the U.S. Department of State recognized that 'while the Soviets could become major exporters of the full range of nuclear materials, equipment, and technology, their exports have in practice been quite limited'.<sup>7</sup> They also noted that 'there are no export areas in which the Soviets have a less restrictive policy than we do', as well as that the United States had 'frequent consultations with the Soviets on IAEA matters through the U.S. respective missions to the IAEA, with an excellent record of cooperation and mutual support in this field'.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Citation: The Soviet Union and Nuclear Proliferation: Policy at a Crossroads (U) Army War College Carlisle Barracks PA R L Rigby 02 Apr. 88

<sup>6</sup> Potter, William C. (1985) 'Nuclear Proliferation: U.S.-Soviet Cooperation', *The Washington Quarterly* 8(1): 141-154.

<sup>7</sup> Memorandum to the Secretary of State from Fred Ikle and Winston Lord, 'U.S. Policy on Nuclear Proliferation' (1974) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Policy Planning Staff, box 348. Obtained and contributed by William Burr, available at <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/119778> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>8</sup> 'State Department telegram 228213 to U.S. Embassy Moscow, "Nuclear Safeguards Consultations"', (1974) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, National Archives Access to Archival Databases Online collections, State Department telegrams for 1974 and other years. Obtained and contributed by William Burr, available at <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/119781> (17 May 2021).

By 1981, the Soviet Union confirmed that it will not use its nuclear weapons against those countries which refrain from nuclear weapons production and acquisition. In addition, the Soviet Union, at least verbally, supported the creation of WMD-free zones in various regions of the world, including Northern Europe, the Balkans, the Mediterranean, Africa, and Latin America. Finally, the historical record contains examples of practical cooperation between the Soviet Union and the United States on resolving proliferation crises, one of the most striking of which was cooperation on the South African nuclear program.

However, for the Soviet Union cooperation with the United States on the NPT never was a value in itself and had always been dependent on several variables.

As it was noted in the United States' 1982 National Intelligence Estimate,

In a more general and far-reaching sense, nuclear proliferation has an impact on the U.S.-Soviet relationship because of the extent to which nuclear proliferation affects U.S. and Soviet influence and interests asymmetrically: the issue creates difficulties for the United States in its bilateral relations with nearly every state mentioned in the regional discussions, a situation the Soviet Union can be expected to exploit in order to undercut U.S. influence. The United States and its allies have far greater equity in strategic and economic ties with most of these countries than does Moscow.<sup>9</sup>

It is true that within the context of bipolar confrontation, the regional proliferation perspective was one of the key issues in determining the two countries' ability and readiness to cooperate on the NPT. The 'Cold War' system allowed the Soviet Union to carry on active nuclear trade, and, as Potter puts it, it was 'more a sign of Soviet confidence in its ability to exercise political control over the recipients' program than an indication of diminished support for the international nuclear non-proliferation regime'.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> 'National Intelligence Estimate, NIE-4-82, "Nuclear Proliferation Trends Through 1987", (1982) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Obtained and contributed by William Burr and included in NPIHP Research Update #11, available at <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/116894> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>10</sup> Potter, William C. (1985) 'Nuclear Proliferation: U.S.-Soviet Cooperation', *The Washington Quarterly* 8(1): 141-154.

In this regard, Europe has always been one of the central regions in determining the Soviet/Russian attitude towards the cooperation with the United States in the field. Any further nuclear proliferation in Europe could directly threaten the national security interests of the Soviet Union, posing a direct threat to its mainland and its allies.

The ideology played its own role in the development of the Soviet nonproliferation policy. In the case of India, after all the U.S. nuclear assistance for India stopped in 1974, 'for the socialist countries it was a rather difficult task to deal with Indian nuclear program,' since they 'did not want to condemn India,' nor could they stand up for it without setting themselves against their own standpoint. For a long time, the Soviet Union 'propagated that there is no essential difference between the nuclear explosive devices which serve military or peaceful purposes, and it depends solely on the manufacturer or possessor of the device to decide which purpose he will use it for'. For this very reason, the Soviet Union adopted the standpoint of 'refraining from expressing its opinion,' which was duly appreciated by India.<sup>11</sup>

Another case of 'expressive silence' took place in 1977 when the Soviet Union and the United States jointly pressure West Germany to revise its nuclear deal with Brasil. Then, the Soviet Union was not interested 'in publicity for the renewed partnership of the usually adversarial powers'. The Soviet press kept silent about the episode because the Soviets 'did not want to be seen in the Third World as accomplices of the United States, as atomic imperialists aiming to exclude others from technological and economic progress'.<sup>12</sup> The same 'expressive silence' took place in the case of the Soviet-U.S. cooperation on South Africa.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> 'Memorandum, Hungarian Foreign Ministry, on India's Policy on Nuclear Disarmament' (1974) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Hungarian National Archives (Magyar Országos Levéltár, MOL). XIX-J-1-j India, 1974, 50. doboz, 60-406, 003434/9/1974. Obtained and translated for NPIHP by Balazs Szalontai, available at <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/112879> (17 May 2021).

<sup>12</sup> 'Brazilian Embassy Cable, Brazilian Ambassador to Bonn Reports on Soviet Pressure on West Germany' (1977) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Centro de Pesquisa e Documentação de História Contemporânea do Brasil (CPDOC), Fundação Getúlio Vargas (FGV), Azeredo da Silveira Archive, AAS mre pn 1974.08.15 pp. 589–591. Obtained and translated by Fundação Getúlio Vargas, available at <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/115218> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>13</sup> Warren, Christopher 'Letter to William Hyland "Response to Soviet Message on South Africa", ' (1977) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, National Archives, Record Group 59, Department of State Records, Records of Warren Christopher, box 16, Memos to White House 1977. Obtained and contributed by William Burr



The case of the FRG-Brazil nuclear deal can serve as an illustration of another factor influencing the Soviet nonproliferation policy during the period – the interdependence between the nonproliferation and disarmament agendas. The 1977 Soviet demarche in Bonn aimed to send a 'signal to Washington Moscow's agreement with the second motive of improving the conditions for concluding SALT-II'. For this reason, the Soviet Foreign Minister, Andrey Gromyko, instructed the Soviet Ambassador to the West Germany to explain in clear terms, but without passion, that the Soviet government shares the American reservations against the agreement with Brazil. Moreover, Falin [the Soviet Ambassador to Bonn] recommended, under Moscow's orders, that the 'Germans take seriously the strong objections from the Americans'. Just like the United States, Moscow was criticizing not the supply of nuclear plants, but the export of facilities for the enrichment and reprocessing of fuel.<sup>14</sup>

In addition to regional, ideological, and disarmament perspectives, it should be noted that the very concept of nonproliferation has always occupied different places in the Soviet / Russian decision-making and that of the United States. Moreover, from 1970 through 1985, nonproliferation was not a central topic of the Soviet-U.S. dialogue. As then U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance noted in 1978, among the issues which provoked concern about the Soviet Union in the United States were 'the increase by the USSR of its military forces, especially in Europe,' 'the situation in Africa,' and 'question of human rights'.<sup>15</sup>

As far as the state level is considered, the new system of foreign policy decision-making was established in the Soviet Union in the early 1970s.<sup>16</sup> That system, which included representatives of five

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for NPIHP Research Update No. 25, available at <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/119249> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>14</sup> 'Brazilian Embassy Cable, Brazilian Ambassador to Bonn Reports on Soviet Pressure on West Germany' (1977) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Centro de Pesquisa e Documentação de História Contemporânea do Brasil (CPDOC), Fundação Getúlio Vargas (FGV), Azeredo da Silveira Archive, AAS mre pn 1974.08.15 pp. 589–591. Obtained and translated by Fundação Getúlio Vargas, available at <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/115218> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>15</sup> 'Memorandum of Conversation between Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko and U.S. Secretary of State Vance, 31 May 1978 (Excerpts)' (1978) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, AVPRF; trans. by M. Doctoroff, available at <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/117044> (17 May 2021).

<sup>16</sup> Akhromeev, Sergey and Georgy Kornienko (1992) *Glazami marshala i diplomata* [Through the eyes of a marshal and a diplomat], Moscow: Mezhdunarodnie Otnosheniya.

main bodies of the Soviet Union Government – Politburo, the KGB, the Military-Industrial Commission, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Defence – was being developed throughout the 1970s and the first half of the 1980s. The system was unofficially called by its participants the 'Big Five'.<sup>17</sup> The mandate of this informal advisory body was broader than just arms control issues.<sup>18</sup> The 'Big Five' system allowed for the reduced influence of personal factors and reinforced the importance of ideology in the Soviet nonproliferation policy.

The economic driver also played a role. In the late 1970s, the interconnection between the arms race and problems in the Soviet Union's economy became apparent to the Soviet leadership. As Brezhnev noted in 1978, 'the strengthening of the country's defensive capabilities still requires our continual attention. Unfortunately, it is not possible to reduce military expenses significantly for now. NATO, especially the USA, is heating up the arms race. [...] The production of modern weapons is a heavy burden on the economy. But we view the strengthening of our defenses as a national, as well as an international duty'.<sup>19</sup> The Soviet Union was no longer able to continue the arms race at the levels of the 1960s – early 1970s. Therefore, it was necessary to negotiate arms control measures with the United States.

This willingness to negotiate arms control measures with the United States provoked by the economic driver also stipulated the Soviet Union's willingness to cooperate with the United States in the field of nuclear nonproliferation (as it happened in the case of the FRG-Brazil deal). Besides, the Soviet Union was not interested in the nascence of new nuclear powers in terms of the additional

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<sup>17</sup> See, for example: Savel'ev, Aleksandr and Nikolay N. Detinov (1995) *The Big Five: Arms Control Decision-making in the Soviet Union*, Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc.; Akhromeev, Sergey and Georgy Kornienko (1992) *Glazami marshala i diplomata [Through the eyes of a marshal and a diplomat]*, Moscow: Mezhdunarodnie Otnosheniya: 129 – 159.

<sup>18</sup> Kortunov, Sergey (2009) *Sovremennaya vneshnyaya politika Rossii: strategiya izbiratel'noy вовlechenosti [Modern Russian foreign policy: selective engagement strategy]*, Moscow: GU-VShE.

<sup>19</sup> 'Transcript, Meeting of East German leader Erich Honecker and Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev, Crimea, 25 July 1978 (excerpt)' (1978) *History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive*, Stiftung "Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der ehemaligen DDR" im Bundesrarchiv (SAPMO-BArch) Berlin, DY30 JIV 2/201/1495. Obtained and translated by Christian Ostermann, available at <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/117047> (17 May, 2021).

burden it could create for the Soviet military-industrial complex. On the other hand, the emergence of new nuclear-weapon states within the 'socialist camp' was considered as a factor able to reduce that burden – an argument that will be used in the case of India in 1985-1991.

The economic driver also manifested itself in the fast breeding reactors issue. As Potter put it, 'especially at odds with the U.S. policy during the last half of the 1970s was Soviet support for plutonium reprocessing and recycle and breeder reactors'. This issue, in particular, provided for certain 'policy convergence concerning regional, multinational fuel cycle facilities (MFCFs). In addition to its attractiveness on nonproliferation grounds, the Soviets find the concept of MFCFs appealing for two other reasons'. First, as Gloria Duffy has noted, 'it is a measure permitting further refinement of the nuclear fuel cycle and movement to an actual-albeit regulated-plutonium-based fuel cycle, a step the USSR heartily support'. Second, as Duffy also points out, a regional fuel cycle system already operates within the Council for Economic Mutual Assistance (CEMA) framework, with the processing facilities based in the Soviet Union. Consequently, 'not only would the Bloc presumably be left relatively untouched by any new international arrangements, but the Soviets would have a model to show the rest of the world'.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, from 1970 through 1985, the following factors determined the Soviet Union attitude towards the cooperation with the United States on the nuclear nonproliferation issue:

- At the level of the international system, the Soviet Union had enough capabilities to influence third world countries;
- At the state level, economic driver forced the Soviet Union to limit proliferation to potentially hostile, or uncontrolled countries, while collective decision-making mechanism smoothed internal conflicts between bodies of the Soviet Government and strengthened ideological factor in the Soviet Union non-proliferation policy;
- The influence of personal factor was quite weak thanks to the 'Big Five' system of collective decision-making.

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<sup>20</sup> Potter, William C. (1985) 'Nuclear Proliferation: U.S.-Soviet Cooperation', *The Washington Quarterly* 8(1): 141 – 154.

## 1985–1991. Gorbachev Period

After Gorbachev came to power in 1985, he attempted to give a new common ground to the Soviet-U.S. dialogue in the nuclear realm. Unfortunately, the main result of his rule was the collapse of the Soviet Union and the sharp narrowing of the Russian sphere of influence. Describing the main difficulties that he faced at the level of the international system, Gorbachev noted in 1988:

We are proposing and willing to build a new world, to destroy the old basis. Those who oppose it are in the minority, but these circles are very influential. In the classified information which we receive they speak directly: we cannot allow the Soviet Union to seize the initiative and lead the entire world.<sup>21</sup>

Nevertheless, during this period the Soviet Union leadership still considered itself able to influence the defense and security policies of its 'traditional partners'. For example, middle-level Soviet leaders, while dealing with their Indian partners, still adopted an attitude 'as if the Soviet Union had India fully in its pocket as if it were India's "big brother"'.<sup>22</sup> At the same time, the Soviet Union and the United States still shared a common understanding of threats and challenges posed by further nuclear proliferation. For instance, in 1986 the Soviet Union officials thought that India will 'nearly inevitable' become a nuclear power soon and formulated the following negative consequences of such a development:

- If nuclear nonproliferation collapses in India, many pro-Western countries – including Pakistan, Israel, and South Africa – will openly take the path of nuclear armament. The danger of local nuclear conflicts will increase;

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<sup>21</sup> 'Minutes of the Meeting of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU CC), (Excerpts)' (1988) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Center for the Storage of Contemporary Documentation (TsKhSD), Moscow, fond 89, perechen' 42, dokument 24. Translated by Vladislav Zubok, available at <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/112478> (17 May 2021).

<sup>22</sup> 'Ciphred Telegram No. 88, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry' (1984) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Hungarian National Archives (Magyar Országos Levéltár, MOL). XIX-J-1-j India, 1984, 66. doboz, 60-103, 002450/1/1984. Obtained and translated for NPIHP by Balazs Szalontai, available at <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/111953> (17 May 2021).

- A new anti-Soviet campaign will unfold, claiming that India became a nuclear power with Soviet support;
- The process of nuclear disarmament will become even more complicated.<sup>23</sup>

On the other hand, the illusion of 'controlled proliferation' forced the Soviet Union leadership to believe that 'the Indian nuclear potential would essentially strengthen the strategic position of the Soviet Union and the socialist countries'.<sup>24</sup>

Also, the Soviet Union still was able to use its influence in certain regions in exchange for some political or economic preferences, as it took place in the case of the ratification of the NPT by North Korea in December 1985. It is believed that the Soviets pressured the North Koreans into signing the NPT as a result of urging by the United States. In exchange, the Soviets have agreed to supply the North Koreans with a safeguarded commercial power reactor.

#### **CIA Assessment of DPRK Accession to NPT**

North Korea's recent accession to the Non-proliferation Treaty and its growing nuclear cooperation with the Soviet Union will place controls on a suspect nuclear program but will not eliminate some longer term risk of nuclear weapons development on the Korean Peninsula. We believe Pyongyang has decided Soviet help is essential to developing a nuclear power program, while Moscow views the cooperation as a means of increasing influence in North Korea at the expense of the Chinese.

North Korea had provided Moscow its instrument of accession on 12 December. The Soviets took credit for bringing North Korea into the international nonproliferation regime and pressed Washington to make similar progress with Israel, South Africa, and Pakistan. We expect Moscow to continue to contrast its own success and North Korea's demonstration of maturity with alleged noncooperation of U.S. allies.

<sup>23</sup> 'Ciphred Telegram No. 342, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry' (1986) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Hungarian National Archives (Magyar Országos Levéltár, MOL). XIX-J-1-j India, 1986, 65. doboz, 60-4, 002134/3/1986. Obtained and translated for NPIHP by Balazs Szalontai, available at <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/111958> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>24</sup> 'Ciphred Telegram No. 126, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry' (1987) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Hungarian National Archives (Magyar Országos Levéltár, MOL). XIX-J-1-j India, 1987, 58. doboz, 60-4, 002195/1987. Obtained and translated for NPIHP by Balazs Szalontai, available at <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/111959> (17 May, 2021).

Now that it has joined the NPT, Pyongyang may also be encouraging Moscow to step up criticism of the U.S. nuclear presence in South Korea. Public commentaries by both countries after last November's Reagan-Gorbachev summit claimed that the density of nuclear weapons in South Korea was 'four times greater than in NATO' and therefore--that Korea was the most likely starting point for a global nuclear war. The Soviets, in addition, warned that U.S. nuclear weapons in South Korea pose a 'threat' to the USSR as well as to North Korea.

Moreover, Soviet involvement could place further controls on the North's nuclear program--and Soviet controls may be more effective constraints on a potential North Korean weapons program than the fact of NPT adherence itself. We expect the USSR to follow its usual pattern of supplying the fuel for reactors it exports and taking back the spent fuel for permanent disposal.

In addition, the Soviet Union is a strong supporter of the NPT.

*Source:* North-Korea-USSR: Implications of NPT Accession. Central Intelligence Agency FOIA Electronic Reading Room

Although at the level of the international system the confrontation basically remained the same, Gorbachev attempted to adjust the level of the state to the task of intensifying the dialogue with the United States. Faced with strong opposition within the military-industrial complex, Gorbachev began to destroy the collective decision-making mechanism and. The principle of collective responsibility, as well as the rule of the old ideology, both became blurred.

In March 1985, after the death of Konstantin Chernenko, a new Minister of Foreign Affairs Eduard Shevardnadze was appointed. After that, the first disputes appeared within the 'Big Five'. Akhromeev cites the following story from 1985:

At one day, when discussing the INF issue, comrade Zaikov (a member of the Politburo charged with coordination of the work of the Soviet Government agencies negotiating arms control treaties with the United States) said: "You know, comrade Akhromeev, the time when you together with Comrade Kornienko formulated the disarmament policy of the country has passed. Now the political leadership of the state formulates it. You need to take this into account".<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Akhromeev, Sergey and Georgy Kornienko (1992) *Glazami marshala i diplomata* [Through the eyes of a marshal and a diplomat], Moscow: Mezhdunarodnie Otnosheniya.

That was the first sign of Gorbachev's new tactic — to bar the Soviet military from decision-making on political issues. The nuclear talks with the West were considered by Gorbachev and Shevardnadze as a mainly political task.<sup>26</sup> The 'Big Five' began to follow the initiatives of the political leadership, while the original idea was to coordinate all political initiatives with military and military-industrial complex before they are put forward.

A well-known Gorbachev's 'perestroika,' or the 'new thinking' policy became the main factor of internal politics influencing the foreign policy as well. In the very beginning, a certain part of the Soviet military, including Akhromeev, wholeheartedly believed in that new policy. In particular, in 1990 Akhromeev wrote:

A new political thinking was finally formulated by the autumn of 1986. Its basic principle was that a nuclear war cannot be a means to achieve political, economic, ideological, any whatsoever purpose. [...] Remembering that time, I consider it the most joyful. The Soviet people believed in perestroika.<sup>27</sup>

Another important factor was certainly the Chernobyl disaster that convinced both the Soviet Union and the rest of the world that it is necessary to strengthen the control over the proliferation of nuclear technologies.

Gorbachev's Western counterparts of Gorbachev did not believe in his success not only at the level of the international system but at the level of the state as well. For instance, then former United States Secretary of State William Rogers said in 1988:

Of course, it [the "new thinking" policy] won't work. In the long run, either Gorbachev will be removed from his office, as Khrushchev was, or Russia will become a much different society. If he remains in the office, and the society becomes more open, a new challenge will face the United States. We will have to constantly remind ourselves in that event that a system which has openly and consistently espoused world

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<sup>26</sup> Akhromeev, Sergey and Georgy Kornienko (1992) *Glazami marshala i diplomata* [Through the eyes of a marshal and a diplomat], Moscow: Mezhdunarodnie Otnosheniya.

<sup>27</sup> Akhromeev, Sergey and Georgy Kornienko (1992) *Glazami marshala i diplomata* [Through the eyes of a marshal and a diplomat], Moscow: Mezhdunarodnie Otnosheniya.

domination does not easily change its spots; or if it does, in all likelihood it will be a temporary change.<sup>28</sup>

The West in general and the United States, in particular, made a mistake when they did not take seriously Gorbachev's good intentions. As will be analyzed below, today's crisis in Russia-U.S. relations in nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation was, to a certain extent, provoked by that mistake.

Finally, the economic driver still played a role in formulating the Soviet Union's attitude towards nonproliferation. In particular, the Soviet Union leadership still thought that the proliferation to 'friendly' countries could reduce the arms race burden on the Soviet economy. As one of the Soviet documents stated in 1987, to a certain extent, it would 'alleviate the military burden weighing on the Soviet Union, since hitherto the latter has been compelled to counter the potential of as many as four nuclear powers'.<sup>29</sup>

Thus, from 1985 to 1991, the following factors determined the Soviet Union attitude towards the cooperation with the United States on the nuclear nonproliferation issue:

- At the level of the international system, the Soviet Union still has enough capabilities to influence third world countries;
- At the state level, the economic driver still forced the Soviet Union to limit proliferation to potentially hostile, or uncontrolled countries (and to consider the option to encourage proliferation to 'friendly' countries), while the collective decision-making mechanism was challenged and internal conflicts between different agencies of the Soviet Government arose, weakening the ideological factor in the Soviet nonproliferation policy;
- The influence of personal factor became strong enough to challenge the 'Big Five' system.

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<sup>28</sup> 'Statement of William P. Rogers, Former Secretary of State' (1988) The INF Treaty: hearings before the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, One Hundredth Congress, second session, on the treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the elimination of their intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles: 209-211, available at <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015014752847> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>29</sup> 'Ciphred Telegram No. 126, Embassy of Hungary in India to the Hungarian Foreign Ministry' (1987) History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Hungarian National Archives (Magyar Országos Levéltár, MOL). XIX-J-1-j India, 1987, 58. doboz, 60-4, 002195/1987. Obtained and translated for NPIHP by Balazs Szalonta, available at <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/111959> (17 May 2021).



## 1991–1999. Yeltsin Presidency

In 1991, the Cold War was over, and the ideological factor was withdrawn from the Russian approach to nonproliferation. The international system that to a large extent determined the cooperation between the Soviet Union and the United States disappeared. The ability of Russia to influence the nonproliferation regime has been narrowed to the borders of the former Soviet Union. This fact, in many ways, determined the geographical scope of cooperation between Russia and the United States during this period.

As Russian researchers note:

Petty differences and clashes prevailed in U.S.-Russian relations at this stage (above all, the matter of Russian exports to Iran, which has become a constant issue throughout these years). The parties failed to discuss strategic problems and could not respond to such nonproliferation challenges, such as the 1998 nuclear tests in India and Pakistan. Moscow and Washington have also failed to find effective and mutually acceptable ways to curb missile proliferation. They have not helped the CD in Geneva to overcome its deadlock and have failed to sustain the momentum for FMCT.<sup>30</sup>

After Russia had lost its sphere of influence, it faced competition with the United States in those regions that previously were within the Soviet Union's sphere of influence.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, certain U.S. officials started to think about the importance of the factor of equality for the Russia-U.S. cooperation in the field of nuclear nonproliferation. Some of them understood, in particular, that 'there is no way to persuade the Russians to allow the United States to take a more active part in protecting their weapons of mass destruction without convincing them that U.S.-Russian relations are fundamentally cooperative rather than competitive'.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Orlov, Vladimir and Roland Timerbaev, and Anton Khlopkov (2002) *Nuclear Nonproliferation in U.S.-Russian Relations: Challenges and Opportunities*, Moscow: PIR Library Series. P. 22

<sup>31</sup> Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Extension Issues (Foreign Intelligence Service Open Report 1995), Open Reports of Foreign Intelligence Service of Russia, available at <http://svr.gov.ru/material/prib01.htm> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>32</sup> Orlov, Vladimir and Roland Timerbaev, and Anton Khlopkov (2002) *Nuclear Nonproliferation in U.S.-Russian Relations: Challenges and Opportunities*, Moscow: PIR Library Series. P. 87

As for the state level, the Russian authors note that:

One of the most serious nonproliferation problems for Russia in the 1990s was the lack of a clear and coherent state policy in the area of WMD nonproliferation and, as a result, the lack of appropriate coordination, redistribution of powers among the agencies involved in export control decision-making. [...] Russian Government had no efficient mechanisms to control the implementation of its declarations. As a result, Russian nonproliferation declarations were devalued, the world began to view them as "export declarations," while at the same time, Minatom and other governmental bodies involved in military-technical cooperation "dominated Russia's internal politics".<sup>33</sup>

Yeltsin's attempts to solve this problem did not bring success. As a result, in the late 1990s, it was clear that even the Foreign Ministry was unable to manage the whole set of problems that was faced by the Russian foreign policy in the 1990s.<sup>34</sup>

But, probably, the most important internal factor influencing Russia's approaches towards the cooperation with the United States during that period was economy. In some sense, economic problems allowed for the continuity of Russia-U.S. cooperative programs introduced in the 1990s (as it took place in the case of the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, bilateral Agreement Regarding Cooperation in the Area of Nuclear Material Physical Protection, Control and Accounting, and WSSX agreement).

At the individual level, the main difference was the multiplication of the number of statesmen who tried to influence and lead the country's foreign policy. In place of Gorbachev and his opponents, there came President Boris Yeltsin, Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev, Minister of Atomic Energy Viktor Mikhailov, director of the Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) Evgeniy Primakov, and others who have tried to enforce the interests of their agencies in the field of foreign policy in general and in the field of nonproliferation in particular.

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Kortunov, Sergey (2009) *Sovremennaya vneshnyaya politika Rossii: strategiya izbiratel'noy вовлеченности* [Modern Russian foreign policy: selective engagement strategy], Moscow: GU-VShE.

Orlov also notes<sup>35</sup> that 'a distinctive feature of that period was that the nuclear non-proliferation policy was implemented under the influence of enormous pressure from external players. The most visible U.S. pressure on Russia was manifest in two cases: Iran and India'. In addition, he argues that although Russia 'has put forward dozens of major initiatives' in the 1990s, 'it has coped with the "recipient of international aid" and the "lame duck" syndromes. In non-proliferation and disarmament matters, Russian diplomats have pursued their own policy with confidence and without regard for others'. But serious and well-considered proposals were allowed 'to die quietly as a rule'. Russia was helpless in promoting its own grand initiatives, according to Orlov.

Thus, in the period between 1991 and the beginning of the 2000s, the following factors determined Russia's attitude towards the cooperation with the United States on nuclear nonproliferation issues:

- At the level of the international system, Russia lost its ability to influence third world countries; its area of influence was limited to the territory of the former Soviet Union;
- At the level of the state, economic driver became the strongest factor influencing Russia's nonproliferation decision-making;
- The strong influence of personal factor led to the complete destruction of the decision-making mechanisms which existed before 1991.

## Conclusions

At the current stage, Russia's attitude towards the cooperation with the United States on the nuclear nonproliferation issue resembles the one of the former Soviet Union.

- At the level of the international system, Russia was able to partly reinstate its capabilities to influence third world countries, but its area of influence has been reduced;
- At the level of the state, the economic driver seems to be less relevant today, while there is a revival (to a certain extent) of the decision-making process that existed before 1991;

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<sup>35</sup> Orlov, Vladimir (2011) Russia's Nuclear Quest Comes Full Circle, Russia in Global Affairs 4 (December/October), available at <http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/number/Russias-Nuclear-Quest-Comes-Full-Circle-15422> (17 May, 2021).

- As far as the personal level is considered, it is obvious that the views of President Putin on the possibility and necessity of cooperation with the United States and the West in general on nuclear nonproliferation undergone certain evolution as well. The current stage of that evolution became clear at the 'Valdai Club' Session in October 2017. Then the Russian president labeled almost all major Russia-U.S. cooperation projects in the nuclear field as 'one-sided' and unfavorable to Russian interests.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, a year earlier, Putin described as 'naïve' the Soviet leadership in the period of 1985 – 1991.<sup>37</sup>

At the current stage, Russia's leadership seems to be trying to regenerate certain aspects of the Soviet-U.S. nonproliferation-related dialogue which existed before 1985. In recent years, in those cases where Russia has been provided with the opportunity to cooperate with the United States on an equal basis (as it took place in Syria and Iran), effective Russia-U.S. cooperation on nonproliferation was possible.

One could agree that today there is a certain prejudice in the West against almost every major Russian foreign policy move. This prejudice increased dramatically in 2014 because of the events in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine. For Russia, it is now much harder to convey its concerns in the field of international security to its Western partners. At the same time, for the West, it is now much easier to convince the world public opinion that Russia is not only 'bullying' Ukraine, but the international security system in general. And it seems to be almost inevitable that the nuclear nonproliferation field will be the next victim of the current hostile discourse between Russia and the West. The most recent and, probably, the brightest examples were the crisis of the 2000 Russia-U.S. Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement (the PMDA). Thus, it is important to note that currently there is a trend towards further politicization of bilateral and multilateral nonproliferation fora where Russia is still involved.

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<sup>36</sup> Vladimir Putin took part in the final plenary session of the 14th annual meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Club titled *The World of the Future: Moving Through Conflict to Cooperation*, October 19, 2017, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/page/3#sel=225:1:R3L,227:24:2jq>

<sup>37</sup> Braterskiy, Aleksandr, Khodarenok, Mikhail, Solopov, Maksim, Amerikantsy Nashli Sekretne Rakety Rossii, *Gazeta.Ru*, February 15, 2017, accessed on August 23, 2017, <https://www.gazeta.ru/army/2017/02/15/10526777.shtml>

## **NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION IN RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY CONCEPTS**

### **Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation Approved by President of the Russian Federation Boris N. Yeltsin on 23 April 1993**

Russia will seek to:

- Adapt its military capabilities to the new environment by eliminating from its arsenals arms that are not necessary (inter-continental ones beyond certain numbers, conventional ones beyond those agreed in existing treaties and agreements) and whose very sustainability is an economic burden and carries with it the risk of accidental or unauthorised use;
- Maintain the retained weapons at a level of sufficiency that provides a deterrent against potential threats both at the border perimeter and far abroad, especially given the risk of proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery.

In the near future, the disarmament process will prioritize:

- Implementation of the agreements on the reduction of conventional and nuclear weapons; at the same time, efforts will be made to ease the financial burden of such reductions;
- The concentration of full control over the nuclear forces of the former Soviet Union in the hands of Russia through the withdrawal of the relevant means to its territory with their subsequent elimination, the practical implementation of the existing agreements on the non-nuclear status of Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan, their accession to the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as non-nuclear states, the creation within the CIS of a non-proliferation control system.
- Russia's accession to the Missile Technology Export Control Regime as an equal party.

### **The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation 2000 Approved by the President of the Russian Federation V. Putin on 28 June 2000**

Russia calls for further decrease of the role of the power factor in international relations, along with the simultaneous enhancement

of strategic and regional stability. Russia reaffirms its unswerving course toward participating jointly with other states in averting the proliferation of nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction and means of their delivery, as well as relevant materials and technologies. The Russian Federation is an ardent supporter of strengthening and developing relevant international regimes, including the creation of a global system of control over nonproliferation of missiles and missile technologies. The Russian Federation to firmly adheres to its commitments under the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and urges all countries of the world to join it;

Russia views the signing by India and Pakistan of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and their accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as an important factor of stability in the Asia-Pacific Region. It will support the line for the creation of nuclear weapons-free zones in Asia.

**Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation  
2008 Approved by President of the Russian Federation  
Dmitry A. Medvedev on 12 July 2008**

Russia consistently calls for diminished role of the force factor in international relations with simultaneous enhancement of strategic and regional stability. Towards these ends, the Russian Federation:

- unswervingly fulfils its international obligations under international treaties in the sphere of nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, arms control and disarmament, as well as takes confidence-building measures in military sphere; participates in negotiations to work out and conclude new accords in these fields consistent with its national interests and on the basis of the principles of equality and indivisibility of security;
- reaffirms its unflinching policy of developing multilateral foundations of nonproliferation of nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction and means of their delivery; stands for compliance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, as well as the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction; is actively engaged in international endeavors to control traffic of dual-use materials and

technologies; promotes the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; supports a global missile nonproliferation regime on the basis of a legally binding agreement;

- is prepared to negotiate with all nuclear powers a reduction of strategic offensive weapons (intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles as well as heavy bombers and warheads they carry) up to a minimum level sufficient to maintain strategic stability;
- considers that the present fundamental development trends, including the emerging multipolarity, and diversification of risks and threats lead to the conclusion that the strategic stability issue cannot anymore be addressed exclusively within the framework of Russia- U.S. relations. Objectively, the time is coming to involve major States in these endeavors, first of all nuclear ones, interested in joint actions to ensure common security. This is the essence of the strategic openness underlying Russian initiatives, in particular those related to collective counteraction to potential missile threats for Europe and to lending of globalized character to the regime of the Treaty Between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles of 1987.

**Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation 2013  
Approved by President of the Russian Federation V. Putin on  
12 February 2013**

Russia consistently advocates reducing the role of the use of force in international relations while enhancing strategic and regional stability. To these ends, the Russian Federation:

- reaffirms its unwavering policy towards developing multilateral political and legal frameworks for a universal and stable regime of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction and means of their delivery; stands for compliance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, as well as the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on

Their Destruction; actively participates in multilateral export control regimes as well as in international efforts to control trafficking in dual-use materials and technologies; encourages an early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; comes out in favor of establishing a global missile non-proliferation regime on the basis of a legally binding agreement, and universalizing obligations under the Treaty between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America on Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles;

- supports the process aimed at establishing zones free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction;
- comes out in favor of strengthening nuclear safety and security worldwide, in particular supports strengthening international legal mechanism in the fields of nuclear safety and prevention of nuclear terrorist attacks;
- in the interests of addressing the issues of strategic stability, stands for the development of bilateral and multilateral cooperation among states, first of all those in possession of nuclear weapons, for the purpose of ensuring common security in the spirit of strategic openness, including in providing access to the benefits of the peaceful use of nuclear energy for all interested states;

Russia firmly supports constructive cooperation with the USA in arms control, taking into account, inter alia, an unbreakable link between strategic offensive and defensive warfare and the necessity to transform nuclear disarmament into a multilateral process, and considers that the possibility of further reduction of strategic offensive armaments can only be examined with due account for all factors influencing global strategic stability. In the context of the creation of a global missile defense system by the USA, Russia will consistently seek legal guarantees that it will not be directed against Russian nuclear deterrent forces.

### **Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation Approved by President of the Russian Federation V. Putin on 30 November 2016**

Force is becoming an increasingly important factor in international relations amid escalating political, social and economic contradictions and growing uncertainty in the global political system and economy.



Efforts to expand and upgrade military capabilities and to create and deploy new types of weapons undermine strategic stability and pose a threat to global security which is underwritten by a system of arms control treaties and agreements. Although a large-scale war, including nuclear war, between major powers remains unlikely, they face increased risks of being drawn into regional conflicts and escalating crises.

Russia consistently advocates strengthening international security and enhancing strategic and regional stability. To this end, the Russian Federation:

- maintains an unwavering commitment to strengthening the political and legal foundations of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, as well as the non-proliferation of other weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, given the risk that elements of such weapons could fall into the hands of non-State actors, primarily terrorist organizations, including in territories within States that central authorities no longer control, in full or in part; affirms its commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons of July 1, 1968, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction of December 16, 1971, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction of January 13, 1993, as well as supports the efforts to make them universal; works to expedite the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty of September 24, 1996;
- reaffirms its readiness to discuss further gradual reduction of nuclear capabilities recognizing the growing need to make this a multilateral process and giving due consideration to all factors that affect strategic stability;
- supports the creation of zones free from nuclear weapons and other types of weapons of mass destruction, primarily in the Middle East;
- advocates stronger technical and physical nuclear safety worldwide and efforts to prevent acts of nuclear terrorism, primarily by improving the relevant international legal mechanisms, with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) playing a central role in international cooperation on these

matters, while respecting the right of States to determine their national policy on their own; believes that the State itself bears responsibility for ensuring that the national nuclear safety system is efficient and reliable and determining its optimal parameters at its discretion;

- advocates the promotion of bilateral and multilateral cooperation of States, primarily nuclear weapons States, with a view to resolving issues related to strategic stability, ensuring common security in the spirit of openness, including the peaceful use of nuclear energy to meet the demand for fuel and energy in all interested countries.

Russia advocates constructive cooperation with the U.S. in arms control, with due consideration of the inextricable link between strategic offensive and defensive warfare, and the imperative to make nuclear disarmament a multilateral process. The Russian Federation believes that talks on the further reduction of strategic offensive arms are only possible when taking into account all factors affecting global strategic stability, without exception. Russia views the creation of the global missile-defence system by the U.S. as a threat to its national security and reserves the right to take adequate retaliatory measures.



PART II

**RUSSIAN-AMERICAN DIALOGUE  
ON REGIONAL CHALLENGES TO  
NONPROLIFERATION**

## CHAPTER 5

# INTERACTION ON NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION IN SOUTH ASIA

*Petr Topychkanov*

The U.S.-Soviet/Russian dialogue on the nuclear developments in South Asia has witnessed both successes and failures. Despite some disagreements about South Asia, the differences in their strategic postures, and crisis in the bilateral relations, Moscow and Washington were able to establish a permanent channel to exchange views on the nuclear programs of India and Pakistan. As a result, they turned to be on the same page of the history of nuclear programs of India and Pakistan.

### **Strategic Significance of the Indian Subcontinent for USSR/Russia and the U.S.**

The Soviet and U.S. attention to the Indian subcontinent and the Indian Ocean significantly increased at the beginning of the 1960s and remained high until the end of the 1970s. In the 1960s and 1970s, U.S. and Soviet sought superiority in the nuclear capabilities, deployed in this part of the world. SLBMs were the main instrument of the arms race between the Soviet Union and the United States in the Indian Ocean.

After achieving progress in the range and precision of ballistic missiles by the middle of the 70s, both powers devaluated the region's role in the nuclear arms race between each other. In 1977 – 1978, Moscow and Washington held four meetings on the issues, related to the nuclear weapons deployment in the Indian ocean.<sup>1</sup> A new round

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<sup>1</sup> About the U.S.-Soviet talks see: Giblin, James Francis Jr. (1984) 'The Indian Ocean Naval Arms Limitation Talks: From a Zone of Peace to the Arc of Crisis. A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy,' Internet Archive, available at <https://archive.org/details/indianoceannaval00gibl> (19 May, 2021).

of the Cold War at the end of the 70s didn't allow them to continue these negotiations.<sup>2</sup>

The decision by the Soviet Union to send troops into Afghanistan in 1979 showed the value of its strategic assets in the Indian ocean to Washington. Yet the two superpowers never returned to attempts to match each other's nuclear capabilities in the region. The main interest of the Soviet Union in the Indian Ocean shifted to permanent monitoring of the U.S. conventional and nuclear capabilities in the region. This was the rationale behind the presence of the Soviet Navy in the ocean.

Admiral Sergey Gorshkov, the Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Navy in 1956–1985, was supportive of the idea to accept the Indian Ocean as a peace zone, initiated in 1964 by Sri Lanka. In part this support was conditioned by financial considerations because through this initiative, the Soviet Union could avoid serious spending on supporting its naval operations in the Indian Ocean.<sup>3</sup> The United States did not endorse a peace zone in the Indian Ocean because it could squeeze its operational space and limit American capabilities in the region. (beginning from 1974, the U.S. started large-scale construction on the Diego Garcia island).<sup>4</sup> This logic explains why the U.S. and USSR/Russia voted differently for the U.N. General Assembly resolutions on the Indian Ocean as a peace zone (*see Chart 1*).

**Chart 1A. U.S.-Soviet/Russian voting on UNGA Resolutions on the designation of the Indian Ocean as a peace zone, 1971–1985**

Date	1971	1972	1973	1974	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
USA				No vote								No vote	No vote	No vote	No vote	No vote	No vote
USSR																	

<sup>2</sup> Singh, K. R. (1991) 'Peace Zone: How Relevant?' in Indian Ocean and U.S.-Soviet Détente. New Delhi: International Institute for Asia-Pacific Studies: 33–37.

<sup>3</sup> Timerbaev, Roland (2007) *Rasskazy o bylom* [Stories about the Past], Moscow: PIR Center, p. 114.

<sup>4</sup> Chopra, V. D. 'American Shadow over the Indian Ocean' in Indian Ocean and U.S.-Soviet Détente. New Delhi: International Institute for Asia-Pacific Studies, p. 68.

**Chart 1B. U.S.-Soviet/Russian voting on UNGA Resolutions on the Indian Ocean as a peace zone, 1986–2015**

Date	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	
USA																						
USSR/ Russia	No vote	No vote	No vote																			

However, the United States and USSR/Russian turned sides in the matter of a nuclear-free zone in South Asia. Washington was mainly supportive of the idea, and Moscow was mostly abstaining during the vote (*see Chart 2*).

**Chart 2. U.S.-Soviet/Russian Voting on UNGA Resolutions on Nuclear-Free Zone in South Asia, 1974–1997**

Date	1974	1974	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	
USA																									
USSR/ RF																									

The reasons for this difference lay in the U.S.-Pakistani and USSR-Indian relations. When in 1974, Pakistan tabled its draft of the resolution at the 29<sup>th</sup> General Assembly session, both Washington and Moscow abstained from voting. Still, after 1977 the United States supported every resolution on a nuclear-free zone in South Asia. Notably, Washington never ratified any protocol to a nuclear-free zone treaty with one exception of the Treaty of Tlatelolco; however, at every session, it voted for Pakistani-drafted resolutions on such a zone in South Asia. Moscow ratified all the protocols to the nuclear-free zone treaties with one exception of the Treaty of Bangkok, not ratified by any nuclear-weapon state.

In 1974, Moscow voted for the Indian draft of the resolution and later kept abstaining from voting for Pakistani drafts until the Soviet Union collapsed. Under the guidance of the first Russian minister of foreign affairs Andrey Kozyrev (1990 – 1996), Moscow

changed its voting pattern from abstaining to supporting the initiative.<sup>5</sup>

This change could be explained by the shifts in Russian foreign policy and the role of minister Kozyrev, who notably opted for better relations with Pakistan. Moscow thoroughly revisited its views on nuclear nonproliferation threats in South Asia during this period. Both before and after the collapse of the Soviet Union, it was clear that Pakistan advanced a range of proposals of political and propaganda nature, possibly as an attempt to hold India back from developing a military nuclear program and thus a costly and dangerous arms race.

In addition to draft resolutions on a nuclear-free zone in South Asia, Pakistan proposed, at different times, to create a South Asian ballistic missile-free zone, adopt an Indian-Pakistani declaration to reject acquiring or building nuclear weapons, and place all nuclear sites in India and Pakistan under full-scope IAEA safeguards. Pakistan offered to join the NPT together with India as non-nuclear-weapon states, or join the CTBT (also together with India).<sup>6</sup>

The U.S. and Soviet/Russian voting records at the U.N. highlight the strategic interests of both players in the region. Respective orientation towards Pakistan and India explains the differences in voting for the Pakistani-drafted resolutions on a nuclear-free zone in South Asia.

Washington was building up its military presence in the Asia-Pacific through the deployment of both conventional and nuclear capabilities during the Cold War. And it continued to do that after the end of this period.

Soviet/Russian appetites for permanent military deployment in the Indian ocean were nondurable and had the strategic sense only in the 60s and 70s. After that, the primary role of the Soviet/Russian military in the region was to monitor U.S. activities. That is why Moscow was supportive of a peace zone in the Indian ocean, while the United States took an opposing stance.

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<sup>5</sup> Thomas, Raju G.C. (1993) 'South Asian Security in the 1990s,' Adelphi Papers No. 278, London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> Moskalenko, Vladimir and Petr Topychkanov (2009) 'Pakistan and Problems of Nuclear Nonproliferation,' Second U.S. — Russian Nuclear Non-Proliferation Conference, 233 — 242, Stanford: Stanford University.



## Reasons for the Military Nuclear Programs of India and Pakistan

India's nuclear program (as well as its ballistic missile program) began during the rule of prime-minister Indira Gandhi (1966 – 1977, 1980-1984). However, her public position was that 'India aimed to use the atom for peaceful purposes'.<sup>7</sup>

The rapid development of Pakistan's military nuclear program is associated with the name of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who was the president in 1971 – 1973 and the prime minister in 1973 – 1977. He began advocating nuclear development in Pakistan in the 1960s. In his book, *The Myth of Independence*, published in 1969, he wrote of nuclear weapons: 'Our problem, in its essence, is how to obtain such a weapon in time before the crisis begins'.<sup>8</sup>

India and Pakistan were motivated to exercise the nuclear option by a tense conjuncture in South Asia, which was determined by several factors that were relevant both during and after the Cold War, including:

- Disputes between India and Pakistan;
- Disputes between India and China;
- Disputes between Pakistan and Afghanistan;
- Transborder terrorist activity;
- Separatist movements;
- The rivalry between the USSR and the U.S. (during the Cold War).

The security challenges in South Asia prompted India and Pakistan to feel that they were in danger. That feeling of insecurity became deeper after neither state managed to obtain security guarantees from the superpowers. Soon after becoming the Indian premier in 1967, concerned by the Chinese nuclear tests since 1964, Lal Bahadur Shastri tasked the Ministry of External Affairs to seek security assurances from the USSR, the U.S., and the U.K.<sup>9</sup> However,

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<sup>7</sup> Gandhi, Indira (1975) Articles, Speeches, Interviews, translated from English by N.V. Alipova and G.A. Pribegina, Moscow, p. 320.

<sup>8</sup> Khan, Feroz H. *Eating Grass: The Making of the Pakistani Bomb*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 63.

<sup>9</sup> Ravichandran, Moorthy and Hau Khan Sum, and Guido Benny (2015) 'Power Asymmetry and Nuclear Option in India-Pakistan Security Relations,' *Asian Journal of Scientific Research* 8(1): 85.

this attempt failed. Islamabad faced the same failure during the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971. It resulted in a defeat for Pakistan and the disintegration of the country. The first severe suspicions that India and Pakistan had begun military nuclear programs could be traced back to that time.

Another critical factor in India's and Pakistan's respective decisions to go nuclear was the presence of an opponent who possessed superior general-purpose forces and a program for developing nuclear weapons or other types of WMD. For India, China was and still is the primary threat because of both reasons. For Pakistan, both explanations are relevant in its calculations about India, but the nuclear program of India seems to be a more important reason for its nuclear program.

As for China, this threat became manifested in the escalation of Indian-Chinese relations after the Tibetan events of 1959, India's defeat in an armed conflict with China in 1962, China's entry into the 'nuclear club' in 1964, the launch of China's first satellite in 1970, and the existence of territorial disputes between India and China.

The authors of a report prepared by the CIA in 1964 concluded that after the Chinese tests, India would decide to create a nuclear weapon within 1 – 3 years.<sup>10</sup> During the second half of the 1960s, several researchers believed that out of all the non-nuclear states, India was the closest to deciding to begin a military nuclear program and conducting nuclear tests.<sup>11</sup>

As for Pakistan, India saw several threats connected with the acute confrontation between the two countries which had led to armed conflicts on multiple occasions (in 1947 – 1948, 1965, 1971, and 1999). It also saw threats related to territorial disputes, terrorism, separatism, and, as many in India believed, the secret possession of nuclear weapons since the 1980s and threats to use them.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> 'Prospects for a Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Over the Next Decade' (1964) National Intelligence Estimate No. 4-2-64, George Washington University, available at <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/nukevault/ebb401/docs/doc%203.pdf> (19 May, 2021).

<sup>11</sup> Edwardes, Michael (1967) 'India, Pakistan and Nuclear Weapons,' *International Affairs* 43(4): 658, 661.

<sup>12</sup> Vajpayee, Atal Bihari (2001) 'Yadernye ispytaniya dlya obespecheniya nacional' noy bezopasnosti. [Nuclear tests to ensure national security],' in Ye.Yu. Vanina et al., *Indiya na puti v buduscheye: sbornik rechey i vystupleniy* [India's path to the future: compilation of speeches and statements], 24 – 26, Moscow: Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

Indian leaders thought that Islamabad had voiced such threats at least twice: in 1986-1987 and 1990.<sup>13</sup>

A letter that Atal Bihari Vajpayee, prime minister of India (1998 – 2004), sent to the leaders of foreign states after the nuclear tests in 1998, was a telling example. The letter justified the need to acquire nuclear weapons in terms of threats from India's neighbours, namely China, 'overt nuclear weapons state on our borders, a state which committed armed aggression against India in 1962' and Pakistan, a 'covert nuclear weapons state' which had attacked India three times and was continuing to support terrorism in Kashmir.<sup>14</sup>

The main incentives for Pakistan to initiate a military nuclear program were the country's defeat in the Indo-Pakistani war of 1971 and the Indian nuclear test of 1974. In 1964, when suspicions that India planned to create a nuclear weapon were already in place, Ishrat Hussain Usmani, head of the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission, said, 'If there will be a sixth nuclear weapon state, then there will be the seventh one'.<sup>15</sup> According to the report prepared by the Bureau of Intelligence and Research of the U.S. State Department in June 1974, India's nuclear tests would provoke Pakistan to create a nuclear weapon, which, in its turn, would cause India to expand its nuclear program significantly.<sup>16</sup>

## **U.S.-Soviet/Russian Dialogue on the Nuclear Programs of India and Pakistan**

According to Hungarian diplomatic sources, the Soviet Union was informed in advance that India planned to explode a nuclear device in 1974, and it 'applied strong pressure to prevent that'.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Subrahmanyam, K. (2010) 'Nuclear Deterrence in the Indian Context,' Golden Jubilee Seminar on "The Role of Force in Strategic Affairs," New Delhi: National Defence College, p. 60 – 61.

<sup>14</sup> Talbot, Strobe (2004) *Engaging India: Diplomacy, Democracy, and the Bomb*, New Delhi: Penguin Books, p. 53.

<sup>15</sup> Khan, Feroz H. *Eating Grass: The Making of the Pakistani Bomb*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 50.

<sup>16</sup> 'Prospects for a Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Over the Next Decade' (1964) National Intelligence Estimate No. 4-2-64, George Washington University, available at <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu//nukevault/ebb401/docs/doc%203.pdf> (19 May, 2021).

<sup>17</sup> Szalontai, Balazs (2011) 'The Elephant in the Room. The Soviet Union and India's Nuclear Program, 1967 – 1989,' NPIHP Working Paper No. 1, available at

This source was not supported by the document of the U.S. Mission to NATO of 1974 regarding Soviet awareness about the possible nuclear test. Still, it was endorsed concerning the Soviet attempts to bring India to the nonproliferation regime:

The Soviets share our concern about proliferation. They lobbied hard, though unsuccessfully, to get India to sign the NPT. At this point, they are wary of damaging their loose ties with India and have refrained from any public comment. Soviet news accounts have stressed the "peaceful" character of the test. We have no information that the Soviets had been informed in advance of the test or assisted the Indians directly in carrying it out. Indo-Soviet cooperation in the nuclear field has been limited (far less than Canadian or U.S. programs), and we believe that the Soviets will be even more cautious in the future in sharing nuclear explosive technology with India. In recent years the Soviets have supplied only 45 tons of heavy water (valued at \$4 million), a large computer, and some laboratory equipment.<sup>18</sup>

The critical difference between the Soviet and U.S. positions about the 1974 test was the USSR insisted that it was a peaceful nuclear explosion, and the U.S. argued that there was no difference between peaceful and military characters of the nuclear test. For instance, when the Indian foreign secretary Kewal Singh summoned the U.S. deputy chief of mission David Schneider on May 18, the American diplomat said: 'The U.S. did not believe it possible to distinguish between explosions for peaceful and military purposes'.<sup>19</sup>

The Soviet approach to the 1974 test was not one-sided. Although Moscow characterized the test as peaceful, it was concerned about the path of the Indian nuclear program. That is why

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<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/the-elephant-the-room-the-soviet-union-and-indias-nuclear-program-1967-1989> (19 May, 2021).

<sup>18</sup> 'U.S. Mission to NATO: Assessment of Indian Nuclear Test' (1974) George Washington University, available at <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB6/docs/doc18.pdf> (19 May, 2021).

<sup>19</sup> 'Telegram 6591 From the Embassy in India to the Department of State, the Interests Section in Syria, and the Embassy in the United Kingdom' (1974) Office of the Historian, available at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve14p2/d47> (19 May, 2021).

Moscow was ready to insist on stringent safeguards for Indo-Soviet deals in the area of peaceful nuclear energy.<sup>20</sup>

According to the cable from 1974 by the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, U.S. diplomats had 'frequent consultations with the Soviets on IAEA matters through [] respective missions to the IAEA, with an excellent record of cooperation and mutual support in this field'.<sup>21</sup> The key focus of this dialogue was on strengthening export control and nuclear security requirements.<sup>22</sup>

This level of the U.S.-Russian dialogue on nuclear nonproliferation remained high in the 1980s despite a new wave of the Cold War. According to the Russian sources, 'in the early 1980s, during the U.S.-Soviet crisis caused by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and plans of SS-20 and Pershing II deployment, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko told his close associates that nuclear nonproliferation was the only silk thread connecting the two superpowers at that time'.<sup>23</sup>

In general, there was no difference between the Soviet and American positions regarding the nuclear programs of India and Pakistan. According to a 1987 telegram from the Embassy of Hungary in Delhi, a Soviet diplomat briefed colleagues from embassies of the Warsaw Treaty Organization about negative consequences of 'nearly inevitable' crossing the nuclear threshold by India:

- The edifice of nuclear nonproliferation will collapse, many pro-Western countries — including Pakistan, Israel, and South Africa — will openly take the path of nuclear armament. The danger of local nuclear conflicts will increase.
- A new anti-Soviet campaign will unfold, claiming that India became a nuclear power with Soviet support.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Potter, William C. (1985) 'The Soviet Union and Nuclear Proliferation,' *Slavic Review* 44(3): 447.

<sup>21</sup> 'State Department Telegram 228213 to U.S. Embassy Moscow, "Nuclear Safeguards Consultations," (1974) George Washington University, available at <http://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/nukevault/ebb467/docs/doc%209C%2010-17-74%20cable%20to%20Moscow.pdf> (19 May, 2021).

<sup>22</sup> Timerbaev, Roland (2000) *Nuclear Suppliers Group: Why and How It Was Created (1974-1978)*, Moscow: PIR Center.

<sup>23</sup> Orlov, Vladimir and Roland Timerbaev, and Anton Khlopkov (2002) *Nuclear Nonproliferation in U.S.-Russian Relations: Challenges and Opportunities*, Moscow: PIR Center, p. 14

<sup>24</sup> Szalontai, Balazs (2011) 'The Elephant in the Room. The Soviet Union and India's Nuclear Program, 1967–1989,' NPIHP Working Paper No. 1, available at <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/the-elephant-in-the-room-the-soviet-union-and-indias-nuclear-program-1967-1989> (19 May, 2021).

Moscow and Washington attempted to interdict India and Pakistan from further nuclear testing. In February of 1990 Secretary James Baker and Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze agree to 'prepare a document for consideration by their leaders covering both principles and concrete steps of cooperation in all areas of nonproliferation – chemical, missile and nuclear'.

Later that year U.S. President George Bush and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev made the Joint Statement on Nonproliferation following a Washington summit:

- The U.S. and USSR strongly support efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, while encouraging the peaceful uses of atomic energy;
- Both countries will encourage further adherence to the NPT;
- Both will urge signatories to the NPT to implement their IAEA safeguards scrupulously, and support stringent export controls on nuclear-related material, equipment and technology;
- The U.S. and USSR support the concept of regional non-proliferation efforts, particularly in areas of tension such as the Middle East, South Asia and Southern Africa.

The joint pressure from Washington and Moscow did not stop India and Pakistan from testing nuclear weapons in 1998. One of several examples of collaborative efforts was the cancellation of the Indo-Russian deal on cryogen engines for Indian space launchers, unilaterally made by Moscow in the mid-1990s. This decision did not enjoy unanimous support within Russia. The Russian government received an adverse reaction from the State Duma and the space industry. But there was an active dialogue between Moscow and Washington. The United States performed the discussions in a 'stick and carrot' way. The 'stick' was the U.S. sanctions on Glavkosmos, leading to the cancellation of the cryogen deal, and the 'carrot' was several political and economic stimulus.<sup>25</sup> According to Russian and American researchers, 'the episode harmonized Russian and U.S. positions in a potentially contentious area of national-security policy, contributing to an overall cooperative relationship between the two countries'.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Simha, Rakesh Krishnan (2013) 'How India's Cryogenic Programme was Wrecked,' Russia beyond the Headlines, available at [https://www.rbth.com/blogs/2013/12/04/how\\_indias\\_cryogenic\\_programme\\_was\\_wrecked\\_31365](https://www.rbth.com/blogs/2013/12/04/how_indias_cryogenic_programme_was_wrecked_31365) (19 May, 2021).

<sup>26</sup> Gibson, Ryan and Elena Kirichenko, Alexander Pikayev, Leonard Spector (1998) 'Russia, the U.S. and the Missile Technology Control Regime,' Adelphi Papers No. 317, London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, p. 61.

The official explanation by India of the decision to test nuclear weapons was focused on China as the main threat and Pakistan as a secret possessor of nuclear weapons.<sup>27</sup> After the Indian tests in 1998, Lal Krishna Advani, India's Minister of Home Affairs (1998–2004), said, 'Islamabad should realize the change in the geo-strategic situation in the region and the world. It must roll back its anti-India policy especially with regard to Kashmir. Any other course will be futile and costly for Pakistan'.<sup>28</sup>

This and similar statements by Indian politicians have allowed the Pakistanis to justify and test their development of military nuclear technologies based on the need to defend the country from its neighbour. At a press conference on May 28, 1998, Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif (1997–1999) emphasized that

Immediately after its nuclear tests, India has brazenly raised the demand that "Islamabad should realize the change in the geo-strategic situation in the region" and threatened that "India will deal firmly and strongly with Pakistan." Our security and peace and stability of the entire region were thus gravely threatened... Our hand was forced by the present Indian leadership's reckless actions... After due deliberations and a careful review of all options, we took the decision to restore the strategic balance... Our decision to exercise the nuclear option has been taken in the interest of national self-defense. These weapons are to deter aggression, whether nuclear or conventional.<sup>29</sup>

The dangerous development in South Asia made the United States and Russia jointly call Indian and Pakistan

To stop their nuclear weapon development programs, to refrain from weaponization or from the development of

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<sup>27</sup> Vajpayee, Atal Bihari (2001) 'Yadernye ispytaniya dlya obespecheniya nacional'noy bezopasnosti. [Nuclear tests to ensure national security],' in Ye.Yu. Vanina et al., *Indiya na puti v buduscheye: sbornik rechey i vystupleniy* [India's path to the future: compilation of speeches and statements], 24–26, Moscow: Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

<sup>28</sup> Inderjit, Sabina (1998) 'Advani Tells Pakistan to Roll Back Its Anti-India Policy,' *Times of India*, 19 May.

<sup>29</sup> 'Text of Prime Minister Muhammed Nawaz Sharif at a Press Conference on Pakistan Nuclear Tests, Islamabad,' (1998) Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy, available at <http://www.acronym.org.uk/dd/dd26/26pak.htm> (19 May, 2021).

nuclear weapons, to cease development of ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons and any further production of fissile material for nuclear weapons, to confirm their policies not to export equipment, materials or technology that could contribute to weapons of mass destruction or missiles capable of delivering them and to undertake appropriate commitments in that regard.<sup>30</sup>

The United States and Russia reacted to the nuclear tests in South Asia in different ways. Moscow was more vocal in comparison to the Soviet reaction to the 1974 nuclear test. However, in terms of real impact, only sanctions by the United States and Japan had material significance for India and Pakistan.<sup>31</sup> For the Russian policy in the region, the nuclear tests meant limitations in areas of cooperation mainly with India. In contrast, for the United States, they meant derailment of the Clinton administration initiative to put the relations with India and Pakistan on a sounder footing.<sup>32</sup>

## Conclusions

The U.S.-Soviet and U.S.-Russian dialogue on nuclear nonproliferation in South Asia, provides two lessons. The first one shows shared concerns and joint efforts regarding the nuclear programs of India and Pakistan. The second one demonstrates how disagreements between the USSR/Russia and the United States could be disturbing for their joint efforts in South Asia.

The first lesson from the Moscow and Washington efforts vis-à-vis the South Asian nuclear problem could be described in the phrase by the former minister of foreign affairs Alexey Gromyko about the silk thread of nuclear nonproliferation connecting the two superpowers in troubling times. The value of this thread should not be questioned

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<sup>30</sup> 'Security Council Resolution 1172 on International Peace and Security' (1998) United Nations, available at <http://www.un.org/press/en/1998/sc6528.doc.htm> (19 May, 2021).

<sup>31</sup> Synnott, Hilary (1999) 'The Causes and Consequences of South Asia's Nuclear Tests,' Adelphi Papers No. 332, London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, p. 29.

<sup>32</sup> Talbott, Strobe (1999) 'Dealing with the Bomb in South Asia,' *Foreign Affairs* 78(2): 110–111.



due to temporary political circumstances. It is still valuable for the U.S.-Russian dialogue. It even allows both countries to remain on the same page in the areas of international security and nuclear nonproliferation.

The second lesson could be explained in terms of U.S.-Soviet rivalry that boosted, though not being the primary reason for, nuclear developments in South Asia. Profound differences between Moscow and Washington did not allow to achieve success for the initiatives to make South Asia a nuclear-free zone and to turn the Indian ocean into a zone of peace.

The U.S.-Soviet/Russian disagreements were virtuously used by both India and Pakistan to avoid the pressure and achieve their goals in the field of nuclear energy and military nuclear programs.

## **CHRONOLOGY OF INDIA`S INTERNATIONAL PEACEFUL ATOM COOPERATION**

### **1955**

**July – October.** The UK supplied India with six kilograms of enriched uranium, as well as the necessary equipment for the construction of the first research nuclear reactor 'Apsara'. The U.S. Atomic Energy Commission agreed to supply 21 tons of heavy water to India. Canada agreed to sell a 40-MW reactor to India upon the peaceful use conditions.

### **1961**

**October 6.** India and USSR signed an agreement on cooperation in the peaceful use of atomic energy.

### **1976**

**May.** Canada and the USA decided to completely end cooperation with India in the field of nuclear energy.

### **1988**

**November 20.** Rajiv Gandhi and Mikhail Gorbachev signed the Indo-Soviet Agreement on cooperation in the construction of a nuclear power plant (NPP) in India.

### **1998**

**June 21.** India and Russia signed the Supplement to the 1988 Agreement between the USSR and the republic of India on cooperation in the construction of 'Kudankulam' nuclear power plant (NPP) in India.

### **2000**

**October.** Russia and India signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy.

### **2002**

Indian Atomic Energy Corporation signed a contract with 'Atomstroyexport' for the development of working documentation for construction, installation and commissioning. There were signed contracts for the manufacture and supply of equipment and materials for the reactor compartment, engine room and other buildings of 'Kudankulam' NPP.

**2005**

**July.** India and the United States announced a nuclear cooperation initiative that would permit India to participate in the international nuclear trade. India agreed to take a series of steps to demonstrate its relevance to its status as a responsible nuclear power and to support the objectives of the nonproliferation regime.

**2006**

The United States and India signed an agreement on peaceful nuclear cooperation in 2006, under which the American companies 'Westinghouse' and 'General Electric' began preparatory work at sites for the construction of future nuclear power plants (NPP) in the states of Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh.

**July 26.** The U.S. House of Representatives passes the Henry J. Hyde Nuclear Energy Cooperation Act, which meant Washington would cooperate with New Delhi on nuclear issues and would no longer require India to join the NPT.

**2007**

**August 3.** India and the United States published the text of the Agreement between the U.S. Government and the Government of India on the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy (Agreement 123).

**2008**

**July 9.** The U.S. succeeds in amending the Nuclear Suppliers Group's (NSG) international export regulations to allow nuclear exports to India.

**September.** Paris and Delhi signed an intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in the field of nuclear energy, which paved the way for the start of cooperation in this industry.

**September 6.** Nuclear Suppliers Group's 'Statement on Civil Nuclear Cooperation with India', which removed the previously existing export control restrictions on interaction with Delhi in the atomic sphere.

**October 11.** India and the United States signed a bilateral '123 Agreement' on Nuclear Cooperation.

**2009**

**February.** There was signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the construction of NPP in India with the help of the French technology.

**June 2.** There was signed an agreement between the Government of India and the IAEA for the Application of Safeguards to Civilian Nuclear Facilities

**2010**

**March 12.** There was signed an agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Republic of India on Cooperation in the use of Atomic Energy for Peaceful purposes

**December 6.** India and France signed 5 agreements in the field of nuclear power.

**2011**

**April 15.** There was signed an agreement between the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Government of the Republic of India on cooperation in the peaceful use of atomic energy.

**2012**

**July 17.** Russia and India signed a Protocol to the 2008 Agreement of between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Republic of India on cooperation in the construction of additional power units of a NPP at the 'Kudankulam' site, as well as in the construction of nuclear power plants according to Russian projects at new sites in the Republic of India.

**2014**

**June.** India ratified a version of the IAEA Additional Protocol (AP) after a 5-year delay.

**September 5.** India and Australia signed an intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in the peaceful uses of atomic energy.

**December 11.** Russia and India signed a number of documents, including the Strategic Vision for Strengthening Cooperation in Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy Between the Republic of India and the Russian Federation, a provision on non-disclosure of technical data and confidential

information, and a set of documents laying the groundwork for the construction of the third and fourth reactors at the 'Kudankulam' NPP.

## 2015

**January.** India and the United States reached an agreement on cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear energy.

**December 12.** Japan and India agreed on cooperation in the field of nuclear energy, including the construction of NPP.

## 2016

**May 12.** India applied to join the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG).

**December 10.** India and Vietnam signed an intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear energy.

## 2017

**June 1.** ASE Group of Companies (Russia) and Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd. signed a general framework agreement on the construction of the third stage of the 'Kudankulam' NPP in Tamil Nadu state (India). The agreement stipulates the construction of two Russian-designed power units, No. 5 and No. 6. The documents were necessary for starting the third-stage construction of the 'Kudankulam' NPP.

## 2019

**January 18.** Uzbekistan and India signed an agreement on long-term supplies of uranium.

**March 13.** India and the United States discussed issues of cooperation on the peaceful atom and confirmed plans to build 6 American NPP in India.

## 2020

**July.** India and EU sign civil nuclear cooperation agreement at 15th India-EU Summit.

**November.** India and the United States extended the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation under the Global Center for Nuclear Energy Partnership (GCNEP) for 10 years.

*Compiled by Maksim Lats*

## CHAPTER 6

# DIALOGUE ON THE IRANIAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM: LESSONS LEARNED AND IGNORED (1992–2020)<sup>1</sup>

*Adlan Margoev*

Iran's nuclear program has been extensively debated over the past few decades and has incited so much controversy among several nations. However, there are hardly any countries like the United States and Russia whose bilateral agenda consistently featured this matter. This chapter is not in any degree diminishing the contribution of other actors to resolving the crisis over Iran's nuclear program but aimed at highlighting the role that the two countries played in this process.

The timeline of this research stretches from 1992, when Russia and Iran signed a memorandum on cooperation in the nuclear field<sup>2</sup>, to 2020, when the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)<sup>3</sup> concluded by the P5+1 and Iran in 2015 was at risk of collapse. It is divided into five stages based on the development of Iran's nuclear program, U.S. and Russian approaches to dealing with Iran, and the pattern of the interface between the two countries. At each stage, it discusses the results of U.S. and Russian policies on this issue as well

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<sup>1</sup> The author expresses gratitude to Hon. Robert Einhorn, Amb. Mikhail Lysenko, Mr. Sergey Ponamarev, and Mr. Roman Ustinov for sharing their ideas and thoughts on the topic. He also acknowledges substantial research conducted by Mr. Anton Khlopkov in this field, which is in line with many findings contained in the article.

<sup>2</sup> The Government of The Russian Federation (1992) Decree 'On Signing Agreements Between the Government of The Russian Federation and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran on Cooperation in the Field of Peaceful Use of Atomic Energy and Construction of a Nuclear Power Plant in Iran,' available at [http://pravo.gov.ru/proxy/ips/?docbody&nd=102017974&rdk&link\\_id=19](http://pravo.gov.ru/proxy/ips/?docbody&nd=102017974&rdk&link_id=19) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>3</sup> European Union External Action (2015) Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, available at [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/8710/joint-comprehensive-plan-action\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/8710/joint-comprehensive-plan-action_en) (17 May, 2021).

as the lessons that the leadership of the countries could learn from this experience and consider when formulating their strategies on the Iranian nuclear program and issues alike.

## Policy Foundations

The United States and Russia have historically disagreed over their policies on the Iranian nuclear program. The reason for that lies in the broader context of their relationship with Iran. The United States, whose grave diplomatic conflict with Iran dates back to the Islamic Revolution and the hostage crisis, has perceived Iran as a threat to U.S. interests and its allies in the Middle East<sup>4</sup> – hence its intent and attempts are to confront, suppress, and isolate Iran. On the contrary, Russia views Iran as a neighbor in three regions: the Caucasus, the Caspian Sea, and Central Asia, and the key objective of Russia's Iran policy is to ensure peace and stability across its vast borders.<sup>5</sup>

The general perception of Iran heavily influenced U.S. and Russian attitudes towards Iran's nuclear program. The United States has been concerned about Iran achieving a capacity to develop a nuclear weapon because in that case, Iran could use it as leverage against Israel, Saudi Arabia as well as other U.S. allies in the region. Even though Iran could not immediately pose a direct threat to the U.S. mainland, Iran's means of delivery could target U.S. forces and counterbalance the U.S. interests in the region. Hence the United States preferred to impose rigid limits on Iran's nuclear program as well as interpreted any uncertainty with respect to and lack of transparency of the Iranian nuclear program, e.g. undeclared activities, as part of Iran's alleged nuclear weapons program.

Not that Russia would welcome a nuclear-armed Iran, but Moscow championed Iran's right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy since this country complied with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and largely with the Safeguards Agreement concluded

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<sup>4</sup> Jordet, Nils (2000) Explaining the Long-term Hostility between the United States and Iran: A Historical, Theoretical and Methodological Framework. The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, 2000. P. 9-11, available at <https://www.nato.int/acad/fellow/98-00/jordet.pdf> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>5</sup> Trenin, Dmitry (2016) Rossiya i Iran: Nedoveriye v Proshlom i Sotrudnichestvo v Nastoyashchem [Russia and Iran: Mistrust in the Past and Current Cooperation]. Carnegie Moscow Center, available at <http://carnegie.ru/2016/09/08/ru-pub-64508> (17 May, 2021).

with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Russia believed the United States politicized the issue of the Iranian nuclear program to put pressure on Iran. Not having clear evidence that Iran was pursuing a military nuclear program<sup>6</sup>, Russia did not accuse Iran of pursuing a nuclear weapons program; however, the scale of its cooperation with Iran depended on the level of Iran's transparency in its cooperation with the IAEA.<sup>7</sup> Before the IAEA clarified certain aspects of Iran's nuclear program following the 2002 revelations, Moscow was hardly motivated to accelerate the slow pace of the Bushehr nuclear power plant (NPP) construction and to overcome the delays in the construction schedule caused by other factors.<sup>8</sup>

Another factor to consider is the significant potential of Russian-Iranian cooperation on a broad spectrum of areas ranging from oil and gas industries, nuclear energy, and agriculture, to fighting terrorism and drug trafficking, as well as ensuring security in the Middle East and Afghanistan. The motivation to cooperate was strong enough, and Russia always had to consider its economic interests when defining its policy on Iran. These differences should be taken into account to understand the U.S. and Russian stances on the Iranian nuclear program. Nevertheless, U.S. and Russian approaches to this issue would evolve and take a different shape at each of the proposed stages of the bilateral dialogue, which would either provide an incentive for resolving the crisis or block any path to a successful agreement.

## 1992–2000. The United States Adjusts Russian Policy

**Political background.** The 1990s observed a major reconsideration of policy priorities by the Russian Federation. Rethinking the previous ideas and approaches did not necessarily result in a significant

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<sup>6</sup> Foreign Intelligence Service (1995) 'The Treaty of the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The Issues of Prolongations. An Open Report by the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR),' available at <http://svr.gov.ru/material/4-iran.htm> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>7</sup> Regnum (2004) 'Rossiysko-Iranskoye Sotrudnichestvo v Sfere Mirnogo Atoma Budet Zaviset ot MAGATE' [Russian-Iranian Cooperation in Peaceful Atom will Depend on the IAEA], available at <https://regnum.ru/news/361546.html> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>8</sup> Lutkova, Anna; Khlopkov, Anton (2010) 'Pochemu Tak Dolgo Stroilas Busherskaya AES' [Why Did it Take so Long to Build the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant]. CENESS. P. 12, available at <https://docplayer.ru/141360-Pochemu-tak-dolgo-stroilas-busherskaya-aes.html> (17 May, 2021).



change compared to the policies of the Soviet Union after 1985, but developing a new Russian foreign policy required time and effort.

The 1993 Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation was the first document that outlined the new Russian vision of its role in international affairs. Its part on the Islamic Republic of Iran is of special interest: Russia claimed that Iran was a source of uncertainty for the region because after this country ceased to be an ally of the United States, it did not become closer to the Russian Federation. Such uncertainty was deemed dangerous, especially because the region had a direct influence on the conflicts in the post-Soviet space. Russia also maintained that it needed to balance its relations with Israel and the region in general.<sup>9</sup>

However, the major factor that shaped Russian policy on Iran was Russia's large nuclear and military industry: it strongly needed financial support to run the facilities and maintain employment.<sup>10</sup> Iran turned out to be one of the few countries ready to pay money to Russia for constructing the Bushehr NPP, educating its personnel, etc.<sup>11</sup> Even though the domestic discussion in Russia was initially diverse regarding the NPP in Iran, e.g. Head of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Russian State Duma Vladimir Lukin contemplated the possibility of abandoning the deal for compensation, later the Russian establishment got convinced of the necessity of delivering on the agreement with Iran.<sup>12</sup> Many nuclear industry employees in Russia had to quit their jobs because they were long unpaid and therefore had to move to other countries, often to some threshold states, to sustain their families. From the nonproliferation standpoint, it was far wiser for Russia to employ them legally and channel technical

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<sup>9</sup> Kontseptsiya Vneshney Politiki Rossiyskoy Federatsii [The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation] (1993). P. 41

<sup>10</sup> This could in part explain why the Ministry of Atomic Energy happened to play the leading role in the interagency process on Iran, with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defense, and the Security Council seemingly being less active, at least in public. See: Melnikov, Yury; Frolov, Vladimir (1995) 'Moskva i Vashington Mogut Possoritsya iz-za Tegerana' [Moscow and Washington Can Quarrel because of Tehran]. *Kommersant*, Issue 74, available at <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/107286> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>11</sup> Interview with a Russian expert on nonproliferation and Iran's nuclear program. August 14, 2017.

<sup>12</sup> Tsekhmistrenko, Sergey (1995) 'Ruskiye Ne Slushayutsya Amerikantsev', [Russians Disobey Americans]. *Kommersant Vlast*, Issue 13, available at <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/10986> (17 May, 2021).

support to those countries through the legal framework, involving cooperation with the IAEA.

The United States intended to minimize, if not totally prohibit, Russian-Iranian cooperation in nuclear and military fields.<sup>13</sup> The U.S. administration was unwilling to discuss such cooperation in detail and wanted to stop it altogether. Congress threatened to decrease help for Russia provided under the Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program and implicitly link Russian membership in G7 with halting Russia's cooperation with Iran.<sup>14</sup> The Clinton administration was pragmatic and refused to cut funding: without financial support, Russia's nuclear industry would raise even more proliferation and nuclear security-related concerns;<sup>15</sup> but it continued to put pressure on Russia for its cooperation with Iran.

The United States was unwilling yet ready to minimally compromise with Russia. The communication with Russian counterparts was conducted on three levels – between the Presidents, between the respective ministries and departments, and between partnering entities and labs. This kind of approach did not enable the U.S.

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<sup>13</sup> The 1994 and 1995 National Security Strategies of the United States maintained that its leadership would “continue to prevent Iran from advancing its weapons of mass destruction objectives,” yet remain “willing to enter into an authoritative dialogue with Iran to discuss the differences” between the two countries. See: ‘A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement’ (1995), available at <https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=444939> (17 May, 2021).

The 2000 National Security Strategy for a Global Age had more serious claims on the Iran dossier: “We continue efforts to thwart and roll back both Iran’s development of NBC (nuclear, biological, chemical) weapons and long-range missiles,” but still kept the dialogue option open: “If a government-to-government dialogue can be initiated and sustained in a way that addresses the concerns of both sides, then the United States would be willing to develop with the Islamic Republic a road map leading to normal relations. It could be useful to begin a dialogue without preconditions.” See: A National Security Strategy for a Global Age, 2000. URL: <https://history.defense.gov/Portals/70/Documents/nss/nss2000.pdf> (17 May, 2020).

<sup>14</sup> Orlov, Vladimir; Timerbaev, Roland; Khlopkov, Anton (2001) *Problemy Yadernogo Nerasprostraneniya v Rossiysko-Amerikanskikh Otnosheniyakh: Istoriya, Vozmoshnosti i Perspektivy Dalneyshego Vzaimodeystviya* [Nuclear Nonproliferation Problems in Russia-U.S. Relations: History, Opportunities, and Prospects for Further Cooperation]. Moscow, PIR Center. P. 131-132, available at <http://pircenter.org/media/content/files/9/13464044500.pdf> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>15</sup> Khlopkov, Anton (2001) *Iranskaya Yadernaya Programma v Rossiysko-Amerikanskikh Otnosheniyakh* [Iran’s Nuclear Program in Russia-U.S. Relations]. PIR Center, Moscow. P. 28 URL: <http://xn---jtbhwghdp7a.xn--p1ai/data/publications/nz18.pdf> (17 May, 2021).

administration to reach some of its unrealistic goals<sup>16</sup>, but it had to admit the United States managed to secure significant progress with Russia.<sup>17</sup>

In the absence of an elaborate foreign policy strategy, Russia took an issue-by-issue approach to its relationships with the United States and Iran. Russian officials were extremely flexible in their decision-making and ready to accept certain U.S. requests with respect to Russia's cooperation with Iran even if they sometimes damaged the Russian interests. However, the 1990s were marked by poor policy coordination among Russian governmental bodies which was of vital importance for export control. In 1995, a protocol on negotiations between the Minister of Atomic Energy Viktor Mikhaylov and his Iranian counterpart Reza Amrollahi was made public before this document was discussed by other departments in Moscow under inter-agency coordination. The sides discussed the possibility of Russia supplying Iran with a centrifuge technology that could potentially produce weapon-grade uranium. This raised a grave suspicion and concern in the U.S. administration, and the United States demanded that Russia stop any further negotiations on this topic with the Iranians. Of notice, even without the U.S. involvement, Russia was unlikely to ship such centrifuges to Iran because other agencies opposed this deal. The Federal Agency of Nuclear and Radiological Security (Gosatomnadzor), the Inter-agency Commission on Ecological Security, as well as a group of governmental experts, recommended that the Russian government not ship any centrifuges to Iran.<sup>18</sup>

In this environment, the exchange of information became a contentious issue. If used properly, Russia was interested in sharing information with the United States to convince the U.S. administration that no threat emanated from the Russian-Iranian cooperation

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<sup>16</sup> Einhorn, Robert; Samore, Gary (2002) 'Neobkhdimost Vozobnovleniya Amerikano-Rossiyskogo Sotrudnichestva s Tselyu Predotvrashcheniya Sozdaniya Iranskoy Bomby' [The Need to Resume Russia-U.S. Cooperation to Prevent the Creation of an Iranian Nuclear Bomb]. *Yaderny Kontrol*, Issue 4. P. 39, available at: <http://pircenter.org/media/content/files/10/13561862720.pdf> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>17</sup> Press Briefing by Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Secretary of the Treasury Robert Rubin, and National Security Advisor Anthony Lake (1995) *The American Presidency Project*, available at <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=59468> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>18</sup> Khlopkov, Anton, Op. cit. P. 25–26.

per se in order to continue working with Iran without obstacles.<sup>19</sup> The United States did share intelligence with Russia, but with reluctance. Washington claimed that intelligence sharing could compromise sources and did not trust the Russian authorities who were believed to be hiding their cooperation with Iran in the nuclear field. The Russian leadership found such reasoning ridiculous. General Evstafiev, former Head of the Arms Control Division of the Foreign Intelligence Service of Russia (SVR), once stated that 'there was no such a price... that would not worth paying for any threshold state to forgo the capacity to produce a nuclear weapon'.<sup>20</sup> Thus, it seems more likely that the U.S. reluctance to share information resulted from the fact that it had little impact on Russia's Iran policy: Moscow believed the U.S. intelligence was in many cases inaccurate or unconvincing to declare that Iran was developing technologies to produce nuclear weapons.<sup>21</sup>

**Results.** The set of policies and approaches of both sides in those conditions brought about controversial but also positive results. First, the United States and Russia agreed upon Russia's construction of the Bushehr NPP, and Russian companies involved in that process were not placed under U.S. sanctions.<sup>22</sup> Russia remained Iran's only partner in the field of nuclear energy; all the rest halted their cooperation with Iran in this area under U.S. pressure.<sup>23</sup>

Second, under U.S. pressure and to the detriment of its economic interests, Russia agreed to stop its military trade with Iran which had nothing to do with Iran's nuclear program. In 1995, Russian Prime

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<sup>19</sup> Interview with a Russian expert on nonproliferation and Iran's nuclear program. August 14, 2017.

<sup>20</sup> Zobov, Andrey (2002) 'Nerazprostraneniye Oruzhiya Massovogo Unichtozheniya kak Aktualnaya Problema Nachala tretiego Tysyacheletiya: Regionalnye I Globalnye Aspekty' [WMD Nonproliferation as a Relevant Problem of the Early Third Millennium: Regional and Global Aspects] Moscow, available at [https://www.arm-control.ru/course/lectures02b/aiz\\_021011.htm](https://www.arm-control.ru/course/lectures02b/aiz_021011.htm) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>21</sup> Interview with a Russian expert on nonproliferation and U.S.-Russian relations. August 3, 2017

<sup>22</sup> Interview with a Russian expert on nonproliferation and peaceful use of atomic energy. July 26, 2017

<sup>23</sup> Safranchuk, Ivan (1998), *Yadernye i Raketnye Programmy Irana i Bezopasnost Rossii: Ramki Rossiysko-Iranskogo Sotrudnichestva* [Iran's Nuclear and Missile Programs and Russian Security: Framework for Russian-Iranian Cooperation]. *Nauchnye Zapiski*, Issue 8. Moscow, PIR Center. P. 8. URL: <http://ns2.pircenter.org/media/content/files/9/13464245790.pdf> (17 May, 2021).

Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin promised U.S. Vice President Al Gore that Russia would fulfill all of its obligations under the active military trade contracts with Iran by the end of 1999 and would not conclude any new deals with this country. The agreement was kept secret until it was leaked right before the 2000 U.S. presidential election. This destroyed the Russian image of a reliable partner and caused harm to both Russian-Iranian relations and Russian economic interests. The Russian leadership regretted having signed that deal and following the disclosure of the contents of the agreement informed their American counterparts that Russia was no longer obliged by the terms of the agreement.<sup>24</sup>

Third, the United States imposed sanctions on certain Russian entities, which, due to the relatively poor export control regime in Russia, turned out to be cooperating with Iran in nuclear and missile technology fields. They did so without notifying the Russian government, but in a very limited way which would not help Iran develop a military nuclear program. They did not breach international norms, yet contradicting U.S. expectations about Russian-Iranian cooperation in the sensitive areas. Considering that the United States also had problems with technology leaks contributing to Iran's nuclear and missile programs, this move was generally perceived in Moscow with irritation as an attempt to put pressure on Russia.

However, some of the entities which also received funding through cooperation with U.S. counterparts violated Russian export control regulations. The U.S. sanctions made these entities more selective in their cooperation with the Iranians and improved their discipline.<sup>25</sup> This corresponded with the efforts of the Russian government to improve the efficiency and standards of the Russian export control system, which took nearly 10 years after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.<sup>26</sup> The measures included the establishment of a comprehensive export control regime that was supposed to block any shipment of materials and technologies that could be used in WMD and missile programs. In 1999, a law on export control was passed by

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<sup>24</sup> Kozyulin, Vadim (2001) *Rossiya-Iran: Chto Stoit za Novym Startom Voenno-Tekhnicheskogo Sotrudnichestva?* [Russia and Iran: What Lies Behind the new Beginning of Military and Technical Cooperation]. *Voprosy Bezopasnosti*, Issue 5 (95), available at <http://pircenter.org/articles/1428-rossiya-iran-chto-stoit-za-novym-startom-voennotekhnicheskogo-sotrudnichestva> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>25</sup> Khlopkov, Anton, *Op. cit.* P. 36.

<sup>26</sup> Interview with a Russian expert on nonproliferation and U.S.-Russian relations. August 3, 2017.

the State Duma; in 2000–2001, newly elected President Putin reorganized the institutional design of the export control system to make the interagency process in this field more robust and efficient.<sup>27</sup>

Over the decade, the United States and Russia maintained a robust, yet strenuous dialogue on the Iranian nuclear program. For Moscow, the dialogue was difficult because of high demands on the U.S. side regarding Russia's cooperation with Iran. For Washington, engaging Russia was a challenging task because of the differences in threat perception that influenced Russian and U.S. assessments of the development of Iran's nuclear program, and because of poor policy coordination and implementation in Moscow following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Although the interaction between the countries resembled coordination rather than cooperation on Iran, given the differences between them, this experience was overall effective.

**Lessons.** The analysis of the bilateral cooperation suggests four lessons for future U.S.-Russian dialogue on Iran's nuclear program:

1. *Demanding everything from a counterpart is counterproductive. Instead, one should set feasible goals, focus on the main ones, and be ready to invest time and effort to achieve them.*

The Clinton administration put too much effort into trying to discourage Russia from any cooperation with Iran. Why would Moscow forgo cooperation with a neighboring country that did not violate international law? It was naturally impossible to reach that goal, s NPP<sup>28</sup> of such cooperation, as well as in finding ways to benefit from that by exchanging relevant information.

2. *Watchful cooperation is the best leverage against a counterpart.*

Being the most significant partner of Iran in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, in 1995, Russia worked closely with the Iranian delegation at the NPT Review and Extension Conference to secure

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<sup>27</sup> Putin, Vladimir (2001) Vstupitelnoye Slovo na Zasedanii Soveta Bezopasnosti, Posvyashchennom Ukrepleniyu Sistemy Eksportnogo Kontrolya [Introductory Statement at the Meeting of the Security Council on Strengthening Export Controls]. Kremlin, Moscow, available at <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/22322> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>28</sup> Einhorn, Robert; Samore, Gary. Op. cit. P. 47.

Iran's support for the indefinite extension of the Treaty.<sup>29</sup> Some experts even claim that Russia linked the construction of the Bushehr NPP to Iran's acquiescence to the indefinite extension of the NPT.<sup>30</sup> Had Russia abandoned the deal under U.S. pressure, there would have been no such leverage to apply.

3. *Abusing power via imposing sanctions against one's own partners may lead to their irritation and lack of will to cooperate in resolving the problems that both partners face.*

If both sides agree that certain policies should be adjusted, there might be no need to resort to sanctions: the bilateral relationship will be too damaged to provide any foundation for future cooperation. When harsh sanctions are imposed for policies that the other side cannot change, e.g. for strong domestic political reasons, one should not expect to build a partnership on this ground even if they inform the sanctioned country of their own intentions and motivation to act so.

4. *Exchange of information is necessary for cooperation and should be valued by the recipients. Abusing this opportunity may lead to a lack of confidence.*

Despite the concerns about the confidentiality of sources, the United States and Russia exchanged information to a relatively significant degree. However, after 1998, when based on the disclosed information the United States imposed sanctions on Russian entities, Russia became less confident in the United States and more cautious about sharing sensitive intelligence with this country.

## 2001–2010. Russia Balances Out U.S. Policy on Iran

**Political background.** By the early 2000s, Russia had elaborated its general foreign policy strategy and could decidedly place its own interests before any other considerations. For its Iran policy, it

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<sup>29</sup> Orlov, Vladimir (1999) *Konferentsia 1995 goda po Rassmotreniyu i Prodleniyu Sroka Deystviya Dogovora o Nerasprostranении Yadernogo Oruzhiya: Osobennosti, Rezultaty, Uroki* [1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference: Features, Results, Lessons]. *Nauchnye Zapiski*, 11. PIR Center. Moscow. P. 10, available at <http://pircenter.org/media/content/files/9/13464238930.pdf> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>30</sup> Khlopkov, Anton; Lata, Vasily. *Op. cit.* P. 12.

meant broader engagement with this country both in economic and political domains.<sup>31</sup> Russia oriented itself towards a more pragmatic and flexible posture. The Russian government continued its nuclear cooperation and military trade with Iran, which was important to Russia; however, by limiting the number of options for this country, Moscow addressed the American concerns. Russia refrained from supplying certain sensitive equipment and technologies to Iran and sold arms in small quantities.<sup>32</sup>

Still, Russia's motivation to cooperate with the Iranians was so strong that Moscow would not even consider abandoning its cooperation with this country, even if compensated for that. The reason for that was a lack of confidence in American conduct and promises to compensate for losses. A case in point, in 1998, the United States convinced a Ukrainian company not to build turbines for the Bushehr NPP and promised to establish cooperation with the facility to recompense for the losses. Four years later Ukraine had to reaffirm its commitments on the NPP because Kyiv had lost more than 5 million dollars and had received no assistance from the United States in exchange.<sup>33</sup>

The U.S. stance on Iran faced a dramatic shift with the election of George W. Bush. In his State of Union Address on January 29, 2002, President Bush announced Iran to be part of an 'axis of evil,'<sup>34</sup> which implied the United States would apply extreme pressure against Iran's leadership and could attempt to change its political regime.

The 2002 National Security Strategy of the United States mentioned Iran only once, but it was clear that this country fell under the category of 'rogue states,' those who 'brutalize their own people,' 'display no regard for international law,' are 'determined to acquire weapons of mass destruction,' 'sponsor terrorism around the globe,' as well as 'reject basic human values and hate the United States and

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<sup>31</sup> The 2000 Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation had a small, yet clear paragraph on Iran: "It is important to further develop relations with Iran." See: Kontseptsiya Vneshney Politiki Rossiyskoy Federatsii [The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation] (2000), available at [http://www.ng.ru/world/2000-07-11/1\\_concept.html](http://www.ng.ru/world/2000-07-11/1_concept.html) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>32</sup> Khlopkov, Anton; Lata, Vasily. Op. cit. P. 15.

<sup>33</sup> Khlopkov, Anton; Lata, Vasily. Op. cit. P. 14.

<sup>34</sup> The President's State of the Union Address (2002) The United States Capitol, Washington, D.C., available at <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html> (17 May, 2021).



everything for which it stands'. The key message to rogue states was in the following line: 'The greater the threat, the greater is the risk of inaction – and the more compelling the case for taking anticipatory action to defend ourselves, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy's attack. To forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively'.<sup>35</sup> The 2006 version of the document also claimed that the United States 'may face no greater challenge from a single country than from Iran'.<sup>36</sup>

The new U.S. administration demanded that Russia halt all military trade with Iran, as well as nuclear cooperation, which included the construction of the Bushehr NPP. To address the U.S. concerns regarding the Bushehr NPP, Russian officials even suggested the United States and Russia build the NPP together<sup>37</sup>, but this offer, unsurprisingly, led to no cooperation – neither the United States nor Iran would be interested in seeing that happen.

The United States expected that Russia would by default accept the U.S. policies on Iran and follow its guidance. The United States strongly opposed Iran's obtaining of any uranium enrichment technology. 'In light of the serious unresolved issues posed by Iran's nuclear program, we strongly disagree with Iran's assertion that it has an inherent "right" under Article IV to its program or to receive foreign assistance or cooperation with it,' said the U.S. statement at the 2003 NPT Preparatory Committee Session.<sup>38</sup> Russia, on the other hand, recognized Iran's right to a peaceful nuclear program, including enrichment capabilities, provided Iran is an NPT Member-State 'in good standing'.

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<sup>35</sup> The National Security Strategy of the United States of America (2002), available at <https://2009-2017.state.gov/documents/organization/63562.pdf> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>36</sup> The National Security Strategy of the United States of America (2006), available at <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/nsc/nss/2006/> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>37</sup> Rossiya Predlozhila SShA Vmeste Stroit Atomnuyu Stantsiyu v Irane [Russia suggested building the NPP in Iran Together with the U.S.] (2003). Vesti.Ru, available at <https://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=27218> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>38</sup> Statement by Dr. Andrew K. Semmel Alternative Representative of the United States of America to the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for The 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (2003) Reaching Critical Will, available at [http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom03/2003statements/7May\\_U.S..pdf](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom03/2003statements/7May_U.S..pdf) (17 May, 2021).

In 2008, there seemed to open new opportunities for a dialogue on Iran. There was little change in Russia's position<sup>39</sup>, but the newly-elected President Obama demonstrated his readiness to engage in diplomacy with the Iranians. He congratulated the Iranians on Nowruz (Persian New Year) in 2009, which was an exceptional move by the President and helped him deliver a message of peace and constructive bilateral relations directly to the Iranians.<sup>40</sup> The 2010 U.S. National Security Strategy proved the U.S. desire for diplomacy with Iran.<sup>41</sup> However, the controversial reelection of Mahmoud Ahmadi-nejad, the revelation of the Fordow facility made it clear to the Obama administration that they would not be able to move forward with Iran under the Ahmadinejad administration to an extent President Obama had hoped for.<sup>42</sup>

**Results.** Iran's safeguards implementation record was far from being perfect, yet it was in large part due to the U.S. denial of Iran's right to enrichment that made the negotiations futile. Under the 2003 Paris Agreement, the E3 recognized Iran's right to enrich on a small scale; however, under U.S. pressure, the E3 included in its final proposal to

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<sup>39</sup> The 2008 Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation named Iran among the countries whom Russia was determined to further develop relations with, committed to the resolution of the Iranian nuclear issue through diplomacy and warned against unilateral use of force that could destabilize the Russian neighborhood. See: Kontseptsiya Vneshney Politiki Rossiyskoy Federatsii [The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation] (2008), available at <http://kremlin.ru/acts/news/785> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>40</sup> "In this season of new beginnings I would like to speak clearly to Iran's leaders. We have serious differences that have grown over time. My administration is now committed to diplomacy that addresses the full range of issues before us, and to pursuing constructive ties among the United States, Iran and the international community. This process will not be advanced by threats. We seek instead engagement that is honest and grounded in mutual respect." See: Videotaped Remarks by The President in Celebration of Nowruz (2009). The White House, available at <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/videotaped-remarks-president-celebration-nowruz> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>41</sup> "The United States seeks a future in which Iran meets its international responsibilities, takes its rightful place in the community of nations, and enjoys the political and economic opportunities that its people deserve. Yet if the Iranian Government continues to refuse to live up to its international obligations, it will face greater isolation." See: The National Security Strategy of the United States of America (2010), available at <https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=24251> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>42</sup> Doran, Michael (2015) 'Obama's Secret Iran Strategy.' Hudson Institute, available at <https://www.hudson.org/research/10989-obama-s-secret-iran-strategy> (17 May, 2021).

Iran a provision that would make it forgo any enrichment capacity for 10 years. This caused significant discord between the parties and undermined the negotiations.<sup>43</sup> Then Director-General of the IAEA Mohamed ElBaradei regretted this decision and blamed the E3 for not offering a reasonable package with concrete benefits to the Iranians because of U.S. opposition.<sup>44</sup>

To overcome this impasse, in October 2005, Russia offered Iran a share in an enrichment facility located in Russian city Angarsk, which would guarantee Tehran a continuous fuel supply. Earlier in September, both Russia and China abstained from referring the Iran dossier to the UN Security Council to buy more time for diplomacy.<sup>45</sup> The painstaking negotiations between Russia and Iran were conducted with delays, and the latter, according to a senior Russian lawmaker, 'did not demonstrate enough goodwill,' which made him think that Iran could follow the North Korean scenario, 'isolate itself, withdraw from the NPT and cut its cooperation with the IAEA'.<sup>46</sup> Although shortly before the Iranian nuclear dossier was raised at the UN Security Council the Iranians demonstrated their willingness to reconsider and accept the Russian proposal, it was quite late. At this stage, resolving the issue was not enough for the overall success of the negotiations<sup>47</sup>. Later the Iranians indicated that the proposal was off the table.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Charbonneau, Louis (2013) 'A Decade of Failure; Missed Opportunities and the Escalating Crisis over Iran's Nuclear Program.' City College of New York. P. 20, available at [http://academicworks.cuny.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1203&context=cc\\_etds\\_theses](http://academicworks.cuny.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1203&context=cc_etds_theses) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>44</sup> ElBaradei Mohamed (2011) *The Age of Deception*. New York: Picador, pp. 146-147. Cited at: Charbonneau, Louis (2013) *A Decade of Failure...* P. 34, available at [http://academicworks.cuny.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1203&context=cc\\_etds\\_theses](http://academicworks.cuny.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1203&context=cc_etds_theses) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>45</sup> Kerr, Paul (2005) IAEA Unlikely to Refer Iran to Security Council. *Arms Control Today*, available at [https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2005\\_11/NOV-Iran](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2005_11/NOV-Iran) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>46</sup> Polit.Ru (2006) Iran Perenosit Peregovory Na Svoyu Territoriyu [Iran Moves Negotiations to Its Own Territory], available at <http://polit.ru/news/2006/02/21/irantalks/> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>47</sup> Iskenderov, Petr (2006) Obogascheniye Usloviy [The Enrichment of Conditions]. *Vremya*, available at <http://www.vremya.ru/2006/34/5/146447.html> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>48</sup> Katz, Mark N. (2006) 'Putin, Ahmadinejad and the Iranian Nuclear Crisis.' Middle East Policy Council, available at <https://mars.gmu.edu/jspui/bitstream/handle/1920/3020/Putin%20Ahmadinejad%20and%20Iranian%20Nuclear%20Crisis.pdf> (17 May, 2021).

The United States advocated for the immediate transfer of Iran's nuclear dossier to the UN Security Council and the imposition of harsh sanctions against Iran, something that Russia and China were opposed to since it would further complicate the situation<sup>49</sup>. However, Tehran's continuous defiance of the IAEA Board of Governors and the consequent UN Security Council resolutions, reluctance to engage in productive negotiations, as well as the rejection of a number of initiatives, including those proposed by Moscow, made the Russian leadership cooperate with the rest of the P5 in imposing of the UN Security Council resolutions on Iran.<sup>50</sup> Still, Russia always called for exercising restraint in the adoption of tough measures and opposed antagonizing of the Iranian leadership. Moscow insisted that the discussion on Iran's nuclear program be held in conjunction with Article 41 of the UN Charter, which excluded the use of military force to compel Iran to fulfill the provisions of the resolution.<sup>51</sup>

When drafting the UN sanctions against Iran, the P5, especially the United States, had to take into account another two issues – (1) they had to allow for certain Russian weapons sale to Iran, and (2) the construction of the Bushehr NPP could not be delegitimized or in any way affected.<sup>52</sup> Russia had a firm intention to complete the project, as long as it was under the IAEA safeguards, and envisaged further plans for nuclear cooperation with Iran.

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<sup>49</sup> Suponina, Elena (2006) 'Sanktsii Protiv Iran Otkladyvayutsya' [Sanctions Against Iran are Postponed]. *Vremya*, available at <http://www.vremya.ru/2006/15/5/144335.html> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>50</sup> The 2010 NPT RevCon statement by P5, delivered by the Russian delegation, was in a striking contrast to what the Russian delegation had ever stated on Iran: "The proliferation risks presented by the Iranian nuclear programme remain of serious concern to us. We underscore the importance of Iran's full and immediate compliance with its international obligations. We urge Iran to respond to the concerns of the international community by complying promptly and fully with the relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions and with the requirements of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)." See: Statement by the People's Republic of China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America to the 2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference (2010). United Nations, available at [http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2010/statements/pdf/russia5\\_en.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2010/statements/pdf/russia5_en.pdf) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>51</sup> RIA Novosti (2008) 'Rezolyutsiya OON i Zayavleniye "Shesterki" Dolzhny Povliyat na Iran – Churkin' [Churkin: The UN Resolution and the P5+1 Statement Must Influence Iran], available at <https://ria.ru/world/20080304/100550871.html> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>52</sup> Gornostayev, Dmitry (2007) 'Rossiya Vyshla iz-pod Sanktsiy OON' [Russia is not Sanctioned by the UN Anymore]. *Kommersant*, available at <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/753194> (17 May, 2021).

To that end, in 2001 — even before the crisis around Iran’s nuclear program took place and despite the domestic opposition to the bill — Russia adopted a new law allowing for the import of spent nuclear fuel (SNF). The rationale behind this move was two-fold: Russia would manage both to bring back the SNF from the Bushehr NPP to address the long-time U.S. proliferation-related concerns, and to create the legal basis for the construction of an international SNF storage under the auspices of the IAEA, something that could help Russia join a potentially beneficial market.<sup>53</sup> Securing a bilateral agreement with Iran on SNF turned out to be extremely difficult (the Iranians required Russia to pay them for taking the SNF back to Russia)<sup>54</sup>; however, by 2005, the Russian officials completed the negotiations on terms acceptable to Russia<sup>55</sup>. The first delivery of nuclear fuel and the subsequent physical startup of the Bushehr NPP helped restore Iran’s confidence in Russia as a reliable partner in the nuclear field that had eroded due to Moscow’s support for the UN sanctions against Tehran. This maintained the Russian presence in Iran which, in the Russian view, was critical for further negotiations on Iran’s nuclear program.

In 2009, Iran happened to run out of fuel for the Tehran Research Reactor that was shipped to Iran before the Islamic Revolution by the United States and informed the IAEA about this issue. By that time, the election of President Obama instilled hope in many countries, including Russia, that the long-standing deadlock over Iran’s nuclear program could be overcome. As Robert Einhorn recalls, the United States came up with the idea that it could cooperate to supply fuel for that reactor and buy some time and space for more comprehensive negotiation. In exchange, the Iranians would ship out of the country enough uranium so that for a substantial period of time they would not have enough enriched uranium required for a single

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<sup>53</sup> Melikova, Natalya; Samarina, Aleksandra; Vaganov, Andrey (2004) 'Moskva i MAGATE Dovolny Drug Drugom' [Moscow and the IAEA are Happy with Each Other]. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, available at [http://www.ng.ru/politics/2004-06-30/1\\_magate.html](http://www.ng.ru/politics/2004-06-30/1_magate.html) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>54</sup> Kornysheva, Alena (2004) 'Aleksandr Rumyantsev ne Poyedet v Iran' [Aleksandr Rumyantsev Will not Go to Iran]. *Kommersant*, available at <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/449573> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>55</sup> *Vesti.Ru* (2005) *Rossiya i Iran Podpisali Dokument o Vozvrate OYaT s AES v Bushere* [Russia and Iran Signed a Document on the Return of Spent Nuclear Fuel from the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant], available at <https://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=60811> (17 May, 2021).

bomb. The U.S. delegation, under his leadership, went to Moscow and agreed to jointly present this proposal to the IAEA. Delivered by the Agency, the Iranians accepted it on October 1, 2009, and less than three weeks later, when the time came to draw up the details in Vienna, they walked away from it.<sup>56</sup>

Even though President Ahmadinejad was believed to be supporting the agreement, the domestic considerations in Iran, which took place against the background of the controversial re-election of Mahmud Ahmadinejad ruined this so-called fuel-swap deal. Conservative officials defended Iran's right to enrich, doubted the necessity of any cooperation with the West, and portrayed the deal as a defeat of Iran.<sup>57</sup> The Tehran declaration adopted later by Brazil, Turkey, and Iran was of no help. Iran possessed more LEU and could produce 20%-enriched uranium, and that declaration was subsequently rejected by the P5+1 negotiators.<sup>58</sup> Further escalation was inevitable – on June 9, 2010, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1929 (2010), which imposed the harshest sanctions, including an embargo on heavy arms sales to Iran.

To sum up, the developments regarding the Iranian nuclear program and the revelations of the undeclared nuclear activities did not change the overall Russian strategy on Iran; however, they exposed the red lines for and limitations to such policy, i.e. the transparency of Tehran's nuclear activities, its full adherence to the IAEA safeguards and cooperation with the Agency. Lack of such cooperation provided for more cooperation between Moscow and Washington on tailoring the UN Security Council sanctions on Iran. Russia was ready to engage in diplomatic efforts that would ease the tensions over the nuclear issue; however, there happened to be no case in which both the U.S. and Iranian leaders were ready to negotiate: Barack Obama and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad were a no better match for a successful negotiation than George Bush and Mohammad Khatami.

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<sup>56</sup> Einhorn, Robert (2017) Interview on the margins of the Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference. Washington, D.C.

<sup>57</sup> Benari, Elad (2011) 'WikiLeaks: Ahmadinejad Wanted Fuel Swap Deal.' Israel National News, available at <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/141550> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>58</sup> Arms Control Association (2014) History of Official Proposals on the Iranian Nuclear Issue, available at [https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Iran\\_Nuclear\\_Proposals](https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Iran_Nuclear_Proposals) (17 May, 2021).

**Lessons.** We can draw four more lessons from the experience of U.S.-Russian dialogue on Iran between 2001 and 2010:

1. *Since international agreements are vulnerable to domestic political pressures, continuity and predictability of national policies are key to confidence*<sup>59</sup>.

U.S., Russian, and Iranian administrations changed at least once over this period. The Bush administration pursued an extremely tough policy on Iran, which made it more difficult for President Khatami to promote open dialogue. Iran also dismissed the 'Bushehr-only' informal agreement with Russia in a way that Russia walked out of the Gore-Chernomyrdin agreement. The election of Mahmud Ahmadijad had a negative impact on the E3 negotiations with Iran. However, both the U.S. and Iranian administrations were relatively upfront and predictable, while Russia often was not.

On the one hand, Russia repeatedly declared its policy on Iran's nuclear program mostly depended on that country's cooperation with the IAEA, and would not affect other areas. On the other hand, in 2010, the Medvedev government supported the imposition of an arms trade embargo on Iran under UN Security Council Resolution 1929. Furthermore, Russia imposed additional unilateral sanctions on Iran prohibiting the sale of Russian the SA-20 (C-300) surface-to-air missile system to Iran, though the contract had been already signed and was legitimate under international law. Tehran's confidence in Moscow was so low that Iran would rather reach an agreement with the United States than with Russia.<sup>60</sup>

2. *Stigmatizing one's counterpart prevents one from beginning negotiations.*

In 2003, Iran suggested bilateral negotiations with the United States on a variety of issues including its nuclear program.<sup>61</sup> At that time, Iran had as few as 164 centrifuges<sup>62</sup>, and its relatively moderate

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<sup>59</sup> Lavrov, Sergei (2016) Interview for the "V Krugue Sveta". Echo Moskvyy Radio Station, available at <http://echo.msk.ru/programs/sorokina/41143/> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>60</sup> Benari, Elad. Op. cit.

<sup>61</sup> Roadmap for U.S.-Iranian Negotiations (2003), available at [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/world/documents/us\\_iran\\_1roadmap.pdf](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/world/documents/us_iran_1roadmap.pdf) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>62</sup> Lewis, Jeffrey (2015) 'Heading off an even bigger problem in Iran.' The Boston Globe, available at <https://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2015/07/18/heading-off-even-bigger-problem-iran/JoNSCMQMMuBJUrm8KbxAjM/story.html> (17 May, 2021).

leadership under President Khatami was ready to engage with the country they have officially deemed 'evil' since 1979. Iran might have been either worried about the possibility of an overwhelming U.S. air attack after the display of U.S. airpower during the 2003 invasion of Iraq, or willing to build on the success of its modest cooperation with the United States on Afghanistan. However, the U.S. leadership thought of Iran as part of the notorious 'axis of evil' and rejected any dialogue with the 'rogue' state.

This demonstrated to Iran that the U.S. leadership was not interested in resolving the problems with Iran's nuclear program collaboratively, rather the goal was suppression by any means. Had the United States not pursued such a policy, it would have been easier for the Bush administration to begin negotiations with Iran (at least secretly) at a time, when Iran made the first step. Instead, the United States wasted this opportunity.

### 3. *Interpersonal relations matter; the higher the level of communication is, the better.*

Good working relations with one's counterparts help understand each other and address the most important issues in a delicate manner. However, without clear high-level leadership, it is almost impossible to translate ideas into reality. The political environment, to a large extent, depends on functional relations between heads of states; if the heads of state cannot stand each other then diplomats find it hard to resolve the situation.<sup>63</sup>

Then-Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation Igor Ivanov claims that in 2006 he paid a visit to Washington and managed to convince President Bush to join the emerging P5+1 format.<sup>64</sup> Just three years after rejecting any negotiations with Iran, the U.S. joined talks structured such as there would be no incentive

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<sup>63</sup> This lesson would have worked in the normal state of the U.S.-Russia dialogue. However, as the experience of the Trump administration has demonstrated, the absence of working-level contacts may undermine the agreements arrived at in the highest spheres. Given that bureaucracies have the agency to sabotage the outcomes of whatever summit, it is advisable that the higher level encounters be preceded by working-level engagements.

<sup>64</sup> Ivanov, Igor (2017) Speech at the Conference "25 Years of U.S.-Russia Relations: From Cold War to New Cold War?" Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EjaKkfchV3M> (17 May, 2021).



to move forward. Clearly, that would be nearly impossible to achieve without good communication.

4. *Isolation is not the best strategy to deal with threshold states because it leads to a lack of credible information on those countries. That requires confidence-building and economic cooperation, as well as expert-level knowledge exchange.*

During this period, all the negotiators — the E3, Russia, and the United States, as well as the IAEA, suffered from information shortfalls on Iran's nuclear program. Besides, the Bush administration suspended the practice of occasional consultations with Iran<sup>65</sup>, which aggravated the situation.<sup>66, 67</sup> In the absence of economic interaction or business-like exchanges between the two countries, it should not be surprising that the two countries had a distorted image of each other. One cannot forcefully make a country more transparent, it can become so only voluntarily, which requires confidence-building through expert-level dialogue and economic cooperation.

## 2011–2016. Russia Facilitates Negotiations

**Political background.** The absence of progress with Iran at the very beginning of Obama's presidency maintained the key elements of the U.S. policy on Iran — designating Iranian entities and individuals under the counter-proliferation and counter-terrorism statutes, as well as building an international coalition to support more and more stringent sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially in the energy and banking sectors.<sup>68</sup> Having built "the most comprehensive and biting sanctions regime that the Iranian government has ever faced," the Obama administration made it clear that Iran had an opportunity to avoid sanctions through diplomacy.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Burns, Nicholas (2008) 'We Should Talk to Our Enemies,' Newsweek.

<sup>66</sup> Khlopkov, Anton; Lata, Vasily. Op. cit. P. 13

<sup>67</sup> There is evidence, though, that some factions within the Bush administration wanted to continue Clinton's policy of engaging the Khatami government. See: Slavin, Barbara (2009) *Bitter Friends, Bosom Enemies: Iran, the U.S., and the Twisted Path to Confrontation*. New York: St. Martin's Griffin, pp. 197–198.

<sup>68</sup> Maloney, Suzanne (2011) 'Progress of the Obama Administration's Policy Toward Iran.' The Brookings Institution, available at <https://www.brookings.edu/testimonies/progress-of-the-obama-administrations-policy-toward-iran/> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>69</sup> The White House (2012) *On-the-Record Conference Call on Iran Sanctions*, available at <https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=737829> (17 May, 2021).

Meanwhile, the third term of President Putin observed a gradual improvement of Russia-Iran relations.<sup>70</sup> In part, the shared suspicious outlook on the West, although of a different scale and nature, provided some base for political cooperation. Iran had to diversify its economic activities and partners to compensate for the crippling effect of the U.S. as well as the EU sanctions.<sup>71</sup>

It was clear to the Russian leadership that the P5+1 strategy on Iran yielded hardly any results. Russia believed that UNSC sanctions exhausted their potential, but the U.S. and EU unilateral sanctions could undermine any positive dynamics and threatened to stir political turmoil in Iran. At a certain point, Russia doubted whether the primary goal of its Western counterparts was to bring back Iran to the table or to change the regime by putting as much pressure on it as they could.<sup>72</sup>

Russia wanted to avoid another major crisis in the region, already suffering from the Syrian crisis. As in many other cases, Russia considered a political solution the only acceptable. However, the U.S. approach, which was to a certain extent shared by its European allies, was centered around sanctions. Furthermore, the U.S. leadership initially considered both political and military ways of resolving the crisis; however, later they resorted to negotiations as their main strategy.

As with all the diplomats who negotiated the agreement on Iran's nuclear program, Russians were innovative and strongly oriented on

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<sup>70</sup> The 2013 Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation mentioned Iran in the context of the negotiations on the Iranian nuclear program. Russia called for a conducting the dialogue on step-by-step and reciprocity principle. See: 'Kontseptsiya Vneshney Politiki Rossiyskoy Federatsii' [The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation] (2013), available at [http://www.mid.ru/foreign\\_policy/official\\_documents/-/asset\\_publisher/CptICkB6BZ29/content/id/122186](http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICkB6BZ29/content/id/122186) (17 May, 2021).

The 2016 version of the document mentioned "all-encompassing development of Russia's cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran" and the implementation of the JCPOA among its goals. See: 'Kontseptsiya Vneshney Politiki Rossiyskoy Federatsii' [The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation] (2016), available at [http://www.mid.ru/foreign\\_policy/news/-/asset\\_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/2542248](http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/2542248) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>71</sup> Kozhanov Nikolay (2015) Understanding the Revitalization of Russian-Iranian Relations. Carnegie Moscow Center, 2015, available at <https://carnegie.ru/2015/06/15/ru-pub-60391> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>72</sup> Ryabkov, Sergei (2012) 'Sanktsii Protiv Irana: Resurs Ischerpan' [Sanctions Against Iran: Resource Depleted]. Index Bezopasnosti (Security Index Journal), available at [http://www.mid.ru/foreign\\_policy/news/-/asset\\_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/169622](http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/169622) (17 May, 2021).

results. In 2011, while paying a visit to Washington, D.C., Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov suggested a 'step-by-step' plan of reciprocal measures from the P5+1 countries and Iran.<sup>73</sup> Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov described the logic behind that plan:

We elaborated this plan based on the fact that the level of trust between the P5+1 and Iran was not even at point zero, it was below that figure. To begin restoring trust and then move towards a mutually acceptable resolution, we had to start from something relatively easy. [...] In our view, the first small step from the Iranian side could be freezing the number of operating centrifuges, refraining from launching new centrifuges within the existing cascades, refraining from developing new cascades, refraining from feeding [UF6 – A.M.] gas into the cascade of already spinning centrifuges, etc. In return, the P5+1 could – after the verification by the IAEA, which is very important, refrain from imposing new sanctions – first, the unilateral ones. Then, while moving towards more complicated measures [...] the international community could even address Iran's concerns in the field of security, including confidence-building measures at sea. Respective steps were put into four stages which shaped the core of our plan. We believe such a scheme could be well efficient.<sup>74</sup>

However, it was difficult for the U.S. diplomats to compromise with the Iranians, considering domestic pressure by Congress, which was inclined to maximize gains and minimize responsibilities of the U.S., with a significant fraction of Congress being ideologically opposed to *any* deal with Iran. Despite the opposition, the Obama administration went as far as to engage in secret bilateral negotiations with Iran in 2012 and did its best to pave the road for an agreement with Iran. Both the U.S. and Iranian leadership displayed a strong willingness to pursue the path of negotiations.

**Results.** The most significant achievement of this period is that it marked two options averted: a nuclear-armed Iran and a war against

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<sup>73</sup> Arms Control Association (2014) History of Official Proposals on the Iranian Nuclear Issue, available at [https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Iran\\_Nuclear\\_Proposals](https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Iran_Nuclear_Proposals) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>74</sup> Ryabkov, Sergei. Op. cit.

Iran.<sup>75</sup> Notably, the framework for the negotiations between P5+1 and Iran was suggested by the Russians. However, the American side believes that the Russian step-by-step initiative had no impact on the course of negotiations. Robert Einhorn opines this initiative was not "terribly helpful" because Moscow "recognized that Iran had a right to an enrichment program before the U.S. was prepared to grant a limited enrichment program to Iran."

However, it is important to underline two facts: (1) Iran would not agree on anything even under sanctions had the United States continued its efforts to deprive Iran of its enrichment program; and (2) in 2013, the P5+1 and Iran each suggested a modified version of the Russian plan, and after the election of President Hassan Rouhani, the parties managed to hammer out the Joint Plan of Action – the first diplomatic document in many years endorsed both in Washington and Tehran. Further negotiations led to the conclusion of the JCPOA, which placed Iran under an unprecedentedly intrusive inspections regime<sup>76</sup> trusted by all parties to the agreement and the international community.

Robert Einhorn highlights the role Moscow played in facilitating the negotiation:

In terms of U.S. engagement in Iran, I don't have any regrets. I think the JCPOA is a good nuclear deal, I think our cooperation with Russia on Iran was very positive. I think Russia played a critical role in getting this agreement. [...] Russia has the influence with Iran to be very helpful. It has the technical expertise, and it has influence by virtue of the commercial relationship. The initial Bushehr reactor, the negotiations for subsequent sales of the VVER reactors – so Russia is in a critical place, and the U.S. found cooperation with Russia critical to a successful negotiation. It's going to remain critical in the future.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Parsi, Trita (2017) 'Behind the Scenes of the Iran Nuclear Deal,' Interview for The Leonard Lopate Show, available at <http://www.wnyc.org/story/inside-story-iran-nuclear-deal/> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>76</sup> Amano, Yukiya (2017) Reflections on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Speech at Danish Institute for International Studies, available at <https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/statements/reflections-on-the-joint-comprehensive-plan-of-action> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>77</sup> Einhorn, Robert. Op. cit.

Russia is believed to have found the ways to resolve some of the most contentious issues in the JCPOA such as setting the 300-kg threshold for LEU stockpile, inventing the mechanism to snap back sanctions on Iran, and converting the Fordow facility. In the interview with the author, Robert Einhorn called the enriched uranium cap "the biggest breakthrough" and credited the Russian delegation for persuading the Iranians to agree on it: "What was so critical about that was if you reduce the uranium stockpile to a low level, that allows you to increase the number of operating centrifuges while still keeping breakout time to at least one year."<sup>78</sup>

Russia could also be credited for inventing a 'snap-back' sanctions mechanism wherein punitive sanctions against Iran are automatically invoked in case of non-compliance unless the UNSC, subject to its own veto power, votes to cancel.<sup>79</sup> However, Russians do not take pride in these 'so-called achievements' and consider these provisions unnecessary. They believe these provisions derive from American phobias that Iran would all of a sudden walk out of the deal or cheat on the IAEA. However, it is not the break-out potential, but the IAEA verification regime that is of vital importance, and the parties to the JCPOA should therefore ensure that Iran abides by IAEA regulations. Russia had to address these concerns: diplomats formulated the 'snap-back' mechanism according to the UN procedures, and nuclear physicists from Rosatom suggested the 300 kg threshold. What Russians are proud of is the conversion of the Fordow facility to the production of stable isotopes for medical purposes, instead of removing the centrifuges.<sup>80</sup>

Another contentious issue in the negotiations was the imposition of restrictions on conventional arms and missile technology trade with Iran for five and eight years respectively. Russia and China opposed such measures at the very early stage of the JCPOA negotiations; however, the P5+1 and Iran eventually addressed the U.S. concerns regarding arms trade with Iran and managed to reach a compromise on the duration of these restrictions.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>78</sup> Einhorn, Robert. Op. cit.

<sup>79</sup> Sherman, Wendi (2017) 'Top "Iran Deal" Negotiator Sees Limits to U.S.-Russian Cooperation.' *Russia Matters*, available at <https://www.russiamatters.org/analysis/top-iran-deal-negotiator-sees-limits-us-russian-cooperation> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>80</sup> Interview with a Russian expert on nonproliferation and Iran's nuclear program (2017).

<sup>81</sup> Einhorn, Robert (2015) 'Debating the Iran nuclear deal: A former American negotiator outlines the battleground issues.' *The Brookings Institution*, available at

When the JCPOA was concluded, its implementation was yet another challenge. All the excessive enriched uranium and certain types of Iran's equipment had to be transported to the Russian Federation by the end of 2015. Such a limited time-frame imposed logistical difficulties and required collaborative actions, recalls Vladimir Kuchinov, Advisor to the Rosatom Director General:

A close cooperation on this issue with the U.S. colleagues should be noted since in exchange for the uranium products, they delivered, as a guarantee, natural uranium from Kazakhstan to Iran. The day when the plane with uranium landed in Iran, the remaining part of the materials were placed on Mikhail Dudin ship, and on December 28, 2015, the ship left for Saint Petersburg, where it got in February. This helped the IAEA to confirm the implementation of the JCPOA.<sup>82</sup>

Both, Russia and the United States, along with the rest of the JCPOA members, also took other efforts to implement the JCPOA, which involved their cooperation with Iran. Shipping out the excessive heavy water from Iran to Russia and the United States are among such efforts.<sup>83</sup>

All in all, this period of the U.S.-Russian dialogue on the Iranian nuclear program, as much as the broader multilateral effort that brought about the JCPOA, could be called exemplary. Even amid the spiraling tensions between Russia and the United States over Ukraine and Syria could not derail the negotiations, which is indicative of the parties' commitment to diplomacy. The negotiators of both the United States and Russia invested the maximum of their creativity and knowledge to find a balanced agreement rich with technical details that helped the sides to compromise.

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<https://www.brookings.edu/research/debating-the-iran-nuclear-deal-a-former-american-negotiator-outlines-the-battleground-issues/> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>82</sup> Kuchinov Vladislav (2017) 'SVPD i Razvitiye Sotrudnichestva s Iranom v Oblasti Mirnogo Ispolzovaniya Atomnoy Energii' [JCPOA and the Development of Cooperation with Iran in Peaceful Atom]. CENESS, available at <http://ceness-russia.org/rus/conf2017/materials/2063/2138/> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>83</sup> Sputnik News (2016) 'Iran Delivers 38 Tonnes of Heavy Water to Russia in September,' available at <https://sputniknews.com/business/201609261045699559-iran-russia-heavy-water/> (17 May, 2021).

**Lessons.** Here are a few final lessons that the U.S.-Russian cooperation on Iran yielded over the period concerned:

1. *Pressure and sanctions in themselves cannot resolve an issue, there must be incentives as well.*

U.S. foreign policy is largely associated with sanctions and pressure. However, it seems to yield modest results. By applying too much pressure and offering few incentives, even the most powerful country cannot achieve a reliable, working, and stable agreement. Sanctions can have their effect, but only with corresponding incentives, otherwise one is causing harm to people without offering a way out.

2. *There should be no preconditions to start negotiations on a complex issue. It is more effective to begin from small steps.*

There is value in isolating certain issues and making progress where progress is possible even if all the sources of friction in a relationship cannot be addressed. Although many critics of the JCPOA claimed that the agreement did not address the broader U.S. concerns related to Iran's regional policies, ballistic missile program, among others, it is the separation of the nuclear issue from the rest of the contentious items on agenda that helped to reach the agreement.<sup>84</sup>

3. *Multilateral negotiation could eventually be more successful than bilateral.*

As the IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano believed, 'even complex and challenging issues can be tackled effectively if all parties are committed to dialogue — not dialogue for its own sake, but dialogue aimed at achieving results'.<sup>85</sup> It is politically harder to quit an agreement negotiated multilaterally, and even after one quits, the deal does not immediately cease to exist, which makes multilateral agreements more sustainable.

4. *Nonpolitical technical cooperation is the key to successful negotiations.*

Unbiased, nonpartisan, nonpolitical, and technical — all these adjectives match the description of IAEA activities. The 'twin-track'

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<sup>84</sup> Einhorn, Robert, Op. cit., 2015.

<sup>85</sup> Amano, Yukiya. Op. cit.

approach ensured the political environment of the nuclear talks did not influence the technical dialogue between Iran and the IAEA. 'The IAEA was able to make a vital contribution, and maintain the confidence of all sides, by sticking to its technical mandate and not straying into politics. Virtually every political breakthrough in recent years was preceded by a technical agreement between the IAEA and Iran. This objective and factual approach will continue to characterize our work in the coming years'.<sup>86</sup>

## 2017–2020. The U.S. Unravels the Deal

Since the beginning of his campaign, Donald Trump has called the JCPOA 'the worst deal ever negotiated',<sup>87</sup> but it took the Trump administration more than a year to review the legacy of President Obama. Days after Trump took office, his first National Security Adviser, Michael Flynn, announced that the United States is 'officially putting Iran on notice' in connection with its missile launches.<sup>88</sup>

Secretary of Defense James Mattis, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, and the second National Security Adviser in the Trump Administration Herbert McMaster had a stabilizing influence on the President for which they were called 'Axis of Adults'. Despite the critical attitude towards Iran in general, the senior officials believed the Iran deal met the U.S. national interests. It was more difficult though to convince President Trump of this.

The need for a so-called certification of the JCPOA was an expected problem. According to the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (INARA), every 90 days the U.S. President should inform Congress that Tehran is fulfilling its obligations and that removing sanctions from this country is in the interests of Washington. During the JCPOA negotiations, although this is a legally-non-binding agreement, the Congress wanted to have leverage and oversight with respect to lifting of the U.S. sanctions against Iran, a power that had been

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<sup>86</sup> Amano, Yukiya. *Op. cit.*

<sup>87</sup> Torbati, Yeganeh (2016) 'Trump election puts Iran nuclear deal on shaky ground.' Reuters, available at <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-election-trump-iran/trump-election-puts-iran-nuclear-deal-on-shaky-ground-idUSKBN13427E> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>88</sup> 'Trump White House says it's "putting Iran on notice."' (2017). CNBC, available at <https://www.cnn.com/2017/02/01/trump-white-house-says-its-putting-iran-on-notice.html> (17 May, 2021).



delegated to the President.<sup>89</sup> This relic of the relationship between the Republican Congress and the Democratic President during the Obama presidency threatened to derail the JCPOA certification under the new circumstances when the primary threat to the agreement was coming from the White House.

In April 2016, the Trump administration conducted its first certification of the JCPOA; however, the U.S. adopted new sanctions against the Iranian missile program and launched a full review of the U.S. strategy on Iran. Even the declaration on certification of the JCPOA, published on the State Department's website, was entitled 'Iran Continues To Sponsor Terrorism'.<sup>90</sup>

By July's deadline for certification, a new strategy on Iran was not ready, and the President spent an hour telling his advisors how he did not want to confirm the implementation of the agreement.<sup>91</sup> Eventually, Trump agreed to do this but told the Wall Street Journal that the Iranians were not in compliance with the JCPOA: 'They don't comply. And so we'll see what happens. I mean, we'll talk about this subject in 90 days. But, yeah, I would be — I would be surprised if they were in compliance.' Another remark in this interview made his intentions regarding the JCPOA crystal clear: 'We've been extremely nice to them in saying they were compliant, OK? We've given them the benefit of every doubt. But we're doing very detailed studies. And personally, I have great respect for my people. If it was up to me, I would have had them noncompliant 180 days ago'.<sup>92</sup>

In his speech on October 13, 2017, Trump refused to certify Iran's compliance with the JCPOA. He claimed that Iran had committed numerous violations of the agreement but mentioned only three relatively minor issues: the excess of the agreed level of heavy water, disagreement on the use of advanced types of centrifuges

<sup>89</sup> Goldsmith, Jack L. (2015) Why Congress is effectively powerless to stop the Iran deal. The Brookings Institution, available at <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/markaz/2015/07/21/why-congress-is-effectively-powerless-to-stop-the-iran-deal/> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>90</sup> Tillerson, Rex W. (2017) Iran Continues To Sponsor Terrorism. Department of State, available at <https://ru.usembassy.gov/iran-continues-sponsor-terrorism-press-statement-rex-w-tillerson-secretary-state/> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>91</sup> Baker, Peter (2017) Trump Recertifies Iran Nuclear Deal, but Only Reluctantly. The New York Times, available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/17/us/politics/trump-iran-nuclear-deal-recertify.html> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>92</sup> Dawsey, Josh; Gold, Hadas (2017) Full transcript: Trump's Wall Street Journal interview. Politico, available at <https://www.politico.com/story/2017/08/01/trump-wall-street-journal-interview-full-transcript-241214> (17 May, 2021).

which arose because of the vague language of the agreement, and intimidation of international inspectors who allegedly could not fully exercise their mandate, an incident that had never been reflected in public documents.

President Trump referenced the so-called sunset provisions – temporary restrictions under the JCPOA that, once exhausted, were believed to allow for a rapid nuclear break-out of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Another critical point for the administration was the absence of any limitations to Iran's ballistic missile program. However, the President's speech was not about these drawbacks of the JCPOA; it was about the current political regime in Iran that had to be countered through a comprehensive strategy.<sup>93</sup>

Setting the non-nuclear part of the new Iran strategy aside, it is important to mention that President Trump instructed his administration to work closely with Congress and allies to address the flaws of the agreement and threatened to cancel U.S. participation in the JCPOA in case no solution was found. On January 12, 2018, Donald Trump refused to certify Iran's compliance with the JCPOA and made a last warning on his withdraw from the deal if it was not fixed.<sup>94</sup>

Amid the European efforts to negotiate a follow-on agreement or fix the JCPOA, President Trump sent a clear signal on the JCPOA by replacing two of the three top advisors in his administration by those who are believed to share his hawkish outlook on foreign affairs and specifically the Iran deal. On March 13, 2018, Donald Trump fired Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and referred to the disagreements, mainly over the JCPOA, as the key reason.<sup>95</sup> Tillerson was replaced

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<sup>93</sup> "Our policy is based on a clear-eyed assessment of the Iranian dictatorship, its sponsorship of terrorism, and its continuing aggression in the Middle East and all around the world. Iran is under the control of a fanatical regime that seized power in 1979 and forced a proud people to submit to its extremist rule. This radical regime has raided the wealth of one of the world's oldest and most vibrant nations, and spread death, destruction, and chaos all around the globe," said Trump and mentioned the seizure of the U.S. diplomats in 1979, multiple bombings of American embassies and military objects, support for Hezbollah and al Qaeda, as well as sectarian violence and civil wars across the Middle East, among others. See: The White House (2017) Remarks by President Trump on Iran Strategy, available at <https://ru.usembassy.gov/remarks-president-trump-iran-strategy/> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>94</sup> The White House (2018) Statement by the President on the Iran Nuclear Deal, available at <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/briefings-statements/statement-president-iran-nuclear-deal/> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>95</sup> Segarra, Lisa Marie (2018) 'We Disagreed on Things.' Read President Trump's Remarks After Firing Rex Tillerson.' Time, available at <https://time.com/5197334/>

by Mike Pompeo, who fiercely opposed the nuclear accord with Iran as a Republican Representative.<sup>96</sup>

Nearly ten days later, on March 22, 2018, President Trump named John Bolton, former U.S. envoy to the United Nations, an advocate of the invasion of Iran in 2003, as his new National Security Adviser.<sup>97</sup> Needless to recall his op-ed published in the *New York Times* a few months before the JCPOA was concluded that clearly conveyed his message in the title 'To Stop Iran's Bomb, Bomb Iran'.<sup>98</sup> The appointment of the two individuals left no chance for the survival of the nuclear deal.

Meanwhile, Russia, along with the rest of the JCPOA participants, continued to support the agreement. Russian officials delivered multiple public statements in support of the JCPOA.<sup>99, 100</sup> Moscow made it clear from the very beginning: the JCPOA should be preserved as it is since it was the result of a hard-achieved consensus, also backed by the UN Security Council resolution. In part due to this position, Russian diplomats did not join the EU-U.S. efforts to fix the JCPOA or to develop an add-on agreement so that it could address other issues and concerns related to the Iranian policies.

In May 2018, at the NPT PrepCom in Geneva, Russia and China proposed a joint statement in support of the JCPOA open to all the NPT Member-States.<sup>101</sup> Even though the text was politically

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we-disagreed-on-things-read-president-trumps-remarks-after-firing-rex-tillerson/ (17 May, 2021).

<sup>96</sup> Costello, Ryan (2017) Trump CIA Pick Hyped Facts On Iran, Downplayed Costs Of War. *Huffington Post*, available at [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/ryan-costello/trump-cia-pick-hyped-fact\\_b\\_13181260.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/ryan-costello/trump-cia-pick-hyped-fact_b_13181260.html) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>97</sup> *Financial Times* (2018) Iran deal at risk due to John Bolton's extremism, available at <https://www.ft.com/content/a89388f8-422f-11e8-803a-295c97e6fd0b> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>98</sup> Bolton, John R. (2015) To Stop Iran's Bomb, Bomb Iran. *The New York Times*, available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/26/opinion/to-stop-irans-bomb-bomb-iran.html> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>99</sup> TASS (2017) Putin vows Russia will keep on backing Iran deal, available at <http://tass.com/politics/968914> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>100</sup> TASS (2018) Lavrov slams U.S. statements on Iran nuclear deal, available at <http://tass.com/politics/985052> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>101</sup> Joint Statement on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) by the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China at the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (2018), available at [https://www.mid.ru/en/foreign\\_policy/news/-/asset\\_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/3209161](https://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/3209161) (17 May, 2021).

neutral and avoided a blame-game, only around 25 countries supported it. Most of the other countries avoided publicly siding with Russia and China as they were concerned that this move would be perceived as one pursued against the United States. However, a vast majority of delegations expressed their support for the JCPOA in their national statements.

Russia continued to implement the JCPOA by redesigning the Fordow enrichment facility so that Iran could produce only stable isotopes useful for medical purposes. When Iran introduced uranium hexafluoride into 1044 centrifuges at Fordo, Rosatom paused the reconfiguration project in December 2019. There were two reasons behind the decision: first, it was technically impossible to enrich uranium and produce stable isotopes at the same facility, second, the United States had revoked the waiver for the Fordo project.<sup>102</sup> However, Moscow remained committed to the project and is willing to continue its implementation once Tehran halts enrichment activities and cleans up the facility.<sup>103</sup> Beyond the JCPOA, Russia moved on with the Bushehr project. In November 2019, Rosatom launched the construction of the second unit of the NPP.<sup>104</sup>

**Results.** As of August 2020, the outcomes of the Trump administration's policies on Iran were purely negative because President Trump ignored the lessons learned by the previous U.S. administrations. First, his administration's foreign policy was inconsistent with the pledges previously made by the United States. Donald Trump was predictable in his approach to Iran and did deliver on his promise to leave the Iran deal, but withdrawing from the hard-achieved agreement ruined the credibility of the U.S. leadership. Against the backdrop of Iran's continued commitment to the JCPOA, it was the United States — not 'just the Trump administration' — that posed as a deal-breaker.

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<sup>102</sup> TASS (2019) Ryabkov: RF Vystupayet Protiv Ispolzovaniya Mekhanizma Razrescheniya Sporov v Iranskoj Sdelke [Ryabkov: Russia Opposes Triggering Dispute Resolution Mechanism in Iran Nuclear Deal], available at <https://tass.ru/politika/7288837> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>103</sup> RBC (2019) 'Rossiya Svernula Proekt na Iranskom Zavode v Fordo iz-za Deystviy Tegerana' [Russia Shut Down the Project at Fordow due to Tehran's Actions], available at <https://www.rbc.ru/rbcfreenews/5dc2a3739a79473c79c891ec> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>104</sup> RIA Novosti (2019) 'Rossiya i Iran Nachali Stroitelstvo Vtorogo Energobloka AES Buser' [Russia and Iran Started Building the Second Unit of the Bushehr NPP], available at <https://ria.ru/20191110/1560774053.html> (17 May, 2021).

Second, the Trump administration was trying to isolate Iran, with maximum pressure eventually leading to maximum resistance. Following several wind-down periods and having granted temporary waivers, President Trump restored sanctions against Iran in full and then introduced tougher measures. Hopeful about the E3 efforts to maintain economic cooperation with Iran, Tehran abstained from reacting to the new U.S. policies for a year. However, the lack of progress with the launching of the Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges (INSTEX) resulted in growing frustration among the Iranian leaders.<sup>105</sup> Multiple incidents that took place in the region after May 2019 led to a military escalation, with Washington and Tehran stopping short of war in January 2020 when, in response to President Trump's order to kill General Qasem Soleimani, Iran attacked two U.S. military bases in Iraq with missiles.

Nevertheless, Iran maintained full cooperation with the IAEA – even the COVID-19 pandemic had no negative impact on the monitoring and verification in Iran.<sup>106</sup> In August 2020, during the visit of the IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi to Tehran, the Iranians committed to providing access to two facilities the IAEA inspectors suspected of having hosted nuclear material and previously undeclared activities carried out in the early 2000s.<sup>107</sup> However, the Iranians took five steps to reduce their commitments under the JCPOA and rejected any technical limitations to the enrichment and R&D program, effectively reducing the so-called break-out time from one year down to about four months.<sup>108</sup> In triggering the Iranians to retaliate in this manner, the Trump administration crossed out one of the key benefits that resulted from the nuclear deal.

Third, the Trump administration refused to compartmentalize the nuclear and non-nuclear issues with Iran, something that had

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<sup>105</sup> Remarks by Abbas Araghchi, Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs, Iran (2019). Moscow Nonproliferation Conference, available at <https://youtu.be/49H8oGYLW1M?t=1410> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>106</sup> IAEA (2020) Verification and monitoring in the Islamic Republic of Iran in light of United Nations Security Council resolution 2231 (2015). Report by the Director General. IAEA, available at <https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/20/06/gov2020-26.pdf> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>107</sup> Hafezi, Parisa; Murphy, Francois (2020) Iran relents on IAEA inspections at two sites, ending standoff. Reuters, available at <https://reuters.com/article/world-news/idUSKBN25M1J7> (17 May 2021).

<sup>108</sup> Katzman, Kenneth (2020) What are the alternatives to the Iran nuclear deal? Atlantic Council, available at <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/iransource/what-are-the-alternatives-to-the-iran-nuclear-deal/> (17 May, 2021).

made the nuclear deal possible. President Trump wanted a comprehensive deal indefinitely limiting Iran's nuclear program, covering its regional policies and ballistic missile program, an idea abandoned by the Obama administration. President Obama preferred to set relatively achievable goals and address priorities in order, rather than all at once. While Donald Trump made numerous never-accepted proposals on talks, phone calls, and meetings with the Iranian leaders, he used ultimatums to force Iran to agree on all the unachievably high demands Mike Pompeo once voiced.<sup>109</sup> Signing up for such a deal would mean the capitulation of Tehran.

Fourth, by alienating and disregarding its closest partners, the United States isolated itself in the international arena. U.S. allies, partners, and interlocutors – all but Israel and the monarchies of the Persian Gulf – defied the Trump administration's approach to Iran. When Donald Trump pulled the plug on the JCPOA, its administration had not even discussed Plan B with the European allies and counted on President Macron's Twitter post as a demonstration of the European will to work with the United States<sup>110</sup>. The European efforts to find a common ground and address the shared concerns turned out to be futile; President Trump required that all his demands must be met.<sup>111</sup>

By threatening other nations with secondary sanctions, the United States undermined the ability of the remaining participants of the JCPOA to implement the agreement and advance the cause of nonproliferation. Such policies backfired when the United States failed to extend the so-called arms embargo on Iran through the UN Security Council. The attempt to snap-back the UN sanctions against Iran lifted under the JCPOA suffered the same fate.

Regrettably, under the Trump administration the U.S.-Russian framework turned no longer valid for addressing Iran's nuclear issue. Although Russia has better communication with Iran and can be

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<sup>109</sup> Pompeo, Michael R. (2018) Secretary of State. *After the Deal: A New Iran Strategy*. U.S. Department of State, available at <https://2017-2021.state.gov/after-the-deal-a-new-iran-strategy/index.html> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>110</sup> Department of State (2018) *Background Briefing on President Trump's Decision To Withdraw From the JCPOA*, available at <https://2017-2021.state.gov/background-briefing-on-u-s-withdrawal-from-the-joint-comprehensive-plan-of-action-jcpoa/index.html> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>111</sup> Lederman, Josh (2018) "'Defective at its core': How Trump opted to scrap Iran deal." AP, available at <https://apnews.com/c8553592cda046238d9fa08273b102df> (17 May, 2021).

instrumental in renewing cooperation, Moscow cannot influence the U.S. position on Iran. With the leadership of the two countries holding discording views on Iran, there is little prospect for new achievements. like the JCPOA. If the restoration of the nuclear deal fails, the role of Russia-U.S. dialogue on Iran will be limited to a modest range from contingency diplomacy between Washington and Tehran to avoid a military conflict to a routine exchange of views on the current developments in the Middle East.

## Conclusion

Any way out? Evidently, the Iranian nuclear program and adjacent issues will remain on the international agenda for the foreseeable future. The lessons learned from the Russia-U.S. dialogue suggest a five-stage model for any negotiations with Iran as well as other countries that are engaged in activities raising proliferation concerns.

- Begin dialogue without setting preconditions, threatening, or stigmatizing the other side. Involve interested parties and carefully exchange information on all levels.
- Loosen pressure on and avoid isolating the other side, offer incentives as well.
- Do not demand much in the beginning. Reach the first agreeable, deliverable agreement.
- Adhere to the agreement, be consistent and predictable. Add technical cooperation for verification.
- Work out further agreements on a step-by-step and reciprocal basis. Enhance cooperation in other areas.

Following these recommendations does not guarantee a success. However, the Russia-U.S. dialogue on the Iranian nuclear program has proven this approach effective.

## **CHRONOLOGY OF U.S.-RUSSIAN DIALOGUE ON IRAN`S NUCLEAR PROGRAM 1992–2021**

### **1992–2000. The United States Adjusts Russian Policy**

#### **1992**

**August 24** –The governments of Russia and Iran signed an agreement on cooperation in peaceful uses of atomic energy.

**July 2** – The U.S. passed the Arms Nonproliferation Act against Iran and Iraq, which banned deliveries of dual-use and conventional weapons.

#### **1993**

**March** – Foreign policy Concept of the Russian Federation presents Iran as a source of uncertainty in the region.

#### **1994**

**July 1** – The U.S. National Security Strategy aims at preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons.

#### **1995**

**January 1** – A protocol on negotiations between Russian Minister of Atomic Energy Viktor Mikhailov and his Iranian counterpart Reza Amrollahi on the supply of Russian centrifuges to Iran was made public.

The U.S. demanded that Russia stop negotiating with Iran. Information exchange between U.S. and Russian agencies was hampered.

**January** – A contract was signed for the completion of the first unit of the Bushehr nuclear power plant. The U.S. did not oppose or impose sanctions against Russian companies involved in the construction of the nuclear power plant.

**April 17** – May 12 – NPT Review Conference, at which Russia pressured Iran to support an indefinite extension of the NPT.

**June** – Russia has pledged not to supply arms to Iran. Russian Prime Minister Chernomyrdin promised U.S. Vice President Gore that Russia would meet its supply obligations before 1999 and would not conclude new arms trade treaties with Iran.



**1996**

**September 8** – The U.S. passed the D`Amato Act, which imposed sanctions on third countries investing a certain amount in the oil industries of Iran and Libya.

**1997**

**October** – China announced a halt and freeze on all nuclear programs in Iran under U.S. pressure.

**1998**

February – U.S. pressure forces the Ukrainian manufacturer of steam turbines Turboatom to abandon its \$45 million deal to supply turbines to Bushehr.

**April** – Russia proposed to build a research reactor in Iran fueled by 20%-enriched uranium.

**1999**

**April** – Meetings of the Russian government export control commission, timed to coincide with meetings between Gore and Chernomyrdin and Gore and Kirienko. Russian missile technology shipments to Iran through shell companies were discussed. All this took place during an IMF mission to Moscow, as Russia intended to use U.S. support to obtain IMF loans.

**July 29** – Russia passed a law on export controls.

**2000**

**June 28** – Russia`s Foreign Policy Concept acknowledged the importance of cooperation with Iran.

**November 23** – Russia notified Clinton administration of its withdrawal from Gore-Chernomyrdin agreement to halt arms trade between Russia and Iran.

## 2001–2010. Russia Balances Out U.S. Policy on Iran

### 2002

**January 29** – Elected president of the United States George W. Bush classified Iran as an ‘axis of evil’ in his speech to Congress.

**October 1** – In U.S. National Security Strategy, Iran is designated as a rogue state.

**December 13** – The administration of U.S. President George W. Bush accused Iran of pursuing a secret nuclear weapons programme.

### 2003

**April 28 – May 9** – During the sessions of the NPT preparatory committees, the U.S. said that Russia’s assistance to Iran was contrary to the NPT and should be phased out, including the construction of the Bushehr nuclear power plant.

**May** – The Iran referred a proposal for negotiations on a wide range of issues, including phasing out its nuclear programme, to United States leaders. The United States refused to negotiate.

**May 30** – Russia offered a compromise – the U.S. and Russia jointly completed construction of the nuclear power plant, but the U.S. refused. Then the Russian Foreign Ministry said there would be no stopping the construction of the atomic power station in Bushehr unless the UN Security Council demands it.

**Fall** – According to U.S. intelligence agencies, Iran halts its illegal nuclear activities.

**December 18** – Iran signed an Additional Protocol to the IAEA Safeguards Agreement allowing the agency to conduct inspections throughout the country.

U.S. Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns warned that the construction of the plant could lead to a leakage of dual-use technology.

### 2004

**November** – The Paris Agreement signed between E3 and Iran: Iran was allowed to continue developing peaceful nuclear energy and receiving EU assistance, but suspended its own uranium enrichment activities during negotiations.

## 2005

**June 24** – Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, a conservative politician, was elected president of Iran.

**June 28** – Bush signed Executive Order 13382 to impose sanctions on individuals and businesses that facilitate WMD proliferation. Four Iranian enterprises fell under the decree.

**August 8** – Iran claimed to have resumed uranium enrichment at Esfahan, in violation of the Paris agreement with the E3.

## 2006

**February** – Iranian dossier were referred to the UN Security Council. Russia and China were against it; the E3 also sought a diplomatic solution without referral to the UN Security Council.

**January 10** – Iran resumed uranium enrichment at Natanz and suspended implementation of the Additional Protocol.

After a visit of Russian Security Council Secretary Igor Ivanov to Washington, it was possible to get the U.S. to join the P5+1 format.

**July 31** – The UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1696, which required Iran to halt all activities related to uranium enrichment within a month.

**August 27** – Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad inaugurated a heavy water plant in Arak.

**October 2** – U.S. President George W. Bush signed the ‘Iran Freedom Support Act’ passed by Congress, the law allowed economic sanctions to be imposed on countries and companies that helped Iran develop its nuclear programme.

**December 23** – The UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1737 and imposed the first round of sanctions against Tehran.

## 2007

**March 24** – These restrictions were supplemented by Resolution 1747, which banned Tehran from selling arms abroad.

**October 24** – The U.S. imposes new sanctions on Iran and accuses the elite Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps of distributing weapons of mass destruction. A month later, China, France, Russia, the UK, the

U.S. and Germany (P5+1, or 'the group of six') will agree to push ahead with a third round of tougher sanctions.

**December 3** – A U.S. National Intelligence Estimate says Iran halted its attempts to build a nuclear bomb in 2003. It also says with 'moderate confidence' that the programme has not resumed as of mid-2007.

**Since 2007** The United States has implemented Operation Olympics, an attempt to neutralise Iran's nuclear programme using cyber-weapons.

## 2008

**March 3** – Security Council Resolution 1803, imposed another round of sanctions against Iran. At the same time, the P5+1 returned to the 2006 proposals with a view to resuming talks.

**September 26** – Resolution 1835 was adopted, which reiterated the content of the three previous resolutions on Iran, without new sanctions due to resistance from China and Russia.

**Since 2008** U.S. cyber-attacks have gradually rendered centrifuges at the Natanz enrichment complex unusable.

**November 4** – The election of Barack Obama as U.S. president has opened the door for a U.S.-Russian dialogue on the Iranian nuclear programme.

## 2009

**June 5** – A quarterly IAEA report says Iran now has 7,231 centrifuge enrichment machines installed, a 25 percent increase in potential capacity since March. Two months later, the IAEA will say that Iran has slightly reduced the scale of its uranium enrichment, while also raising the number of installed centrifuge machines by some 1,000, to 8,308.

## 2010

**February** – Tehran increases its uranium enrichment level to 19.75%.

**June 9** – The Security Council adopted Resolution 1929, which imposed a fourth set of sanctions against Iran, an arms embargo against it. The arms embargo directly affected the interests of Russia, one of Iran's main arms suppliers.

**June 24** – Congress approved the imposition of unilateral sanctions by the U.S..

**July 26** – The European Union joined the sanctions and a ban was imposed on technical assistance for the development of the Iranian oil and gas industry.

**Summer** – The massive use of the Stuxnet virus knocked out around 1,000 centrifuges, which at the time represented one-fifth of all Tehran`s available centrifuges.

## **2011–2016. Russia Facilitates Negotiations**

### **2011**

**July** – During a visit to Washington, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov proposes a phased approach to resolving the Iranian issue through P5+1 efforts.

**September** – Bushehr NPP was connected to the national power grid.

### **2012**

**January 23** – The European Union imposed an oil embargo on Tehran and blocked Iran`s Central Bank accounts in European banks.

**April 14** – The six world powers – P5+1 – and Iran launched a new round of negotiations in Istanbul, with substantive meetings held in May in Baghdad.

**June 18–19** – Meetings in Moscow, though the step-by-step approach proposed by Lavrov was adopted, the sides were unable to reach a consensus neither on the content of the steps nor on their sequence.

### **2013**

**Winter and Spring** (26–28 February – Alma Ata, 17–18 March – Istanbul, 5–6 April – Alma Ata) – A new round of talks between Tehran and the P6 also did not lead to a change in the status quo.

**June 15** – Moderate candidate Hassan Rouhani wins Iranian presidential elections.

**September 27** – Rouhani has an historic phone call with U.S. President Barack Obama.

**November 20–24** – Geneva talks. An interim agreement, the Joint Action Plan, is adopted, spelling out the parties' actions for a six-month period.

**November 24** – Secret U.S.-Iran talks were revealed. Iran agrees to curb certain nuclear activities and accept enhanced IAEA monitoring. In return, minor sanctions are lifted, and Iran is promised that no new sanctions will be imposed. The deal is considered temporary until a new, broader agreement is reached.

## 2014

**February 17–20** – Iran and 5+1 begin talks in Vienna on a comprehensive agreement on Iran's nuclear programme. The parties discuss the agenda and format of future talks.

**June 9–10** – U.S. and Iranian diplomats meet in Geneva for bilateral consultations.

**June 11–12** – Diplomats from Russia and Iran met in Rome in bilateral consultations.

**June 17** – The U.S., Iran, and the EU met in a trilateral consultation format.

## 2015

**March 3** – Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu launches a last-ditch effort to stop the Iran nuclear deal by delivering a speech before the U.S. Congress.

**July 14** – Iran and the six world powers sign the nuclear deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

**July 20** – The UN Security Council unanimously adopts a resolution endorsing the JCPOA and lifting sanctions on Iran.

**December 28** – Iran announces the shipment of 8.5 tonnes of low-enriched uranium to Russia. In return, it receives 140 tonnes of uranium concentrate.

## 2016

**January 15** – Iranian authorities report pouring concrete over the core of the heavy water reactor at Arak, as required by the JCPOA.

**January 16** – International sanctions against Iran were lifted after the statement of the IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano that Tehran has complied with its side of the JCPOA agreement.

**November 9** – Donald Trump wins the U.S. presidential election. In his campaign, he calls the JCPOA the worst deal in history and promises to withdraw from it or renegotiate its terms.

**December 1** – The U.S. Congress decides to extend the Iran sanctions law for a ten-year period.

## **2017–2021. The U.S. Unravels the Deal**

### **2017**

**May 19** – Iranian President Hassan Rouhani is elected for a second term.

**October 17** – Trump announced his decision to disavow the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, saying Tehran is not living up to the spirit of the accord.

### **2018**

**January 4** – U.S. announces sanctions against five Iranian companies allegedly involved in developments on Iran's ballistic missile programme.

**March** – Trump fires Secretary of State Rex Tillerson over disagreement over JCPOA and appoints militarist advocate John Bolton as national security adviser.

**May 8** – Trump announces U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA.

**June** – Iran announced to the IAEA that it was resuming uranium enrichment, increasing its capacity to produce UF<sub>6</sub> and launching production of enrichment centrifuges. Iran also threatened to return to enriching uranium to 20% if European countries rejected the JCPOA.

**August 7** – U.S. President Donald Trump imposed the first round of sanctions against Iran, targeted aviation and auto industry, as well as Iranian currency and some other Iranian products.

**November 5** – The second round of U.S. sanctions against Iran. The sanctions list included over 700 individuals and entities in the oil, banking and transport sectors. The U.S. refused to purchase oil from Iran.

The U.S. removed from sanctions the Bushehr nuclear power plant, where Russia is building a second unit.

## 2019

**March** – U.S. expands list of sanctioned companies, recognises Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as terrorist organisation.

**June 20** – Trump approved a strike on Iran in response to a downed U.S. drone, but reversed the decision at the last minute.

**December 31** – The U.S. accused Iran of attacking the U.S. embassy in Iraq after the U.S. struck three Hezbollah sites.

## 2020

**January 3** – Major General Qasem Suleimani, commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps` (IRGC) elite al-Quds unit, is killed in Baghdad in U.S. strikes.

The U.S. embassy has advised Americans to leave Iraq.

The U.S. began moving more than 4,000 troops to the Middle East.

**January 5** – Iraq`s parliament demanded the withdrawal of U.S. troops.

**January 8** – An American airbase in Iraq came under fire from Iran.

**January 14** – The euro-troika launches a snapback as part of a dispute resolution mechanism on the JCPOA and UNSCR 2231.

**January 31** – U.S. Treasury Department imposes sanctions on Iran`s Atomic Energy Organisation.

**July** – An explosion and fire at the Natanz nuclear facility, for which Israel is blamed. There were also allegedly explosions at sites near Tehran.

**August 6** – Elliot Abrams is appointed U.S. Special Representative for Iran.

**August 14** – UN SC vote on the U.S. resolution to extend arms embargo against Iran. Results: two votes against (Russia and China), 11 UN SC members abstained, and only the U.S. and the Dominican Republic supported the resolution.

On the same day, Putin proposed an online summit on the problems of implementing the JCPOA, but his proposal was not supported by the U.S.



**August 20** – U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo wrote to the UN Security Council to initiate a dispute resolution mechanism under Resolution 2231 (in the absence of a decision to the contrary, sanctions against Iran were to be renewed after 30 days).

**September 1** – Joint JCPOA Commission meeting in Vienna, initiated by Russia, to discuss legality of launching a U.S. snapback mechanism.

**September 19–21** – U.S. threatens to those who would lift sanctions against Iran and not support snapback.

**October 18** – Arms embargo against Iran under JCPOA expires.

**November 27** – Assassination of Iranian nuclear physicist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh.

**November 28** – Iran blames Israel for the assassination.

**December 1** – The Iran`s Parliament approves the draft ‘Strategic Measures to Remove Sanctions’, which includes abandoning the IAEA Additional Protocol as well as increasing uranium enrichment levels.

**December 9** – Iran`s president reiterated that a return to the original JCPOA was possible without any negotiations.

**December 16** – Online meeting of the JCPOA Joint Commission and discussion of ways to revive the nuclear deal.

## 2021

**January 5** – Iran has enriched uranium to 20 % at the Fordow nuclear facility.

**February 18** – The United States has notified the United Nations that it is withdrawing a request from the administration of former President Donald Trump to renew sanctions against Iran.

**February 21** – The Biden administration announced its readiness to negotiate with Iran.

**February 22** – The IAEA and Iran have agreed to continue verification activities.

**February 23** – Iran suspends the implementation of the Additional Protocol.

**March 5** – Biden extended the sanctions regime against Iran for a year: restrictions are extended until March 15, 2022.

**March 9** – Iran has started enriching uranium using new-generation IR-2M centrifuges.

**April 2** – Meeting of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) Commission

**April 11** – In the Iranian city of Natanz, an accident occurred in the distribution grid at the Shahid Ahmadi Roshan nuclear facility.

**April 13** – The Iranian Foreign Ministry announced the start of uranium enrichment to 60 % from April 14. At the same time, Tehran plans to install 1 thousand new centrifuges. Iran called the enrichment of uranium to 60% in response to Israel`s actions.

**May 24** – Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have agreed to extend the temporary technical agreement on monitoring at the country`s nuclear facilities until June 24.

*Compiled by Maria Bondareva, Anna Lashina*

## CHAPTER 7

# EXCHANGES ON ESTABLISHMENT OF A ZONE FREE OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

*Natalia Artemenkova*

In the absence of superpower support, any nuclear-weapon-free zone initiative – including the one in the Middle East – is unlikely to prove successful.

*Dr. Mahmoud Karem*

Former Ambassador of the Arab Republic of  
Egypt to Belgium

### Introduction

The 2015 NPT Review Conference (RevCon) is thought to have ended without a consensus final document in large part due to the inability of States parties to the NPT, *inter alia*, Russia and the United States, to resolve their differences over the Middle East. The first warning sign of the disagreement became evident in late November 2012, when Russia and the United States, the co-sponsors of the 1995 Middle East resolution and co-conveners of the Conference, separately announced the decision to postpone the conference.<sup>1</sup> While Russia in its statement highlighted that the new dates for the Conference should be fixed as soon as possible, the United States did not mention any new deadlines, citing the lack of agreement by participating states on 'acceptable conditions' for the conference. Notwithstanding this gap, both Moscow and Washington have repeatedly reiterated

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<sup>1</sup> For the statement on behalf of the Russian Federation, see Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (2012) 'Press Statement on the 2012 Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Weapons of Mass Destruction,' available at [http://www.mid.ru/foreign\\_policy/international\\_safety/disarmament/-/asset\\_publisher/rpOfiUBmANaH/content/id/133378](http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/international_safety/disarmament/-/asset_publisher/rpOfiUBmANaH/content/id/133378) (19 May, 2021). For the statement on behalf of the United States, see U.S. Department of State, Office of the Spokesperson (2012), available at (accessed 22/1/2018).<https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2012/11/200987.htm> (19 May, 2021).

their commitment to establishing a weapon-of-mass-destruction-free zone (WMDFZ) in the Middle East.

Yet lack of progress on this issue may have damaging implications for the NPT regime at large. In preparation for the 10<sup>th</sup> NPT RevCon, one should be mindful that 'without a commitment to move towards a nuclear-weapons-free Middle East, there would not have been an indefinite extension of the NPT'.<sup>2</sup>

To secure a positive outcome of the 10<sup>th</sup> RevCon, both Russia and the United States will have to address the Middle East issue, and deal with the strong sentiment of dissatisfaction among several Middle Eastern states.<sup>3</sup> As the next RevCon approaches, it is important to look back at the history of the U.S.-Russian dialogue on the WMDFZ in the Middle East, which may offer important lessons about the incentives and obstacles to cooperation.

This chapter seeks to revisit the examples of the U.S.-Russian dialogue on the zone through the analysis of the incentives and obstacles to cooperation on the NPT, the specific dimensions of U.S.-Russian cooperation, and the factors contributing to successful cooperation.<sup>4</sup> Given these parameters, the following paper first focuses on RevCons that bore fruit, and then briefly discusses what went wrong at less productive conferences.

## Ideas on the Establishment of a Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone in the Middle East

Surprisingly, the first idea to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone (NWFZ) in the Middle East was put forward by the Soviet Union. On January 21, 1958, the Telegraph Agency of the *Soviet Union* (TASS)

<sup>2</sup> Orlov, Vladimir A. (2011) 'A Nuclear-Weapon-Free Middle East: Looking for Solutions'. International Affairs, available at [http://www.pircenter.org/kosdata/page\\_doc/p2533\\_1.pdf](http://www.pircenter.org/kosdata/page_doc/p2533_1.pdf) (19 May, 2021).

<sup>3</sup> Duarte, Sérgio (2018) 'Unmet Promise: The Challenges Awaiting the 2020 NPT Review Conference,' Arms Control Association, available at <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2018-11/features/unmet-promise-challenges-awaiting-2020-npt-review-conference> (19 May, 2021).

<sup>4</sup> These parameters of examining U.S.-Russian cooperation follow the analytical framework suggested by Dr. Lewis A. Dunn, for more see Dunn, Lewis A. (2016) 'Three NPT Snapshots – and Some Lessons and Implications for Rebuilding U.S.-Russian Cooperation' (U.S.-Russian Dialogue on the NPT Review Process: Lessons Learned (1970 – 2015) and Steps Ahead (2016-2020), Geneva, Switzerland, 2016), available at <http://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/13/148113159450.pdf> (19 May, 2021).

published a proposal to create in the Middle East 'an area free of nuclear and rocket bases'.<sup>5</sup> The initiative also endorsed the establishment of 'a zone of good neighborliness and friendly cooperation between states' in the Middle and Near East.<sup>6</sup> However, these ideas did not receive broad support, mostly due to the fact that Washington considered them a political bluff designed to 'weaken the military capabilities of the United States and its allies'.<sup>7</sup>

Sixteen years after the Soviet proposal, and two Arab-Israeli wars, Iran came up with a similar initiative to free the Middle East from nuclear weapons, which opened formal international discussions in 1974. As a result, in the same year, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution 'Establishment of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the Region of the Middle East' presented by Egypt and Iran.<sup>8</sup> 128 countries voted in favour, including the Soviet Union and the United States, while only Israel and Burma abstained.

From 1974 to 1990, the issue of a NWFZ in the Middle East was part of the UN agenda. During the first four NPT RevCons (1975–1990), the NWFZ in the Middle East played a marginal role. Notwithstanding this fact, Arab parties always articulated their misgivings about imbalances in the Middle East with regard to nuclear capabilities. Yet this was not a significant item on the agenda, unlike disarmament. This changed decisively at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference (NPTREC).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Bloomfield, Lincoln P.; Clemens, Walter C.; Griffiths, Franklyn (1965) Soviet Interests in Arms Control and Disarmament. The Decade Under Khrushchev 1954–1964. Report, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, available at <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/18623846.pdf> (19 May, 2021).

<sup>6</sup> Orlov, Vladimir A. (2011) 'A Nuclear-Weapon-Free Middle East: Looking for Solutions,' *International Affairs*.

<sup>7</sup> CIA: Directorate of Intelligence (1984) 'Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zones: Proposals and Prospects,' A Research Paper, Declassified in Part, p.4, available at <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP84S00895R000200070004-8.pdf> (19 May, 2021).

<sup>8</sup> Karem, Mahmoud (1988) *A Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East: Problems and Prospects*, New York: Greenwood Press, p. 93.

<sup>9</sup> Müller, Harald (2014) 'The NPT Review Conferences,' *The Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime at a Crossroads*, Institute for National Security Studies, JSTOR, available at <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep08978.5> (19 May, 2021).

## 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference

### *Incentives and Obstacles to Cooperation*

Both Russia and the United States had a serious common interest in the NPT and its indefinite extension. Moreover, this interest was reinforced by 'a sense of responsibility for a Treaty that they had jointly played leading roles in creating'.<sup>10</sup>

Speaking on the tasks for his delegation, Ambassador Grigory Berdennikov stated, 'the instructions were to work for the indefinite extension'.<sup>11</sup> Washington was instructed likewise. Besides, there was an agreement between the five [nuclear weapon states] to push for an indefinite extension.

However, one of the obstacles to indefinite extension by consensus was the position of Egypt and other members of the Arab League that tabled a draft resolution calling for Israel's immediate accession to the NPT and the IAEA safeguards. Egypt took a tough stance, with Amre Mousa saying that the NPT cannot ensure the security of his country until Israel remains *outside* the Treaty.<sup>12</sup>

### *Dimensions of U.S.-Russian Cooperation*

The United States and Egypt as the key protagonists started drafting a mutually acceptable text on the Middle East. In this regard, Amb. Berdennikov said, 'We thought, there was no problem with the side agreements. After all, we voted at the UN for the Middle East NWFZ resolution year after year before the conference'.<sup>13</sup> While Egypt sought to explicitly name the non-Parties to the NPT in the Middle East, including Israel, the United States could not accept that. Besides, Egypt proposed that the nuclear powers should give special guarantees to the Arab countries in the region. This proposal was not acceptable for both Moscow and Washington. Eventually, the language was changed to urge 'all States of the Middle East that

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Conversation by author with Grigory Berdennikov on February 26, 2019.

<sup>12</sup> Orlov, Vladimir A. (1997) 'Perspektivy međunarodnogo režima nerasprostranjenja jadernogo oružija vo vtoroj polovine 90-h godov i Konferencija 1995 goda po prodleniju Dogovora o nerasprostranjenii jadernogo oružija' [Prospects of International Nonproliferation Regime in the second half of the 1990s and 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference], Moscow State University of International Relations.

<sup>13</sup> Conversation by author with Grigory Berdennikov on February 26, 2019.

have not yet done so' to join the NPT. Given the change of language, Egypt and the other Arab states indicated that they would accept the resolution if someone else sponsored it.

Conference President Ambassador Jayantha Dhanapala suggested that the resolution could be sponsored by the three NPT depositaries. Washington sought and received the support of the two other NPT depositaries — the United Kingdom and the Russian Federation — as co-sponsors.<sup>14</sup> Then it also took some time to finalize the language between the three states. Continuing consultations among the three depositaries were characterized by 'real conversations among equal states joined in this responsibility to do Indefinite NPT Extension'.<sup>15</sup> As Dr. Lewis Dunn said, 'In the closing negotiations over the Resolution on the Middle East, U.S.-Russian cooperation was critical — and proved absolutely essential to achieving consensus indefinite extension without a vote'. Ambassador Sergei Kislyak said, 'the 1995 NPTREC serves as a remarkable example of a good partnership between Russia and the United States, how both countries can interact when they have a common interest'.<sup>16</sup>

Russia and the United States also met additional two times a week at the meetings of the Five, as countries lobbied for the indefinite extension and exchanged the results.

Regarding the 1995 NPTREC, Sergey Kislyak, the Deputy Head of the Russian delegation said,

We could hardly accept the approach whereby the extension of the NPT was being made conditional on this or another state joining the treaty. At the same time, we share another approach: first we agree to extend the NPT, in everyone's interests, and then on this basis, we work to make sure all the remaining states become involved. My impression is that almost all the Arab countries are quite happy with the resolution we have passed. In the end, the decision to extend

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<sup>14</sup> Rauf, Tariq (2000) 'The 2000 NPT Review Conference,' *The Nonproliferation Review* 7, no. 1: P. 146–61, available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/10736700008436802> (19 May, 2021).

<sup>15</sup> Dunn, Lewis A. (2016) 'Three NPT Snapshots — and Some Lessons and Implications for Rebuilding U.S.-Russian Cooperation,' *U.S.-Russian Dialogue on the NPT Review Process: Lessons Learned (1970-2015) and Steps Ahead (2016–2020)*, Geneva, Switzerland, available at <http://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/13/14813159450.pdf> (19 May, 2021).

<sup>16</sup> Conversation by author with Sergei Kislyak on March 27, 2019.

**Amb. Roland Timerbaev on the WMDFZ in the Middle East:**

I think it was a great error for the United States to allow Israel to become an unofficial nuclear-weapon state. U.S. President Richard Nixon and Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir had a one-on-one conversation in September 1969. There was virtually no one else in the room, so the meeting notes were taken by Nixon himself. These notes will probably never be made available to the general public. But as I understand it, the gist of the conversation was that the Americans agreed to Israel developing its own nuclear weapons on [the] condition that Tel Aviv would always officially deny its possession of such weapons in the international arena. In the end, that is exactly how it happened. Apparently, the Americans would not have been able to secure a ratification of the NPT if they had not agreed to this. The situation with the Israeli nuclear arsenal hinders non-proliferation progress in the Middle East. It also remains the most problematic issue in terms of the decisions taken by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference; no progress has been made at all on that front.



the NPT indefinitely gave us an additional instrument in our dealings with the countries that remain outside the treaty. Now they will not be able to raise some hypothetical scenarios that were possible before the NPT was extended indefinitely.<sup>17</sup>

Likewise, Amb. Berdennikov described that the co-sponsors worked 'on the resolution on the Middle East very arduously, especially during the last days. It turned out that for some countries, especially from the Middle East, that it was — I would not use the

<sup>17</sup> Trushkin, Ivan (2011) 'WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East: From Ideas to Reality,' Security Index: A Russian Journal on International Security 17, no. 4: P. 55 – 68, available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/19934270.2011.609731> (19 May, 2021).



word "a condition," but very desirable — that such a resolution would be adopted so that they would be able to go along with the rest of the package. So, we tried our best and succeeded, and that was very gratifying'.<sup>18</sup> The representative of the U.S. delegation, the Honorable Lawrence Scheinman, Assistant Director, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, announced, 'We all won. This is a Treaty for everybody... We think this Treaty will be all the more enhanced if every state in the world is party to [it]. The indefinite extension of this Treaty has really enhanced international security, regional security, and the security of states in various localities'.<sup>19</sup>

### *Factors Contributing to Successful Cooperation*

In his study, Dr. Dunn explores the factors that contributed to the U.S.-Russian cooperation in 1995: broad U.S.-Russia political-military relationship, institutions, and people.

First, the U.S.-Russia political-military relationship was stable in the mid-1990s, for example, the 'Soviet Nuclear Threat Reduction Act' and START I entered into force, the Megatons to Megawatts Program was initiated, START II and the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances were signed. From a more specific WMD/FZ focus, the United States and the Russian Federation took a leading role in organizing Arms Control and Regional Security (ACRS) working group events from 1992 to 1995.<sup>20</sup>

Second, institutional support for nonproliferation and the NPT remained strong both in Moscow and Washington. It was a shared strategic interest in sustaining and strengthening the NPT.

Finally, Dr. Dunn writes about 'robust professional relationships' that had been developed between key U.S. and Russian diplomats, Thomas Graham and Sergei Kislyak. In 1995, the personal relationships between Russia's President Yeltsin and U.S. President Clinton seemed also good (see Chapter 13 for more detail). It is known that

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<sup>18</sup> Welsh, Susan B. (1995) 'Delegate Perspectives on the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference,' *The Nonproliferation Review* 2, no. 3: P. 1–24, available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/10736709508436589> (19 May, 2021).

<sup>19</sup> Welsh, Susan B. (1995) 'Delegate Perspectives on the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference,' *The Nonproliferation Review* 2, no. 3: P. 1–24, available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/10736709508436589> (19 May, 2021).

<sup>20</sup> Yaffee, Michael D. (2001) 'Promoting Arms Control and Regional Security in the Middle East,' *Disarmament Forum*, P. 17, available at [https://www.peacepalace.library.nl/ebooks/files/UNIDIR\\_pdf-art67.pdf](https://www.peacepalace.library.nl/ebooks/files/UNIDIR_pdf-art67.pdf) (19 May, 2021).

in Moscow, January 12–15, 1994, Clinton and Yeltsin discussed measures on cooperation in preventing nuclear proliferation, and the situation in the Middle East.<sup>21</sup> Both Presidents appealed to the Conference to make the NPT permanent. Thomas Countryman, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Nonproliferation, believes that one of the factors for the successful 1995 NPTREC and the adoption of the Middle East resolution was Clinton's personal desire to reach consensus on NPT's indefinite extension.<sup>22</sup>

## 2000 NPT Review Conference

In this section the results of the 2000 NPT RevCon are omitted, as there were few steps forward regarding the Middle East resolution. In the general debate during the conference, neither Moscow nor Washington addressed the issue of the MEWMDFZ, yet both states expressed dissatisfaction with Iraq's implementation of the safeguards agreement with the IAEA. By 2000, the United Arab Emirates, Djibouti and Oman acceded to the NPT, which meant that all Middle Eastern states became parties to the Treaty, with the exception of Israel. The states of the Arab League wanted Israel to be called upon by name to accede to the NPT. As a result, Israel was named in the part of regional issues of the Final Document.<sup>23</sup> This step could be regarded as a manifestation of Moscow's and Washington's continuing efforts on the universalization of the NPT. Though the decision on including this language was much dependent on the U.S., Thomas Countryman said that the final document was adopted because President Clinton wanted to have a successful conference although there was no pressure for the extension of the Treaty.

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<sup>21</sup> U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian (2000) 'Chronology of U.S.-Russia Summits, 1992 – 2000,' available at [https://1997-2001.state.gov/regions/nis/chron\\_summits\\_russia\\_us.html](https://1997-2001.state.gov/regions/nis/chron_summits_russia_us.html) (19 May, 2021).

<sup>22</sup> Conversation by author with Thomas Countryman on March 22, 2019.

<sup>23</sup> Simpson, John; Elbahtimy, Hassan, eds. (2018) NPT Briefing Book, 2018 Edition, James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey; King's College London, available at <https://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/npt-briefing-book-2018.pdf> (19 May, 2021).

## 2010 NPT Review Conference, Glion and Geneva

### *Incentives and Obstacles to Cooperation*

President Obama's speech in Prague carried a political message that would be important for both the U.S.-Russia strategic relations and for the 2010 NPT RevCon. Negotiations on the New START and the U.S. plans to submit the CTBT to the Senate for ratification provided another significant incentive for cooperation. A desire to avoid successive failure of the RevCon also played a role.

In the run-up to the 2010 NPT RevCon, Russia and the United States, along with other Middle East Quartet mediators, sought to promote the negotiating process in the Middle East. However, the security environment in the region remained unstable. In response to the Iranian nuclear program in 2006, Russia and the United States interacted in the P5+1 format. Besides, both countries voted in favor of several UN Security Council Resolutions requiring Iran to suspend its enrichment program and verify its compliance with the IAEA Board of Governor's requirements. Despite this unanimity in the Security Council, Moscow and Washington were split on the issues of U.S. missile defense (MD) that included sites in Poland and the Czech Republic and, to a lesser extent, of Russia's S-300 contract with Iran.<sup>24</sup>

In 2009, during the preparation for the upcoming NPT RevCon, Russia came up with a number of initiatives for the region, for instance, it encouraged all states in the region to accede to the CTBT, and to abandon the creation and development of sensitive elements of the nuclear fuel cycle (NFC).<sup>25</sup> Besides, Russia also stated that it supports holding a conference to 'consider the prospects' for implementing all aspects of the resolution, but would like such a conference to address all WMD.<sup>26</sup> These ideas and approaches helped rein-vigorate the discussion.

<sup>24</sup> Wikileaks Public Library of U.S. Diplomacy (2009) 'Fm Lavrov Discusses Missile Defense and Iran with Codel Levin,' Russia, Moscow, available at [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09MOSCOW1111\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09MOSCOW1111_a.html) (19 May, 2021).

<sup>25</sup> Orlov, Vladimir A. (2011) 'A Nuclear-Weapon-Free Middle East: Looking for Solutions,' International Affairs, available at [http://www.pircenter.org/kosdata/page\\_doc/p2533\\_1.pdf](http://www.pircenter.org/kosdata/page_doc/p2533_1.pdf) (19 May, 2021).

<sup>26</sup> Kerr, Paul K.; Nikitin, Mary Beth (2010) '2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference: Key Issues and Implications,' in Congressional Research Service, p. 33, available at <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/nuke/R41216.pdf> (19 May, 2021).

### *Dimensions of U.S.-Russian Cooperation*

There were reasons for optimism regarding the upcoming 2010 RevCon. Senior American and Russian diplomats interacted on a regular basis, and the issue of the WMDFZ in the Middle East was top of their agendas. For instance, the issue of Iran was discussed at the meetings between Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and U.S. senators, headed by Carl Levin, the Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. During one of their talks, Lavrov commended the new U.S. approach to Iran, welcoming President Obama's readiness to engage in talks with Iran. 'Senator Levin said that Russia had taken a practical and pragmatic step with the suspension of the sale of S-300 missiles to Iran. This helped make Israel less nervous, and sent a message to Iran that the U.S. and Russia were working more closely together on Iran issues'.<sup>27</sup>

The U.S.-Russia Binational Commission's Arms Control and International Security Working Group opened up another opportunity for dialogue. In this context, Ellen Tauscher, then Under Secretary for Arms Control, discussed a Middle East WMDFZ with Sergey Ryabkov, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister. Speaking on the Middle East Resolution, Ryabkov said it would be destructive for the NPT regime if there was no progress on this issue and suggested holding another P5 discussion. Ryabkov restated Russia's position that 'all states in the region should be in compliance with the NPT, all states should accede to the NPT, and all nuclear facilities should be under safeguards'. Tauscher said 'the U.S. was working closely with Egypt to find a way forward. The U.S. would support approaches at the RevCon that were consultative, positive, and which did not cause participants to take sides'.<sup>28</sup>

While negotiating a New START, both countries spent some time exchanging their views on the Middle East. For instance, Undersecretary for Arms Control and International Security. Tauscher shared the results of her talks with Egypt with Ambassador Anatoly Antonov. Tauscher said she wanted to find a consensus language regard-

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<sup>27</sup> Wikileaks Public Library of U.S. Diplomacy (2009) 'Fm Lavrov Discusses Missile Defense and Iran with Codel Levin,' Russia, Moscow, available at [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09MOSCOW1111\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09MOSCOW1111_a.html) (19 May, 2021).

<sup>28</sup> Wikileaks Public Library of U.S. Diplomacy (2009) 'U.S.-Russia Arms Control and International Security Working Group Meeting, Moscow, October 12,' Russia, Moscow, available at [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09MOSCOW2696\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09MOSCOW2696_a.html) (19 May, 2021).

ing the WMDFZ in the Middle East, 'in a way that provided them [the Egyptians] with a political benefit but was not harmful to Israel. With regard to determining the language on a Middle East nuclear-weapons-free zone, she said her Egyptian counterpart agreed that technical teams would meet soon to discuss and resolve the issue'.<sup>29</sup> Antonov said he was sure that Russia had the same goals as the U.S. for the RevCon and that he wanted a unified P5 position. Tauscher agreed and said a unified statement would be characteristic of our new relationship with Russia. Additionally, Antonov emphasized that it was better to be unified on a sensitive issue like the Middle East, suggesting the U.S. have a closer look at Russia's proposal from the third session of the PrepCom. In the 2009 PrepCom, Russia tabled the list of ideas on how to get away from merely repeating slogans such as 'we support the 1995 resolution' and put forward concrete action: 'to hold an international conference or a meeting involving all the parties concerned to consider the prospects of implementing the Resolution on the Middle East,' and to appoint 'a special coordinator authorized to hold consultations on this issue with countries in the region and make a report about the progress of this work during the review process'.<sup>30</sup> Antonov added that Russia does not want to isolate Israel.

Several months later, Philip Gordon, then U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, said that 'Russia has been a useful peace process partner, playing a positive role in the Quartet, and reinforcing U.S. messages in the region'. He acknowledged that both countries had different views on their engagement with Hamas, Damascus, and Tehran. Assistant Secretary Gordon added that 'Russia's improved relations with Israel, with whom it now has a visa-free regime and a vigorous strategic dialogue, which has moved Moscow beyond its reflexively pro-Arab stance of Soviet days'.<sup>31</sup>

Amb. Berdennikov recognizes that the negotiations on the WMDFZ between Russia and the United States, as well as within the P5, have

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<sup>29</sup> Wikileaks Public Library of U.S. Diplomacy (2009) 'Start Follow-on Negotiations, Geneva: Tauscher Meeting with Russian Start Head of Delegation Antonov, December 9, 2009,' Switzerland U.S. Mission in Switzerland, available at [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09GENEVA1203\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09GENEVA1203_a.html) (20 May, 2021).

<sup>30</sup> 'Statement by the Russian Delegation at the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review Conference' (2009), New York, available at [http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom09/statements/8MayME\\_Russia.pdf](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom09/statements/8MayME_Russia.pdf) (19 May, 2021).

<sup>31</sup> Wikileaks Public Library of U.S. Diplomacy (2009) 'Scenesetter for Visit of Assistant Secretary Gordon,' Russia Moscow, available at [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09MOSCOW2298\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09MOSCOW2298_a.html) (19 May, 2021).

never been more intensive than in the run-up to the 2010 RevCon. Despite the agreed position among the P5 that 'Egypt must be offered something in this review cycle,'<sup>32</sup> Thomas Countryman said that the talks with the Egyptians at the 2010 NPT RevCon were tough, but a good compromise was reached.<sup>33</sup> Dr. Chen Kane believes that there was the U.S.-Egyptian agreement intended to facilitate a consensus text for the 2010 NPT RevCon. According to the agreement, Egypt was to get 'Iran to agree on the consensus document in exchange for the United States promising to launch the 2012 conference'.<sup>34</sup>

Despite the fact that the United States gave Israel regular updates on the negotiations, Israel was outraged by the Final Document that had been adopted by the 2010 NPT RevCon on a regional process.

According to Dr. Bernd Kubbig, the 2010 NPT Final Document required compromises by all leading actors, including Cairo, Tehran, and Washington, yet for the Israeli government, 'the Helsinki Mandate was born in sin'.<sup>35</sup> After the Final Document was agreed upon, Israel made a statement: 'As a non-signatory state of the NPT, Israel is not obligated by the decisions of this conference, which has no authority over Israel. [...] Given the distorted nature of this resolution, Israel will not be able to take part in its implementation'.

## The 2012 Conference and the Informal Multilateral Consultation Process

### *Incentives and Obstacles to Cooperation*

Speaking at the PIR Center seminar on the 2012 Conference, leading Russian and the U.S. diplomats reaffirmed that they stand by their commitment to convene the conference. Nevertheless, both states

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<sup>32</sup> Wikileaks Public Library of U.S. Diplomacy (2009) 'Discussed at P-5 Lunch in New York' United Nations (New York), available at . (20 May, 2021).

<sup>33</sup> Conversation by author with Thomas Countryman on March 22, 2019.

<sup>34</sup> Kane, Chen (2012) 'Bad Timing but Still Some Hope,' in The 2012 Conference on a Weapons of Mass Destruction-Free Zone in the Middle East, James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, available at [https://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/120731\\_mideast\\_wmdfz\\_conf\\_roundtable.pdf](https://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/120731_mideast_wmdfz_conf_roundtable.pdf) (20 May, 2021).

<sup>35</sup> Kubbig, Bernd W.; Weidlich, Christian (2015) 'A WMD/DVs Free Zone For The Middle East. Taking Stock, Moving Forward Towards Cooperative Security,' Peace Research Institute Frankfurt, Academic Peace Orchestra Middle East, Frankfurt, available at <http://academicpeaceorchestra.com/gui/user/downloads/A%20WMD-DVs%20Free%20Zone%20For%20The%20Middle%20East.pdf> (20 May, 2021).

acknowledged the challenges they were facing. Rose Gottemoeller, however, noted that 'there remain serious divisions in the region on how to start a constructive dialogue that we hope will begin in Helsinki. These divisions cannot be bridged by any means imposed from outside of the region'.<sup>36</sup> Ambassador Mikhail Ulyanov said that not all countries confirmed that they would participate in the Conference, meaning Israel and Iran.<sup>37</sup>

There are also views that neither Egypt nor the United States were ready for the 2012 Conference. For instance, then Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi had been in power for a month, while it was presidential election season in Washington.<sup>38</sup> From Israel's perspective, the conference was too closely tied to the NPT process, which could complicate efforts by Israel and Egypt to find common ground on the nuclear issue.<sup>39</sup> After Thomas Countryman was appointed as U.S. Assistant Secretary for International Security and Nonproliferation in 2011, his first task was to reconcile the U.S. President and the Israel Prime Minister.<sup>40</sup> So he tried to work out a formula to engage Israel in the Conference and start a security dialogue.

### *Dimensions of U.S.-Russian Cooperation*

The first session of the PrepCom for the 2015 NPT RevCon gave little reason for optimism. The head of the U.S. delegation, Thomas Countryman said:

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<sup>36</sup> Gottemoeller, Rose (2012) Speech at the PIR Center's International Seminar on WMD/FZ in the Middle East, available at <http://pircenter.org/en/events/1721-2012-conference-on-the-middle-east-zone-free-of-weapons-of-mass-destruction-searching-for-solutions> (10 May, 2021).

<sup>37</sup> Ulyanov, Mikhail (2012) Speech at the PIR Center's International Seminar on WMD/FZ in the Middle East, available at <http://pircenter.org/en/events/1721-2012-conference-on-the-middle-east-zone-free-of-weapons-of-mass-destruction-searching-for-solutions> (20 May, 2021).

<sup>38</sup> Kane, Chen (2012) 'Bad Timing but Still Some Hope,' in The 2012 Conference on a Weapons of Mass Destruction-Free Zone in the Middle East, James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, available at [https://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/120731\\_mideast\\_wmdfz\\_conf\\_roundtable.pdf](https://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/120731_mideast_wmdfz_conf_roundtable.pdf) (20 May, 2021).

<sup>39</sup> Kaye, Dalia Dassa (2012) 'Focus on Renewing the Regional Security Dialogue,' in The 2012 Conference on a Weapons of Mass Destruction-Free Zone in the Middle East, James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, available at [https://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/120731\\_mideast\\_wmdfz\\_conf\\_roundtable.pdf](https://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/120731_mideast_wmdfz_conf_roundtable.pdf) (20 May, 2021).

<sup>40</sup> Conversation by author with Thomas Countryman on March 22, 2019.

Just as our efforts to seek peace and security in a world without nuclear weapons will not be realized quickly, we understand that a WMD free zone in the Middle East can only be achieved once essential conditions are in place, most critically a comprehensive and durable peace and full compliance by all countries in the region with their nonproliferation obligations.[...].<sup>41</sup>

In May 2012, the co-conveners of the Conference met in Helsinki. At that meeting, Russia made a proposal to hold informal consultations between the Middle Eastern states, but this proposal, for some reason, was not accepted by the U.S. till the beginning of 2013.

In fall 2012, the agenda was not agreed upon, and the UN Secretary-General could not issue official invitations without all states in the Middle East indicating in advance their readiness to attend. Consequently, the postponement of the Middle East conference was announced, causing considerable disagreement between Russia and the United States. Thomas Countryman recalls that it was possible to convene the 2012 Conference as scheduled but without Israel. He was confident that the Conference without Israel would not bear fruit.<sup>42</sup>

Dr. Kubbig believes that in the Helsinki preparation process, both Washington and Moscow sided with the respectively opposed 'camps': Washington continued to play the role of a protector of Israel and its interests, whereas Moscow supported the proposals put forward by Egypt. Russia's position was that it had been consistently pursuing the goal of implementing its 1995 Middle East Resolution mandate.

During the 2013 PrepCom, it seemed that the gap between Russia and the United States was widening further. Thomas Countryman made it very clear that for his country an agenda 'cannot be dictated from outside the region – it must be consensual among the States who must live with the agenda'. Mikhail Ulyanov stated that it was necessary to engage in multilateral consultation with the participation of all states of the Middle East without delay. The Russian diplomat emphasized that the preparation process of the Conference

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<sup>41</sup> Kubbig, Bernd W.; Weidlich, Christian (2015) A WMD/DVs Free Zone For the Middle East. Taking Stock, Moving Forward Towards Cooperative Security, Peace Research Institute Frankfurt, Academic Peace Orchestra Middle East, Frankfurt, available at <http://academicpeaceorchestra.com/gui/user/downloads/A%20WMD-DVs%20Free%20Zone%20For%20The%20Middle%20East.pdf> (20 May, 2021).

<sup>42</sup> Conversation by author with Thomas Countryman on March 22, 2019.



should be shifted to a multilateral format, as bilateral contacts alone were not enough.<sup>43</sup>

However, new developments brought some hope. The United States and Russia acted in concert after the use of chemical weapons in Syria in August 2013, made Syria join the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), and destroyed its respective stockpile. Starting in October 2013, the conveners engaged in five rounds of multilateral consultations with regional states in informal meetings in Glion and Geneva. Thomas Countryman referred to those meetings as official enough for the Arab states and unofficial enough for Israel.

Russia had to persuade the Arab states to engage in informal negotiations in Glion, while the United States encouraged Israel to participate. During three meetings in Glion and two in Geneva a dialogue was established. However, the Arabs and the Israelis did not talk to each other directly, preferring communication through the co-conveners, yet they were able to get across what their positions were. During the second Glion meeting, Israel said that it would be ready to set a date for the Conference after the agenda and outcome document are outlined.<sup>44</sup>

Unfortunately, those favourable circumstances were not used to develop coordinated approaches. Soon, the drafting work was halted by the United States.

There are different regional views on Glion and Geneva. From an Arab point of view, it was 'restaurants, coffee shop diplomacy', where the Israeli representative reminded everyone that Israel was a non-NPT nation, and therefore was not obligated by a decision in a forum it had not acceded to. Hence, the Israeli representative refused any reference or relationship to the UN and the NPT. The Arabs wanted to hold the meetings in UN premises under a UN flag, but they were still ready to attend any meeting with terms of references that were symbiotically linked to the 2010 mandate.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> 'Statement by Mikhail Ulyanov on Convening the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and All Other Weapons of Mass Destruction and Their Means of Delivery at the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT' (2013), available at [http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom13/statements/29April\\_Russia.pdf](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom13/statements/29April_Russia.pdf) (20 May, 2021).

<sup>44</sup> Conversation by the author with senior Russian diplomats on April 3, 2019.

<sup>45</sup> Karem, Mahmoud (2014) 'The 2010 NPT ME Conference: A Historical Recount of Its Stalled Diplomatic Unfolding; and Final Outcome,' WMD and Security Forum, Amman, Jordan.

Israel engaged with the informal consultations because at that point of time they did not feel they had another choice and it could serve best their interests. The United States supported the process, despite an Israeli-U.S. agreement prior to the 2010 RevCon that there would not be a decision to establish a process, and the two governments were already at odds on other issues related to the peace process and Iran. As a result, Israel decided that there were more important issues Israel needs U.S. support for and refrained from straining U.S.-Israel relations even further. Nevertheless, the Israeli negotiator was acting under very strict instructions from Prime-Minister Netanyahu on his mandate and reported to him before and after each round. In many ways, Israel felt that it has nothing to lose by participating in the negotiations because they were informal.<sup>46</sup>

Despite these different regional perspectives, both Russia and the United States believe that the informal multilateral consultation process in Gliion and Geneva produced some progress. First, Israel and the Arab states sat together five consecutive times. Second, the working relationship between the parties was established.

### *Factors Contributing to Successful Cooperation*

First, the U.S.-Russia political-military relationship was normal in the early 2010s. Besides, there were unique channels for dialogue such as the *U.S.–Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission* and the U.S.-Russia Binational Commission's Arms Control and International Security Working Group. From a more specific WMDFZ focus, the Russian Federation and the United States interacted intensively through the P-5, P5+1, and the *Middle East Quartet*. Both countries made it clear that the Middle East was an important item on their agendas.

Second, there was a shared strategic interest in sustaining and strengthening the NPT. Moreover, both states understood the importance of the WMDFZ problématique, as it was rightly put by Ambassador Thomas Graham, Jr., who told the participants at a June 2011 conference in Washington, D.C., 'The [NPT] will stand or fall depending on how the issue of nuclear proliferation is managed in the Middle East in the coming years'.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Conversation by author with Chen Kane on April 2, 2019.

<sup>47</sup> Shaw, Douglas B. (2012) 'Middle East Nonproliferation,' *The Nonproliferation Review* 19, no. 3 : P. 357 – 63, available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/10736700.2012.734184> (20 May 2021).

Finally, personnel policy and professional relationships also contributed to cooperation. For instance, President Obama's selection of George Mitchell as the Middle East envoy showed his dedication to resolving the Iran issue diplomatically.<sup>48</sup> Sergey Ryabkov emphasized, 'We are not in a zero-sum game'. Anatoly Antonov supported the view that the P-5 must be united going into 2010 adding, 'We should forget our bilateral problems and make an agreement not to attack each other'.<sup>49</sup> Overall, this phase of U.S.-Russian interaction on the MWDFZ in the Middle East can be characterized by the words of Ambassador Antonov, 'business is business'.<sup>50</sup>

With regard to the professional relationships, it is important to highlight the efforts of PIR Center that organized a seminar on the 2012 Conference on the MEWMDZFZ in fall 2012. Senior diplomats from all relevant states attended the event and were openly sharing their opinions and concerns regarding the zone. Such kind of events represents a unique opportunity for diplomats to talk to each other in an unofficial environment, to be more open to innovative approaches offered by their colleagues or independent experts present at these meetings.

## Results of the 2005 and 2015 Review Conferences

When one analyses successful and unsuccessful NPT RevCons, the analogy of Leo Tolstoy comes to mind, 'Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way'.

The collapse of the 2005 NPT RevCon was largely attributable to Egypt's and the Arab states' frustration over the lack of progress on the 1995 Resolution and skepticism about the commitment of the co-sponsors. Though the U.S.-Russia political-military relationship was not on the level of 1995 or 2000, it was not as bad as in 2015. Thomas Countryman sees the major factor provoking the failure of the 2005

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<sup>48</sup> Guardian (2010) 'U.S. Embassy Cables: Egypt Turned down Nuclear Weapons after Collapse of Soviet Union, Washington Told,' The Guardian, sec. World news, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/us-embassy-cables-documents/206843> (20 May, 2021).

<sup>49</sup> Wikileaks Public Library of U.S. Diplomacy (2009) ' Discussed at P-5 Lunch in New York ' United Nations, New York, available at . [https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09USUNNEWYORK522\\_a.html](https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09USUNNEWYORK522_a.html) (20 May, 2021).

<sup>50</sup> Arms Control Association (2010) 'Remarks of Assistant Secretary Rose Gottemoeller at the ACA Annual Meeting,' available at . (20 May, 2021).

RevCon in the diplomatic approach of then Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, John Bolton, who was unwilling to compromise and took a hostile approach to arms control agreements that appeared to constrain America's freedom of action. The United States entered the 2005 review determined not to compromise on disarmament and to demand much stronger nonproliferation measures, including export controls, harsh penalties in case of treaty withdrawal, strong sanctions against wrongdoers, and stricter verification.<sup>51</sup>

As a result, P5 failed to issue a joint statement, mainly due to the U.S. hostility to a paragraph endorsing CTBT entry into force. The Bush administration made it clear that it had no interest in the Middle East Resolution and was complacent regarding Israel's nuclear weapons. The U.S. delegation declared that the results of the 2000 NPT RevCon were irrelevant as they had been accepted by a previous U.S. administration and therefore were not binding on the present one. This declaration constituted an unprecedented devaluation of the entire institution of review.

The United States, for instance, proclaimed, 'Today, the Treaty is facing the most serious challenge in its history due to instances of noncompliance' notably by North Korea and Iran, and by non-state actors.<sup>52</sup> It continued to say, 'Iran has made clear its determination to retain the nuclear infrastructure it secretly built in violation of its NPT safeguards obligations'.<sup>53</sup> On Iran, Russia called 'for current negotiations and consultations to provide such decisions with regard to Iran's nuclear program that would meet the country's legitimate energy needs on the one hand and dispel doubts as to the peaceful nature of its nuclear activities on the other'.

Regarding the 2015 NPT RevCon, it is believed that 'instead of maintaining traditional nuclear weapon-state solidarity, Russia sided with Arab delegations on the contentious Middle East nuclear-free-zone issue in the hope of isolating the United States and putting

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<sup>51</sup> Müller, Harald (2014) 'The NPT Review Conferences,' *The Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime at a Crossroads*, Institute for National Security Studies, JSTOR, available at <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep08978.5> (20 May, 2021).

<sup>52</sup> Johnson, Rebecca (2005) 'Politics and Protection: Why the 2005 NPT Review Conference Failed,' Acronym Institute, available at <http://www.acronym.org.uk/old/archive/textonly/dd/dd80/80npt.htm> (20 May, 2021).

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

the onus on Washington for blocking consensus'.<sup>54</sup> From the Russian perspective, Russia has always taken actions to implement the mandate of the 1995 Resolution and the 2010 Final Document. Russia has always been supportive of the idea of convening a Conference on a set date. In its turn, Moscow believes that Washington only simulates its activities regarding the Middle East Resolution. When it comes to a concrete step, for instance, to convene a Conference, they usually refrain from action.

As one can see, it has turned into an exchange of mutual accusations. However, it is important to realize that the 2015 RevCon fallout while officially was because of the Zone, was in fact a manifestation of much deeper disagreements between Russia and the United States.<sup>55</sup>

### **Study of Russian and U.S. Proposals**

For the 2017 PrepCom, Russia introduced its working paper on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.<sup>56</sup> The key points are the following:

- the mandate of the 2010 action plan is valid, and the convening of a Conference on the establishment of MEWMDFZ remains a relevant, worthwhile and achievable goal;
- all decisions on substantive matters at the Conference and within the framework of its Preparatory process should be taken on the basis of consensus;
- participation of all the States of the region without exception is desirable;
- a Conference should be held well before the 10<sup>th</sup> RevCon;
- it is advisable to devote one session of the Conference to several specific aspects of regional security.

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<sup>54</sup> Einhorn, Robert (2016) 'Prospects for U.S.-Russian Nonproliferation Cooperation,' Task Force on U.S. Policy Toward Russia, Ukraine, and Eurasia, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, available at <https://carnegieendowment.org/2016/02/26/prospects-for-u.s.-russian-nonproliferation-cooperation/iujh> (20 May, 2021).

<sup>55</sup> Potter, William C. (2016) 'The Unfulfilled Promise of the 2015 NPT Review Conference,' *Survival*, Volume 58, 58, no. 1: P. 151 – 78, available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/00396338.2016.1142144> (20 May, 2021).

<sup>56</sup> Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction (2017) 'Working Paper Submitted by the Russian Federation,' Vienna, available at <http://undocs.org/NPT/CONF.2020/PC.I/WP.31> (20 May, 2021).

At the 2018 PrepCom, the United States tabled its proposal on establishing regional conditions conducive to a Middle East free of WMD and delivery systems.<sup>57</sup> The key points are as follows:

- the United States remains convinced that the task of creating a WMD-free zone in the Middle East is fundamentally a regional task that must be pursued by the regional states concerned through direct, inclusive, and consensus-based dialogue;
- the United States would not support any proposals regarding a Middle East WMDFZ that lacked the consent of all the regional states concerned;
- discussion of the prevailing security conditions and concerns of all parties must be at the center of any meaningful dialogue on a Middle East WMD-free zone;
- the NPT review cycle cannot be the primary mechanism for progress on a Middle East WMDFZ;
- a more productive avenue for advancing the implementation of the 1995 Resolution would be for regional states to redouble their efforts, both on a voluntary basis and in dialogue with other regional states, to establish the security, political, and diplomatic conditions needed for a MEWMDFZ.

Russia and the United States are obviously split on four issues regarding the zone. First, while Russia stresses the importance of convening the Conference, the U.S. considers recommendations on the Middle East contained in the 2010 RevCon Final Document (Helsinki mandate) no longer an appropriate basis for action. Second, the countries disagree on the role of the co-sponsors in the establishment of a zone. Third, Moscow and Washington have some differences regarding agenda: WMD issues or security concerns. Though Russia agrees that regional security should be addressed, this topic cannot be at the center of a dialogue. Finally, Moscow disagrees that the NPT review process is not the most suitable format to discuss the WMDFZ issue. It reminds that the Resolution on the Middle East was adopted at the 1995 NPTREC, where the NPT was extended indefinitely.

Speaking on the U.S. reaction to the 2017 Russian working paper, Dr. Chen Kane noted that the U.S. could not support it because it

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<sup>57</sup> Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (2018) 'Working Paper Submitted by the United States of America,' Establishing Regional Conditions Conducive to a Middle East Free of Weapons of Mass Destruction and Delivery Systems, Geneva, available at <https://undocs.org/NPT/CONF.2020/PC.II/WP.33> (20 May, 2021).

represented a position that the Conference can take place outside of the region, without Israel and make decision on its behalf. The United States supported the Israeli position that the process needs to be regional in nature and not managed by the UN; that decisions need to be adopted by consensus by all regional states, with their participation.<sup>58</sup>

In fact, the Arab countries and Iran found Russia's working paper too 'pro-Israel'.<sup>59</sup> Washington dislikes the fact that the Russian proposal requires real action, rather than mere discussions. Russia believes that it is important to talk about regional security, as it is the only way to encourage Israel to participate. However, Russia's position is that neither Israel nor Washington have showed considerable interest in seriously addressing the issue of the WMDFZ in the Middle East since the 2015 RevCon.

### Preparing for the 10<sup>th</sup> NPT Review Conference

There are not so many reasons for optimism. In his remarks at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, Ambassador Antonov emphasized that the relations between Russia and the United States were in dire straits, and high-level interaction between Russian and U.S. officials was halted. Hence, Antonov was skeptical about the progress on the Middle East at the next RevCon.

Similarly, Thomas Countryman did not expect progress on the WMDFZ. He believes that at the 10<sup>th</sup> NPT RevCon there will be more 'dangers' to the NPT review process than the WMDFZ. For instance, he mentioned the fact that Russia and the United States were going in the wrong direction on disarmament.<sup>60</sup>

Sergey Kislyak was pessimistic about any breakthrough as well. He pointed out that new U.S.-Israel relations, meaning the recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, the U.S. Embassy's move to Jerusalem, missile defense system exercises, and the recognition of the Golan Heights, could only harm the regional stability and peace. Hence, it was clear the Trump administration would not push Israel to any steps towards the WMDFZ.<sup>61</sup>

Grigory Berdennikov thought that the consensus language on the WMDFZ can be reached, containing solely words and intentions, but no real actions.

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<sup>58</sup> Conversation by author with Chen Kane on April 2, 2019.

<sup>59</sup> Conversation by the author with Russian diplomats on April 4, 2019.

<sup>60</sup> Conversation by author with Thomas Countryman on March 22, 2019.

<sup>61</sup> Conversation by author with Sergey Kislyak on March 27, 2019.

Chen Kane believed that at times when the United States and Russia found it necessary to cooperate, they managed to insulate specific topics and work on them together. But those were issues that were important to both countries, like Syrian chemical weapons. While Russia wanted to protect President Assad against a U.S. attack, the United States was satisfied with a disarmament success without the need to employ its military. However, the WMDFZ issue is not a top priority for either country and given it is not a top priority for any of the relevant Middle Eastern countries (Egypt, Israel, or Iran), 'the U.S. and Russia will not "waste" political and diplomatic capital more than needed to do the minimum needed as NPT depository states'.<sup>62</sup>

Finally, Ambassador Mikhail Ulyanov supposed that since 2015 the only decision to advance a Middle East WMDFZ was the UN General Assembly decision to entrust to the Secretary-General the convening, no later than 2019, of a conference on establishing a zone. Though Ambassador Ulyanov did not find this option optimal, as it does not ensure the participation of the United States and Israel, this decision helped move from words to actions. Ambassador Ulyanov expected the debate on the MWDFZ at the 10<sup>th</sup> RevCon to be less fierce because the conference under the UN umbrella was held, so the process of implementing the 1995 and 2010 mandates was launched.

Speaking at a VCDNP seminar in Vienna, Dr. Bernd W. Kubbig stated that the UN GA decision 'aims at taking the controversial WMD issue out of the NPT framework in order to save the NPT Process and the NPT RevCon'.<sup>63</sup> Thomas Countryman believed that the 2019 Conference without the United States and Israel was a 'PR' show for some delegations. Or the U.S. delegation can be unwilling to address the WMDFZ at the 10th RevCon citing the UN GA decision.

Having identified the examples of successful interactions and obstacles, it is possible to offer some recommendations.

1. It is certain that the Middle East will not be free of WMD until a serious and concerted effort is begun.<sup>64</sup> In this regard, the three conveners may be required to make the establishment of a WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East a higher priority on their

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<sup>62</sup> Conversation by author with Chen Kane on April 2, 2019.

<sup>63</sup> Finaud, Marc; Kubbig, Bernd W. (2018) 'Cooperative Ideas: Overcoming the Stalemate on a WMD Free Zone in the Middle East,' VCDNP, available at <https://vcdnp.org/cooperative-ideas-overcoming-the-stalemate-on-a-wmd-free-zone-in-the-middle-east/> (20 May, 2021).

<sup>64</sup> Lewis, Patricia; Potter, William C. (2011) 'The Long Journey Toward a WMD-Free Middle East,' *Arms Control Today* 41, no. 7: P. 8–14, available at <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23629110> (20 May, 2021).



foreign policy agendas and to demonstrate greater willingness to cooperate in its preparation. For instance, despite the differences between Russia and the United States, they can agree to establish a relevant mechanism, regional seminars, or several working groups to launch the parallel process on disarmament and peace in the Middle East. The new process can build on the experience of the ACRS talks, but the major focus should be equally given to WMD and security issues.

2. The Middle Eastern states should view the concept of a zone as a serious disarmament proposal. They should not wait for reciprocity. Instead, they should demonstrate their strong interest in a zone through no-first use declarations with regard to both WMD and missiles, ratification of the CTBT, the BWC or the CWC, as well as support for the Additional Protocol to the Safeguards Agreements. It is clear that the regional states will remain the major players in efforts to overcome the stalemate. Hence, it is advisable to become compromise-oriented, more flexible and exercise a higher level of patient, medium- and long-term thinking.<sup>65</sup>
3. Unless either Israel or the United States participate in the subsequent conferences on the MEWMDFZ, it is not worth drafting a MEWMDFZ treaty.
4. To reach a consensus language on the MEWMDFZ at the 10<sup>th</sup> RevCon, it is recommended that the Conference President ask Egypt and the United States to start discussions on the Middle East from the first day of the Conference. Neither Egypt nor the United States are likely to endorse this suggestion, but the 2015 NPT RevCon showed that this subject, when addressed in a hurry, can kill the consensus.<sup>66</sup>

These ideas do not present an exhaustive list, but rather a collection of measures that could contribute to progress on a MEWMDFZ.

Revisiting the factors that contributed to the U.S.-Russia dialogue on the MEWMDFZ in 1995 and 2010, one should say that

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<sup>65</sup> Kubbig, Bernd W.; Weidlich, Christian (2015) A WMD/DVs Free Zone For The Middle East. Taking Stock, Moving Forward Towards Cooperative Security, Peace Research Institute Frankfurt, Academic Peace Orchestra Middle East, Frankfurt, <http://academicpeaceorchestra.com/gui/user/downloads/A%20WMD-DVs%20Free%20Zone%20For%20The%20Middle%20East.pdf> (20 May, 2021).

<sup>66</sup> Conversation by author with Thomas Countryman on March 22, 2019.

there is only one left, which is a strong interest in the international nonproliferation regime. The political-military relationship is at its lowest level. One cannot currently commend the robust professional relationships, as the majority of bilateral consultations were halted. Nevertheless, the history of the U.S.-Russia interaction shows that the countries can shelve their disagreements in the interest to strengthen the NPT. It remains to be seen what results will be achieved and at the next NPT RevCon.

It should be noted that the UN-facilitated conference on the establishment of a WMDFZ in the Middle East held in November 2019 in New York did not introduce greater clarity into the issue. On the one hand, the November 2019 Conference turned out to be more successful than anyone could expect in the beginning. The conference marked the beginning of a practical implementation of the 1995 Resolution, and it got broad participation of regional states and four nuclear weapon powers. Besides, the negotiations revealed the complementarity of the two forums, namely NPT Review Conferences and UN machinery, for WMDFZ discussions. On the other hand, the U.S. and Israel did not participate, and there is little reason to believe that Israel and the U.S. will change their attitudes to the process that kicked off in the framework of the UN. Additionally, the two states are known to put in considerable effort to dissuade some countries from taking part in the Conference, thus undermining this international enterprise. Moreover, the disagreements between the main groups of players (the League of Arab States on the one hand, and Israel together with the United States on the other) remain unresolved. Despite the unfavorable international situation and skepticism, and even direct opposition from Washington, Russia stood its ground concerning a Middle East WMDFZ. Such a consistent and determined approach has been viewed as positive by Russia's regional partners. Even the regional states that treat Russia with caution (as the monarchies of the Persian Gulf do) cannot ignore the fact that Russia's position on a WMDFZ is clear, logical, and consistent. A political declaration issued at the Conference sends a clear signal to the international community that participants are determined to continue to work together.

## Conclusions

Looking back at the MEWMDFZ cooperation between Washington and Moscow offers important lessons about the factors that contributed to successful cooperation.

Such factors as stable political-military relationship, institutional support for nonproliferation, a shared strategic interest in sustaining and strengthening the NPT, and robust professional relationships have always contributed to the successful Conferences. However, today the U.S.-Russian political-military relationship is at its lowest level. One cannot currently commend the robust professional relationships, as the majority of bilateral consultations were halted. Besides, Russia and the United States are obviously split on four issues regarding the zone: the Conference, the role of the co-sponsors in the establishment of a zone, differences regarding the Conference's agenda, and the platform where the MEWMDFZ should be addressed.

Jayantha Dhanapala said that the road ahead for the NPT 'will be influenced greatly by the road behind'. Yet the road behind was different. Some conferences saw active diplomacy working toward a positive conclusion (1995 and 2010) while others were polarized from the beginning, with little or no bridge-building efforts (2005 and 2015). In this regard, the revitalization of high-level bilateral consultations and related direct engagement on NPT issues may again be the first step toward a process of re-engagement on the fuller set of strategic issues now dividing the two countries. That outcome would serve both countries' continuing interests. On the contrary, the exacerbation of divergences is not in the interest of any party and would result in gradually discrediting the NPT as a reliable international legal norm.<sup>67</sup> The second step would be to make the establishment of a WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East a higher priority on their foreign policy agendas and to demonstrate greater willingness to cooperate in its preparation. For instance, despite the differences between Russia and the United States, they can agree to establish a relevant mechanism, regional seminars, or several working groups to launch the parallel process on disarmament and peace in the Middle East. Yet one should understand that today there are more pressing issues that divide the two states.

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<sup>67</sup> Duarte, Sérgio (2018) 'Unmet Promise: The Challenges Awaiting the 2020 NPT Review Conference,' Arms Control Association, available at <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2018-11/features/unmet-promise-challenges-awaiting-2020-npt-review-conference> (20 May, 2021).

## WMDFZ IN THE MIDDLE EAST: CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

**January 22, 1958** – The Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union (TASS) made the following official statement: “The Middle East should and can become a zone of peace, where there are no nuclear and missile weapons, a zone of good neighborhood and friendly cooperation between states.” The proposal was in response to ongoing discussions by the countries of the Baghdad Pact about hosting U.S. nuclear and missile bases in the region.



**1961** – Washington began deploying its PGM-19 Jupiter medium-range nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles in Turkey.

**September 4, 1974** – The League of Arab States adopted Resolution No. 3178 On “Creating A Zone Free Of Nuclear Weapons In The Middle East”, endorsing the proposals by the Egyptian foreign minister and the memorandum by the Syrian Arab Republic on the establishment of a NWFZ in the Middle East and requesting to raise the issue the 29th session of the UNGA.

**1974** – The official discussion of the MENWFZ began at the UN General Assembly per the initiative of Iran. The UN General Assembly adopted the resolution “Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East region”.

**December 9, 1974** – UN General Assembly released Resolution 3263 On The “Establishment Of A Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone In The Region Of The Middle East”. The resolution considered it was “indispensable that all parties concerned in the area proclaim solemnly and immediately their intention to refrain, on a reciprocal basis, from producing, testing, obtaining, acquiring or in any other way possessing nuclear weapons”, and called on the regional states to accede to the NPT.

1. *Commends* the idea of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East;

**1975** – The UN Secretary General issued a report on the views of the regional parties on implementation of UN General Assembly Resolution 3263. For the first time a geographical delineation of the region was made since the Secretary General invited the governments of Bahrain, Democratic Yemen, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates and Yemen to voice their stances on the issue.

**1975–1978** – The UN General Assembly adopted a series of resolutions “On The “Establishment Of A Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone In The Region Of The Middle East” that urged all states to take steps towards the establishment of the zone, accede to the NPT, and place any nuclear activities under IAEA safeguards.

**1978** – Tenth UN General Assembly Special Session Final Document called on all the states of the region, pending successful negotiations establishing a NWFZ, to declare that they would not acquire, produce or possess nuclear weapons and place all their nuclear activities under IAEA safeguards. It added that consideration should be given to a UN Security Council role in advancing the idea of NWFZ in the Middle East.

**1980** – Revised Resolution 35/147 On The “Establishment Of A Nuclear Weapon Free Zone In The Region Of The Middle East” was adopted without a vote for the first time in history. The resolution called upon all the Middle Eastern states to adhere to the NPT, place all their nuclear activities under IAEA safeguards, and declare that they will not to produce, test, acquire, or station nuclear weapons on their territory until a the NWFZ in the Middle East is established.

**April 20, 1981** – In a letter to the UN Secretary General, Egypt requested the UN Secretary General to undertake a study to explore the modalities for establishing a NWFZ in the Middle East, indicating that “a study on the establishment of the nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East would undoubtedly facilitate the establishment of the zone, in so far as it may help to focus the attention of the concerned parties on the modalities required to establish the nuclear-weapon-free zone”.

**1985** – At the NPT Review Conference, the delegation of the Soviet Union stated that “the time has come to move on to the practical

implementation of the initiative to create a NWFZ.” The Final Documents of the 1985 RevCon welcomed “the consensus reached by the United Nations General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East would greatly enhance international peace and security”, and urged “all parties directly concerned to consider seriously taking the practical and urgent steps required for the implementation of the proposal to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East”.

**1986** – Draft Resolution “Israeli Nuclear Threat” co-sponsored by Algeria, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Madagascar, Morocco, Namibia, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Libya was first introduced for consideration at the 1986 IAEA General Conference. Although the resolution was rejected, the draft called on Israel to put all nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards, and called on the IAEA to monitor Israeli nuclear activities. It also urged other states to refrain from collaborating on nuclear technology with Israel.

**September 25, 1987** – IAEA General Conference adopted a resolution “Israeli Nuclear Capabilities And Threat” that called for Israel to place all nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards. The resolution also requested that the IAEA Director General report on Israeli nuclear capabilities. This 1987 resolution makes a direct reference to the “information regarding the possession of nuclear weapons by Israel”.

**1988** – Resolution On “Israeli Nuclear Capabilities and Threat” was adopted at the IAEA GC. Among other things, the resolution requested that the IAEA Director General prepare a technical study on different modalities of application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East.

**1989** – IAEA “Technical Study On Different Modalities Of Application Of Safeguards In The Middle East”. The study concluded that “there was no common pattern of safeguards application on which to base any future regional agreement”. IAEA recommended the following:

- Conclusion of Safeguards Agreement by those Parties to the NPT which have not done so
- Adherence to the NPT and conclusion of the relevant Safeguards Agreement

- Conclusion of voluntary full-scope agreements
- Application of INFCIRC/66/Rev. 2-type agreements to all nuclear installations
- All States in the region to make similar or identical legally binding unilateral declarations.

**1990** – The initiative put forward by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak expanded the concept of MENWFZ to include all WMD. The initiative called on all states of the region to make equal and reciprocal commitments, and verification measures and modalities should be established to ascertain complete compliance by the states in the region.

President Hosni Mubarak, on 8 April 1990, categorically declared Egypt's support for ensuring that the Middle East become a zone free from all types of weapons of mass destruction. President Mubarak emphasized the following:

(1) All weapons of mass destruction, without exception, should be prohibited in the Middle East, i.e. nuclear, chemical, biological, etc.

(2) All States of the region, without exception, should make equal and reciprocal commitments in this regard.

(3) Verification measures and modalities should be established to ascertain full compliance by all States of the region with the full scope of the prohibitions without exception.

**April 3, 1991** – UN Security Council adopted Resolution 687, which terminated the Persian Gulf War in 1991, called for an NWFZ and a zone free of all WMD and noted that Iraq's disarmament "represent steps towards the goal of establishing in the Middle East a zone free from weapons of mass destruction and all missiles for their delivery".

**May 29, 1991** – President George H.W. Bush announced a series of proposals intended to curb the spread of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons in the Middle East, as well as the missiles that can deliver them and expressed support for a NWFZ in the region.

**August 5, 1991** – In a letter to the UN Secretary General, Egypt suggested new measures such as requiring regional states to declare their support for a Middle East WMDZF and called on all the Middle Eastern states to implement IAEA safeguards at all their nuclear

facilities and to submit declarations conveying their intent not to use, produce or test WMD.

**1992** – Decision On “Israeli Nuclear Capabilities And Threat” was taken at the 1992 IAEA General Conference to remove the “Israeli nuclear capabilities and threat” item from the agenda. The president of the conference reported that from their consultations with various groups, and in light of the ongoing peace process in the Middle East, including discussions on the establishment of a WMD-free zone, the item would no longer be considered.

**July 14, 1993** – A personal paper by Shaleveth Freier, former Director General of the Israel Atomic Energy Commission, outlined the Israeli perspective on the future of a Middle East WMD-free zone. Written in 1993, the paper highlights the different viewpoints of Israel and the Arab states on the ongoing peace talks, as well as discussions on regional stability and security.

**October 25, 1993** – UN Secretary General presented the Report On The “Establishment Of NWFZ In The Middle East”. In his report, the UN Secretary General concluded that the prospects for establishing a ME NWFZ were more promising at that time and that the process should run in parallel with the “broader aspects of peace settlement” in the Middle East.

**March 27, 1994** – Resolution 5380 of League of Arab States On “Coordination Of Arab Positions On Weapons Of Mass Destruction And Mobilizing Efforts Towards The Creating On A Zone Free Of Weapons Of Mass Destruction In The Middle East” established a high-level committee that included international law and military affairs experts to draft a treaty establishing a WMDFZ in the Middle East, as well as formulate recommendations on the indefinite extension of the NPT. The draft treaty was not finalized or made public. The effort was paralleled by the activities within the Arms Control and Regional Security Group stemming from the 1991 Madrid Conference.

May 11, 1995 – The adoption of a resolution on the establishment of a WMD free-zone in the Middle East. As part of the package of decisions adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference,



the three NPT depository states sponsor a resolution calling upon all Middle Eastern states to take “practical steps” towards achieving a ME WMDFZ.

5. Calls upon all States in the Middle East to take practical steps in appropriate forums aimed at making progress towards, inter alia, the establishment of an effectively verifiable Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological, and their delivery systems, and to refrain from taking any measures that preclude the achievement of this objective;

**November 27–28, 1995** – The Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (aka the Barcelona Process), which include several states from the Middle East adopted a statement calling on ME states to pursue a mutually and effectively verifiable ME WMDFZ, to adhere to international and regional non-proliferation regimes and consider practical steps to prevent WMD proliferation and the accumulation of conventional arms.

**September 4, 1997** – Director-general of the Israeli foreign ministry Eytan Bentsur outlined Israel’s perspective on regional security at the Conference on Disarmament. Mr. Bentsur stressed that improved relations among the states of the region was necessary in order to advance discussions on arms control and regional security arrangements.

**September 3, 1998** – Final Document of The 12th NAM Summit reiterated the support for the establishment of a Middle East WMD Free Zone, and called on all states to take urgent and practical steps in support of the zone.

**May 6, 1999** – The UNDC Report recommended a set of principles and guidelines for NWFZ, which included, inter alia, that their establishment should be on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at, emanating exclusively from states within the region concerned, and that a NWFZ should not prevent the use of nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes.

**2000** – The UAE, Djibouti and Oman joined the NPT, which meant that of all the Middle Eastern States, only Israel remained outside the legal framework of the Treaty.

**2000** – The 2000 NPT Review Conference Final Document reiterated the validity of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East and invited all States, “especially States of the Middle East, to reaffirm or declare their support for the objective of establishing an effectively verifiable Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons as well as other weapons of mass destruction, to transmit their declarations of support to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and to take practical steps towards that objective.”

**February 25, 2003** – Final Document Of The 13th NAM Summit, – in paragraph 81, the NAM heads of government reiterate their support for the establishment of a Middle East WMD Free Zone, and called on all states to take urgent and practical steps in support of the zone.

**May 13, 2003** – The Chairman`s of NPT Preparatory Committee Factual Summary called on all states in the Middle East to accede to the NPT and place their nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards. It took note of the initiative by the U.S., UN, EU and Russia to promote a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which could be an important step in the direction of the establishment of a ME WMDFZ.

7. The Conference welcomes the accessions of Andorra, Angola, Brazil, Chile, Comoros, Djibouti, Oman, the United Arab Emirates and Vanuatu to the Treaty since 1995, bringing the number of States parties to 187, and reaffirms the urgency and importance of achieving the universality of the Treaty.

**2005** – The NPT RevCon ended without the adoption of the final document over the issue of MEWMDFZ.

**December 19, 2005** – Gulf Cooperation Council Secretary-General Al-Attiyah announced his initiative to establish a Gulf WMDFZ. The proposed initiative would involve the six GCC states and Iran. In his remarks, Al-Attiyah mentioned security concerns regarding the Iranian reactor in Bushehr.

**December 29, 2005** – Secretary General of the League of Arab States expressed objection to the GCC Gulf WMDFZ initiative explaining that it could hurt Arab efforts in pursuing a ME WMDFZ.

**March 29, 2006** – The LAS Council summit, held in Khartoum, Sudan, 28–29 Mar 2006, lamented the failure of the 2005 NPT RevCon and emphasizing the need to make “the region of the Middle East into a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, above all nuclear weapons”.

**2006** – Statement issued by at the LAS Council summit on the failure of the 2005 NPT RevCon emphasized the need to establish a MEWMDFZ. The document also requested the LAS-SG to remain seized in the matter and to provide a report on the security situation in the Arab world in light of the international and regional changes at the next LAS Council Summit

**April 30, 2008** – In its working paper, the Arab Group called for the creation of a subsidiary body at the 2010 RevCon to address the implementation of 1995 Resolution on the Middle East and for the UN to convene an international meeting on the establishment of a MEWMDFZ.

**July 13, 2008** – the parties at the Paris summit for the Mediterranean decided to pursue a mutually and effectively verifiable Middle East Zone free of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological, and their delivery systems. The summit was intended to revive the Barcelona Process that had begun in 1995.

**2009** – At the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 RevCon, the Russian delegation made proposals designed to unblock the impasse over the MENWFZ. Inter alia, Russia proposed to hold a conference to consider the project of the ME WMDFZ and welcomed the idea of appointing a special coordinator to hold consultations on the ME WMDFZ urging the regional states to taking certain confidence-building measures.

**May 28 2010** – The Final Document of the NPT RevCon called for a 2012 conference of all Middle Eastern states to move forward on a 1995 proposal for a nuclear-free Mideast and for the United Nations secretary general, along with the United States, Russia and Britain, to appoint a facilitator and consult with the countries of the Middle East convening the conference.

**November 21–22, 2011** – The IAEA organized a two-day forum to learn from the “Experience of Possible Relevance to the Creation of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone (NWFZ) in the Middle East”. The forum looked at different regional contexts and approaches to successfully establish NWFZs.

**March 29, 2012** – In resolution 557, the LAS Council welcomed the steps taken in preparation for the 2012 ME WMDFZ conference, the efforts by the facilitator to consult with the states and warned that if the conference were to fail the Arab states would have to take other measures to ensure their security. The resolution described the 2012 ME WMDFZ conference as a crossroads.

**August 28, 2012** – The Russian draft resolution was submitted at the 56th IAEA GC, included language that acknowledged and strongly supported the planned 2012 Helsinki conference and aimed to use the GC “as a forum to give a positive impetus” to the preparations and work of that conference by asking all the Middle Eastern member states to commit to attending it. Due to lack of support, Russia withdrew the draft resolution.

**October 4, 2012** – The PIR Center held an international seminar, during which Iran for the first time confirmed its readiness to participate in the conference in Helsinki. Israel, although it did not make such a statement, held consultations with a representative of the Arab League on the sidelines of the seminar.

**November 2012** – The conference with the participation of all the Middle Eastern States on the establishment of the NWFZ was postponed. The reason for the postponement of the Conference was the disagreement of the parties. On the one hand, Washington gradually began to withdraw its support for the specific provisions of the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences, which called on Israel to join the NPT and place national nuclear facilities under the comprehensive control of the IAEA. On the other hand, the positions of Israel and the Arab States on the inclusion of issues of regional security and peace did not coincide. While this was a key condition for Israel to participate in the planned event, the Arab States and Iran believed that the issues of achieving peace in the region and the issues of creating a NWFZ should be considered separately from each other.

**August 2013** –Russia made Syria join the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and destroyed its respective stockpiles.

**September 3, 2013** – Israel reiterated its willingness to participate in the informal consultation process and emphasizing that the consultations should be based in consensus and highlighted the potential of such consultations to start the region on a path of direct dialogue leading to a shared vision of a more secure Middle East.

**September 28, 2013** – In his speech to the UN General Assembly, Minister Nabil Fahmy urged all countries in the Middle East, as well as the five permanent members of the Security Council to formally state their support for a MEWMDFZ; for all the states of the region to accede to the WMD international conventions and to work towards holding the postponed 2012 ME WMDFZ conference by the Spring of 2014.

**November 4, 2013** – the Facilitator extended an invitation to the League of Arab States to participate in the second round of consultations regarding convening a conference.

**November 10, 2013** – In its Resolution 7718, the LAS decided to support the Egyptian initiative to promote efforts to free the Middle East region of all weapons of mass destruction, presented by FM Fahmy at UN General Assembly.

**2013–2014** – In Switzerland (in Geneva and in Gilon), five rounds of negotiations were held with the participation of most of the countries of the Middle East region. Even though Russia was ready to support the Israeli idea to link MEWMDFZ and regional security issues, the Arab countries saw this as threatening to “dilute” the mandate of the conference. As a result, the negotiations stalled.



**2014** – rollback of the entire process of interaction between Russia and the United States.

**April 28 – May 4, 2014** – At the 2014 NPT PrepCom, the members of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), submitted joint working paper outlining the NPDI`s perspective on the creation of a Middle East Zone Free of Weapons of Mass Destruction, and the steps to be taken in support of implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East.

**2015** – The 2015 NPT RevCon ended without a consensus document, with Canada, UK and U.S. rejecting the language on the MEWMDZFZ in the draft final document. In its concluding remarks, the U.S. explained that it was “not able to support the draft consensus document and the language related to the convening of the ME WMDZFZ Conference was “incompatible with our long-standing policies.” The statement added that “the initiative for the creation of such zones should emanate from the regions themselves, and under a process freely arrived at and with the full mutual consent of all the states in the region.” The U.S. lamented Egypt and the Arab states were “not willing to let go of these unrealistic and unworkable conditions included in the draft text.”

**December 5, 2016** – Resolution 71\29 adopted by the General Assembly urged all states to take steps towards the establishment of the zone, and called on all regional states to adhere to the NPT and place any nuclear activities under IAEA safeguards.

**2017** – First session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference. Russia presented a working paper outlining three principles for organizing the work on convening the Conference envisaging that: 1) decisions on substantive issues should be taken by consensus; 2) the participation of all States of the region without exception is desirable; 3) one meeting of the Conference was recommended to be devoted to discussing several specific aspects of regional security, which should be agreed in advance by the States of the region and fit into the context of the 1995 resolution.

**2018** – In its working paper, Washington called the NPT review process “ill-suited” to address the issue of establishing a MEWFZ.

**May 8, 2018** – the U.S. withdrew from the JCPOA.

**September 21, 2018** – IAEA General Conference adopted a resolution calling on all States in the region to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); cooperate fully with the IAEA within the framework of their respective obligations; and affirming the urgent need for all States in the Middle East to forthwith accept the application of full-scope Agency safeguards to all their nuclear activities as an important confidence-building measure among all States in the region and as a step in enhancing peace and security in the context of the establishment of an NWFZ.

**November 1–9, 2018** – The resolution on the establishment of the zone, which had been adopted annually by consensus in the First Committee and UNGA, is put to a vote by Israel for the first time since 1980. The resolution was adopted by 171 votes for, and two against (Israel and the U.S.), with 5 abstentions. In its explanation of vote, Israel linked its change in vote to the Arab Group “imposing a new unilateral and destructive resolution [sic] entitled “Convening a Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction”.

(d) **The NPT review cycle cannot be the primary mechanism for progress on a Middle East WMD-free zone.** NPT Preparatory Committee meetings and Review Conferences are opportunities for assessing progress on the Treaty and strengthening implementation of the Treaty across areas of common interest, not for resolving regional disputes. The security undertakings and benefits of the Treaty are bigger than any one region, and progress in advancing the shared interests of all parties should not be held captive to parochial regional objectives. Moreover, the review cycle is particularly ill suited to resolving such issues in the Middle East, as not all regional states are a Party to the NPT or bound by decisions made in the NPT context. Continued efforts by some NPT Parties to impose a solution on the region will further erode trust among regional states and set back the goals of the 1995 Resolution.

**December 22, 2018** – The UN General Assembly has decided to convene a Conference on the MEWMDFZ. The goal is to launch the negotiation process for the development of a legally binding agreement on the WMD free-zone.

**2019** – During the 2019 PrepCom, it became known that the UN Conference on the Establishment of a MEWFZ will be held in New York from November 18 to 22, 2019.

**November 18–22, 2019** – The United Nations Conference on the WMD free-zone in New York. The participating countries adopted a political declaration, declaring a commitment to continue openly and inclusively developing a treaty on the establishment of a WMD free-zone on the basis of agreements voluntarily concluded by the States of the region. Nevertheless, the contradictions between the main groups of players (the Arab League, on the one hand, and Israel and the United States, on the other) remain unresolved.

**December 12, 2019** – Resolution 74\30 adopted by the General Assembly about Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East.

It was emphasized ‘the basic provisions of the above-mentioned resolutions, in which all parties directly concerned are called upon to consider taking the practical and urgent steps required for the implementation of the proposal to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East and, pending and during the establishment of such a zone, to declare solemnly that they will refrain, on a reciprocal basis, from producing, acquiring or in any other way possessing nuclear weapons and nuclear explosive devices and from permitting the stationing of nuclear weapons on their territory by any third party, to agree to place their nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards and to declare their support for the establishment of the zone and to deposit such declarations with the Security Council for consideration, as appropriate’.

**July 7–9, 2020** – Informal seminar organized by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs. The workshop was organized in consultation with the President and participating States of the first session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction. The initiative was an effort to support the implementation of the outcome of the first session of the Conference, which agreed to invite representatives of existing nuclear-weapon-free zones, as well as relevant experts, to share good practices and lessons learned in the establishment of such zones.



**September 21, 2020** – the conference decided to postpone its second session, originally planned for 16–20 November 2020, to be held at a later date, but no later than November 2021.

*Compiled by Anna Lashina*

PART III

**RUSSIAN-AMERICAN DIALOGUE  
ON ARMS CONTROL**

## CHAPTER 8

# NEGOTIATIONS OF THE STRATEGIC ARMS REDUCTION TREATY

*Amb. Yuri Nazarkin*

The level of Russian-American relations fell down till one of the lowest, even in comparison with one of the worst periods of the Cold War in the early 80s. All the talks stopped, arms race was heating up, serious international conflicts aggravated the political atmosphere in the world. Even sports became an arena of confrontation.

The current situation is reminiscent of that time. But not only in this gloomy respect. Let us recall that in the mid-80s new possibilities emerged to prevent further escalation from political confrontation to direct military threats. A few successive summits in the 80s (Geneva-85, Reykjavik-86, Washington-87, and Moscow-88) stopped the dangerous downward trend and put the U.S.-Soviet dialogue on rails.

Meanwhile the preparations for the 10<sup>th</sup> NPT Review Conference have started, where the implementation of Article VI will be the most sensitive issue.

### **Article VI of NPT and the Beginning of the Soviet-U.S. Dialogue**

There were many difficult problems during the negotiations on NPT. Some of them were solved, others remained. But to my mind, the key issue for the future of NPT is the implementation of Article VI.

Despite different juridical interpretations of the text of the Article, politically it is clear that its implementation and, hence, the fate of the Treaty depends on the two countries with the biggest nuclear arsenals that oversize by far arsenals of all others combined.

It was not by chance that on 1 July 1968 the U.S. and the USSR, signing NPT, announced their intention to start negotiations on

strategic arms control. It might be regarded as a kind of recognition of their primary responsibility for the implementation of Article VI.

This agreement on the negotiations was the result of previous consultations that started in 1964. As Ambassador Dobrynin recalled later in his memoirs:

On January 16, 1964, less than two months after Johnson had taken office, William Foster, who was McNamara's soul mate and the director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, had a long conversation with me at lunch. He argued it would be feasible for both nations to renounce building a major ABM system, the cost of which he estimated at a minimum of \$15 billion to \$20 billion.<sup>1</sup>

The Soviet Union had already launched the construction of the ABM system around Moscow and the Soviet position towards the American idea at that time was negative. 'Defense is moral and offense is immoral' – was the Soviet concept. However, in the long run, American reasons reached Soviet leaders. This resulted in a compromise: to start negotiations on limiting both ABM deployment and offensive strategic weapons.

#### **Amb. Timerbaev on SALT and ABM Negotiations**

When the first bilateral negotiations on the SALT began in the late 1960s, there was no mutual understanding on the agenda or on the scope of a possible agreement. The United States sought primarily an agreement on the limitation of missile defense systems, while the Soviet Union proposed to deal with the limitation of strategic offensive weapons (SALT) (and it is quite understandable why: The USSR was making progress in mastering missile defense technology, and the United States had a huge advantage in offensive weapons). It was only after a year and a half of negotiations in May 1971 that Washington and Moscow agreed to focus on achieving a permanent treaty on the limitation of missile defense systems and at the same time to develop some restrictions on offensive weapons, as well as to continue negotiations on a more comprehensive and long-term agreement on such weapons.

<sup>1</sup> Dobrynin, A. (1995) *In Confidence: Moscow's ambassador to American six Cold War presidents*. Times Books, a division of Random House, New York, p. 149.

The conclusion in 1972 of the ABM Treaty and the Interim agreement on strategic offensive weapons (SALT I) was the first result of the U.S.-Soviet dialogue and a valuable contribution to the implementation of the Article VI of NPT. SALT II on strategic offensive weapons (1972-79) was the next. It was not ratified by the U.S. Senate and withdrawn by President Carter from the ratification. Let us recall the international situation at that time.

### **Interruption of the Dialogue in Early 80s and its Resumption**

The early 80s were one of the worst periods of the Cold War. Soviet armed forces entered Afghanistan. President R. Reagan proclaimed the Soviet Union 'the evil empire'. The Soviet Union started deploying new SS-20 missiles in Europe. The U.S. responded with the deployment of 'Pershing-2' missiles. President R. Reagan announced the Strategic Defense Initiative ('Star Wars'). All the U.S.-Soviet arms control negotiations were terminated or suspended. A South Korean airliner was shot down by the Soviet air defense. Even sport became an arena of strong confrontation: Washington boycotted the Olympic Games in Moscow (1980) and Moscow responded with the boycott of the Olympic Games in Los Angeles (1984).

Does that situation resemble somehow what we are currently experiencing? Even the details are similar: confrontation rhetoric, frozen dialogue, disputes around downed aircraft, sport scandals, and boycotts.

In March 1985, Gorbachev came to power. Two months before Reagan entered his second presidential term. In November 1985, they met in Geneva. They continued their dialogue in October 1986 in Reykjavik. Both summits failed to adopt agreements, but anyway the dialogue was resumed.

### **The Role of Offense-Defense Relationship in the Dialogue**

The main subject of both summits was ABM. And it was the main reason for their failure. The same subject put the beginning of the dialogue in 1964. But in twenty years the positions of the sides changed diametrically. In the 80s, the U.S., trying to justify its work

for promoting SDI, put forward the so-called 'broad interpretation' of the ABM Treaty. This interpretation, according to the American position, permitted to conduct research and test ABM, including in the outer space (an important component of SDI was space-based devices – lasers, beams<sup>2</sup>, etc.). Washington wanted to continue the SDI. The Soviet side was against and insisted that ABM research and tests should be limited to laboratories only. Particularly, the Soviet leadership was preoccupied with space-strike weapons because they could be used not only as a part of SDI but also as anti-satellite weapons. Besides, the Soviet side asserted that SDI, i.e. an ABM 'shield', would stimulate the U.S. to deliver the first nuclear strike against the Soviet Union. The existence of the ABM Treaty that strongly limited ABM was in favor of the Soviet position. It strongly insisted on its implementation 'as it was signed and ratified in 1972', i.e. without any additional interpretations.

In order to find a way out from this deadlock, the Soviet side declared its readiness to reduce strategic offensive armaments under the condition that both sides pledge not to withdraw from the ABM Treaty for a certain period of time.<sup>3</sup> Originally it specified this period as 15 – 20 years. Later, in Reykjavik it reduced it to 10 years.

The American side agreed in Reykjavik to take a pledge on non-withdrawal from the ABM Treaty for five years and then for another five under the condition that by the end of this period all ballistic missiles (but not heavy bombers with their nuclear weapons) should be eliminated. It was not acceptable for the Soviet Union. Due to its geographical location and absence of air bases near the U.S., it had a big disadvantage in the 'air-leg' and had an advantage in ICBMs. Later the American side dropped its insistence on the complete elimination of strategic ballistic missiles and agreed to take the non-withdrawal pledge for not more than 7 years.

Besides, the three years' difference there also was disagreement on what should follow the non-withdrawal period. The Soviet side proceeded from the premise that after the reduction of strategic offensive forces the Parties would begin negotiations on their new attitude toward the ABM Treaty in the context of the new strategic situation after the reduction of strategic offensive arms. The U.S.

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<sup>2</sup> This project was called BEAR – "Beam Experiment aboard a Rocket".

<sup>3</sup> The ABM Treaty in the Art. XV provided for the right of withdrawal if it decided that extraordinary events related to the subject matter of the Treaty had jeopardized its supreme interests (with six months of notice).

insisted on the full and non-negotiable right of withdrawal (after the non-withdrawal period expired).

At the 1987 Washington summit, after signing the INF Treaty, both sides needed to say something 'encouraging' on the situation with strategic weapons. Evidently for this reason they included into their joint statement the following formulation on this issue:

...The leaders of the two countries also instructed their delegations in Geneva to work out an agreement that would commit to observe the ABM Treaty, as signed in 1972, while conducting their research, development, and testing as required, which are permitted by the ABM Treaty, and not to withdraw from the ABM Treaty for a specified period of time.

It was a classical 'lip-stick compromise'. It did not solve anything. Each side interpreted it in its own way. The Soviet Union continued to maintain that the ABM Treaty banned research, testing, and development of the Strategic Defense Initiative out of laboratories, while the Reagan administration continued to insist on a broad interpretation that would permit expanded SDI tests and development. The question of 'a specified period' of non-withdrawal also remained open and continued to block the START negotiations.

I don't know who invented the non-withdrawal proposal and suggested it to Gorbachev (at that time I was not directly involved in the START process). To my mind, this idea might have come from our military and military-industrial people who believed that ten years were enough to create reliable means of penetrating the ABM 'shield'.

However, at that time, watching the process from aside, I felt the political awkwardness and legal vulnerability of this proposal. To conclude a treaty on non-withdrawal from another treaty? In any case, this firm juridical link between the START and ABM treaties kept the START negotiation in a deadlock.

For the first time, I expressed my doubts about this position at a meeting with Minister Eduard Shevardnadze in February 1986. I suggested to replace the juridical link with a political one, namely to drop our insistence on the legally-binding non-withdrawal pledge and to make a statement that the Soviet Union would withdraw from the START treaty in case of violations by the U.S. of the ABM Treaty.

Shevardnadze did not react in any way. He was just listening and making notes. Probably that meeting played a certain role later in my appointment as the head of the Soviet delegation at the U.S.-Soviet nuclear and space/defense talks (START I). When it happened in April 1989, I did my best to contribute to the removal of the legally-binding link between the ABM Treaty and future START and thus to avoid this obstacle for further START talks. This approach was included in the instructions of the Soviet delegation at the ministerial meeting in Wyoming in September 1989 (see below).

## **START Negotiations after Reykjavik Summit**

Meanwhile, the Geneva START negotiations remained without a prospect of concluding the treaty till the end of Reagan's presidency. Some important solutions or starting points for further negotiations had been found during the Reykjavik summit in 1986. Though that summit failed to adopt a joint document, important work was made in the working group under the guidance of the Presidents. The Soviet side was represented in the group by Sergey Akhromeyev, the Chief of the Soviet General Staff, and the American — by Paul Nitze, a former Secretary of Navy and Deputy Secretary of Defense (he was regarded as the key 'wise man' on military and arms control affairs of the American government).

In Reykjavik, the sides discussed and elaborated some basic parameters of the future START Treaty. The status of these parameters was rather ambiguous: they were not officially agreed upon, but later in the course of the START negotiations they were taken as a skeleton of the future treaty. Each side proceeded from its own records of the talks and discussions both between the two leaders and in the working group Akhromeyev-Nitze. Of course, they required further detailed elaboration and some were subjects of sharp disputes because of different interpretations and understanding (I'll touch upon some of them below). Anyway, the Nuclear and Space Talks<sup>4</sup> in Geneva received a good basis.

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<sup>4</sup> There were three tracks: (1) strategic weapons, (2) defense and space, (3) intermediary weapons.



## 1989: New Stage of START

Reagan's successor George Bush took half a year as a time-out at the negotiations on strategic armaments and made a review of the situation. He changed the head of the delegation appointing Ambassador Richard Burt (previously Ambassador in the Federal Republic of Germany and Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs).

The Soviet side also used the break for revision of the situation. At that time, I was appointed as the head of the Soviet delegation and became directly involved in the process.

My first round in this capacity took place in summer 1989. My goal was to try to grasp the main problems 'in the field' and to establish contacts with my counterpart R. Burt. I guess, he pursued similar goals. There was a long list of problems that had to be negotiated. But the main hurdle remained. It was the relationship between offensive and defensive strategic weapons.

The solution came at the Ministerial meeting (Shevardnadze – Baker) in Wyoming in September 1989. That was really a paradise. The Indian summer, beautiful landscapes, and silhouettes of cowboys around the touristic camp where our and American delegations were accommodated and where the negotiations were going on... ('Cowboys' safeguarded the place). Against this nice background, I felt really happy: the idea that I had put forward three and a half years ago started to work. During further negotiations, I have experienced other successes, as well as disappointments and failures. But Wyoming really encouraged me.

In Wyoming, the Soviet side dropped the legal linkage between the START Treaty and the mutual pledge of both sides not to withdraw for 10 years from the ABM Treaty. Minister E. Shevardnadze stated that the Soviet Union would be ready to sign the START Treaty even without agreement on the ABM issue, but if the sides continued to comply with ABM Treaty as it was signed in 1972.

The joint statement read that on the issue of ABM and outer space the Soviet side proposed a new approach aimed at solving this important problem. Both sides agreed that the Soviet approach opened a way to reaching and realizing START Treaty without concluding a treaty on defense and outer space. The sides agreed to drop the approach linked with the pledge of non-withdrawal from the ABM Treaty.

We clarified that before the signing of the START Treaty we would unilaterally express our position on this issue.

'We have moved from confrontation to dialogue and now to cooperation,' Mr. Baker said. The Soviet Foreign Minister said that the talks had 'placed Soviet-American relations on a new stage'. The announcement came a day after the Soviet side conditionally dropped its demand that the Americans abandon plans for space-based missile defense — a major obstacle to a strategic arms accord. The talks could continue, but the substantial difference on the ABM Treaty remained.

## Defense and Space Debates in 1989–1991

Though in January 1991 President Bush 'refocused' the SDI on a much more modest ABM system — the Global Protection Against Limited Strikes (GPALS), the U.S. continued to proceed with its 'broad' interpretation of the ABM Treaty.<sup>5</sup> After the conclusion of the INF Treaty, the U.S.-Soviet nuclear and space/defense talks continued in two groups — on START and space and defense.

The START group was headed from our side by Amb. Lem Masterkov and from the American by Amb. Linton Brooks (later, after the departure of R. Burt in early 1991 Linton Brooks was promoted to the position of the head of the whole delegation). In the space and defense group, the Soviet delegation was represented by Amb. Yuri Kuznetsov (on political level) and by Lieutenant-General Nikolay Detinov (on military and technical level). The U.S. side was represented by Amb. David Smith and Henry ('Hank') Cooper (a high official from ACDA). The U.S. part of the group consisted of about 20 people, and ours of three (two mentioned above and a legal expert). Evidently, the U.S. side tried to imitate 'full-fledged' talks on space and defense, while we did not see any necessity to keep more than three persons there.

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<sup>5</sup> In his State of the Union Address on 29 January 1991 President Bush stated: "Now, with remarkable technological advances like the Patriot missile, we can defend against ballistic missile attacks aimed at innocent civilians. Looking forward, I have directed that the SDI [Strategic Defense Initiative] program be refocused on providing protection from limited ballistic missile strikes, whatever their source. Let us pursue an SDI program that can deal with any future threat to the United States, to our forces overseas, and to our friends and allies."

Records of each meeting of this group repeated each other: arguments in favor of 'broad' interpretation of the ABM Treaty – counterarguments against. The discussion was absolutely futile. However, the American side attempted to induce the Soviet side in developing its own 'ABM shield'. In other words, to push us to an economically ruinous race, which from our point of view was useless for our security.

Americans tried to reach this goal not only through the space and defense group. At the ministerial meeting in Wyoming, J. Baker invited a group of Soviet experts to visit two laboratories involved in the SDI project – the Los Alamos National Laboratory and San Juan Capistrano laboratory that belonged to a private corporation TRW. He wisely stressed that this invitation was unilateral, not conditioned by Soviet reciprocity (otherwise, I am sure that, the invitation would have been rejected).

Moscow responded positively and very fast. The interest of scientists was felt clearly behind this decision. The delegation was composed of our eight leading scientists who dealt in one or another way with various technical aspects of ABM. My mission was rather dull – to express and emphasize the official position of the Soviet Union (in other words, I was a political 'commissar'). At each meeting in the laboratories, with journalists, etc.) I repeated in a robotic fashion that the ABM Treaty 'as it had been signed and ratified in 1972' was our icon, and so on, and so forth. In the course of our visits to the two American laboratories, I could clearly see the professional interests of our scientists in the efforts of their American colleagues. However, it had no impact on the Soviet position towards the ABM Treaty.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Personally, I am extremely grateful to the U.S. side that gave me the opportunity to see tremendously interesting places – not to say about the laboratories themselves, but New Mexico (Santa Fe!), California (Los Angeles, San Francisco!) and some other parts in the West.

14 December 1989 our group arrived in Washington, and the next morning a special air force flight took us from the Andrews airport to California. We started from the San Juan Capistrano laboratory. It had a contract with the Government to develop laser devices to be deployed in the outer space. Their mission was to eliminate our missiles at their mid-flight stage. The project had the name "ALPHA". Indeed, the construction that was demonstrated for us at a test site, as well as technical explanations given by American specialists reminded clips from the film "Star Wars". Later the project "ALPHA" was closed.

Our next visit was to Los Alamos. The laboratory worked on the project "Beam Experiment aboard a Rocket (BEAR)". The role of the project was to develop a device that would be able to distinct real warheads from false ones and possibly, after the

Before the signing of the START Treaty (31 July 1991) the Soviet side, following its position declared in Wyoming in September 1989, confirmed its right to withdraw from the START Treaty in case of violation or disruption of the ABM Treaty. However, it did not implement this right (in accordance with Art. XV of the START Treaty) when the U.S. withdrew from the ABM Treaty in 2002. Thus, the ABM Treaty had remained in force for thirty years. I note this fact recalling how much time and efforts both sides had lost during their fierce debates on terms of non-withdrawal from the ABM Treaty in connection with the START Treaty.

### **Negotiations on START in 1989–1991**

Despite the enormous work made at the negotiations before this stage, a great variety of issues remained unresolved. I am going to mention here the most substantial of them. Apart from the offense-defense interrelationship, a lot of difficulties emerged because of differences in the structures of strategic forces. Or, to be more precise, because of the desire of each side to use these differences in its own favor.

The main component of the strategic triad of the Soviet Union was (as it still is for the Russian Federation) land-based ICBMs, both silo-based and road-mobile. The United States had (and still has) an advantage in air-leg and sea-based components. These differences emerged because of geographical (or geostrategic) reasons. The United States had (and has) air bases in the proximity of the Soviet Union/Russia, and the latter didn't (and doesn't). Being a maritime country, the U.S. has free access to two open oceans. The Soviet Union/Russia has exits to the Arctic and Pacific oceans, but in both

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increase of sources of beams, to eliminate real warheads. We were given a very warm welcome (as in San Juan Capistrano). The list of our group included contained eight names of experts — directors of institutes, academicians, laureates, etc. It was not in alphabetical order, but in accordance with the hierarchy. The last on the list was the name of Professor V. Teplyakov. To my surprise the head of the BEAR project devoted his welcoming speech mainly to him. I knew from his speech (and later checked it) that the BEAR project was based on the discovery made by Professor Teplyakov a number of years ago in the course of fundamental research, the result of which had been published. After the formal part at a cocktail I noted the attention that was given by American scientists to Professor Teplyakov: they really treated him as their Guru. As far as I know, the BEAR project shared the fate of the ALPHA — it was also closed.

cases the U.S. has capabilities to control the movements of Soviet/Russian strategic submarines going out for patrolling. On the other hand, the Soviet Union had a vast territory (the biggest in the world) and could afford to have not only silo-based, but also mobile road and rail ICBMs. Despite that Russia has a smaller territory in comparison with the Soviet Union, its territory still remains world's biggest.

**A sublimit on warheads for ballistic missiles (ICBMs and SLBMs).** The original intention of the American side was to prohibit all ballistic missiles, while keeping aside heavy bombers with their nuclear armaments. This was not acceptable for the Soviet side. In Reykjavik, the U.S. proposed 4500 units as a sublimit for ICBMs and SLBMs. Later the sides agreed on 4900.

**Heavy missiles** (according to the definition – with throw-weight higher than 4350 kg). The U.S. had no such missiles, while the Soviet Union had 308 deployed SS-18 missiles and their launchers. They were equipped with 10 nuclear warheads of 500-550 kt each, and besides, due to their big throw-weight (7600 kg) could carry, besides warheads, means of ABM defense penetration (false 'warheads' and other deceiving or blinding means). That is why the American side did its best to impose maximum limitations on them. In Reykjavik, the Soviet side agreed to substantially reduce the numbers of its heavy SS-18 missiles. As far as the original Soviet proposal provided for 50% reduction of all strategic offensive means, the Soviet side agreed to apply the same level to heavy missiles, though other delivery means were reduced less. The limit for heavy missiles (154 for missiles and 1540 for their warheads) was fixed in the Treaty. However, during the talks, a lot of important issues had to be ironed out (possible redeployment, etc. – see below).

**Mobile ICBMs.** Washington was deliberating possible deployment of mobile ICBMs. That is why this issue was practically frozen at the negotiation till 1989. But after this idea was dropped the U.S. focused on tough control of movements of the Soviet mobile ICBMs. It took a lot of time to find a solution. Finally, the sublimit of 1100 warheads for mobile ICBMs was established by the Treaty.

**Heavy bombers.** The Soviet Union had an evident disadvantage in this component of the strategic triad (the U.S. recognized this). That is why this issue was discussed till the very end of the Geneva talks. In Reykjavik, it was decided that the main criterion for the definition of a 'heavy bomber' should be its equipment with long-range ALCMs (later other criteria were added, particularly – the range

being more than 8000 km). It was agreed upon that all the gravity bombs and shorter-range missiles (SRAMs) should be counted as one warhead within 6000 limit (each heavy bomber was counted within 1600 limit). To my mind, it was the biggest concession of the Soviet side to the American side, which given the U.S. advantage in the 'air-leg' gave Washington a substantial addition to the level of 6000 warheads.

**Air-launch cruise missiles (ALCMs).** It was the key problem with 'air-leg' component. Both sides agreed that ALCMs should be limited. But how? The U.S. side insisted that they should be treated in the same way as gravity bombs and SRAMs (all warheads on a bomber as one unit). The Soviet side disagreed. Later this issue was a subject of intense and dramatic negotiations. Till the end of 1990 there were two basic points of divergence on this issue: (1) a definition (based on the range) and (2) how to limit them.

**Definition of ALCMs.** From the very beginning of the negotiating process, including in Reykjavik, the Soviet side proceeded from the definition adopted for the SALT-2 agreement, namely: the term 'long-range ALCM' meant an ALCM with a range in excess of 600 km. In Reykjavik, the American side did not challenge this approach. However later in the course of the negotiations it insisted on 1500 km and then reduced it to 1000 km. This controversy reached its dramatic peak at the Moscow Ministerial meeting in May 1990. After long and very sharp debates Secretary Baker pronounced his 'last word' — 800 km. Minister Shevardnadze and Marshal Akhromeyev, referring to the previous agreement on 600 km, stated very firmly that not a single kilometer could be added to this range. Indeed, this position was based on the maximum capability of the Soviet anti-aircraft defense (600 km for plane-interceptors and 400 km for land-based means). It looked like that this issue was torpedoing the negotiation. The reason behind the American position was also known: a new ALCM 'Tacit Rainbow' with the range of 800 km was at the stage of development and flight-testing. The solution came early morning 19 May 1990 a few hours before Baker's departure from Moscow. He gave assurance that the 'Tacit Rainbow' would never be equipped with nuclear warheads and, if the Soviet side took his assurance, he agreed with the range of 600 km. The Soviet side accepted this deal. By the way, later the U.S. closed the 'Tacit Rainbow' program.

**Limitation of ALCMs.** It was evident, and Americans recognized this, that American heavy bombers had a big advantage, because

they could land for re-fueling at their air-bases not far from the Soviet territory, while Soviet HBs, without having such possibility, had to go to targets and back. That is why they could not take the same number of ALCMs as American HBs (each additional ALCM 'eats' 700 km). After long and very dramatic discussions in Moscow (in the 'Big Five'<sup>7</sup> meetings), as well as at the negotiating table in Moscow, Washington and Geneva the problem was solved with due account of this advantage/disadvantage: the basic provision provided for 10 ALCMs for each American HB and 8 for Soviet within the limit of 150 HBs for each side.

**Sea-launched cruise missiles (SLCMs).** This problem also was the Russian headache, because the U.S. had an advantage in this component. The U.S. agreed to limit them, but not in the treaty, by a separate level, outside the boundaries of the triad. The Soviet side accepted this approach, but insisted that this limitation on SLCMs should be legally-binding. This difference created a problem for further talks and for me personally, because in my informal consultations with R. Burt I discussed possible solutions on this basis and our 'thinking aloud' was leaked and appeared in the *New York Times*.<sup>8</sup> I was reprimanded afterwards for 'stepping aside from the formal instructions'. However, the final solution was found on the basis of that 'thinking aloud': mutual annual notifications of the deployment of SLCMs and their number would not exceed 880 units each year.

**Verification.** Both sides agreed in Reykjavik that verification should be 'effective and give full assurance of the implementation of the treaty'. But, evidently, no specific measures were discussed. Later in the course of the Geneva talks, a very detailed system of verification was elaborated. It included national technical means (in combination with a ban on concealment measures), numerous types of on-site inspections, continuous monitoring of mobile missile final assembly facilities, data exchange and notifications, full access to telemetric information during each flight test of ICBMs and SLBMs, confidence-building measures contributing to the effectiveness of verification. These measures were negotiated in a special working

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<sup>7</sup> Mechanism of preparing positions on arms control issues between five ministries/agencies – see below.

<sup>8</sup> Gordon, Michael R. (1989) 'Upheaval in the East; Soviets Softening on Limits For Missiles at Sea, U.S. Says,' *The New York Times*, available at <https://www.nytimes.com/1989/12/19/world/upheaval-in-the-east-soviets-softening-on-limits-for-missiles-at-sea-us-says.html> (20 May, 2021).

group with the participation of military and technical experts. Later, of course, the whole verification system was considered and finalized on the ambassadorial level and reported to the respective capitals.

## **Political Struggle in Moscow and Washington around START**

Now I am going to mention some problems that were behind the negotiating table and greatly complicated the talks. After the first two years of Gorbachev's leadership, expectations that he might reform the Soviet economy started to disappear. He made substantial changes in the political sphere, but the economy remained ineffective, and standards of life were low. The opposition to him was growing. Though its main focus was on domestic problems, Gorbachev's foreign policy was also criticized.

Concessions that Gorbachev made for the conclusion of the INF Treaty caused a great indignation in the military establishment. The START negotiations were also used by the opposition against Gorbachev. Oleg Baklanov, the secretary of defense in the Central Committee, was the leader of the Soviet hawks. He was an open adversary of Gorbachev and, particularly, insisted on disrupting the START negotiations. He raised this issue several times. Later, in August 1991, he participated in an attempt of overthrowing M. Gorbachev and was imprisoned. But before that, he had created a lot of problems for our negotiations. I saw this opposition in Moscow where I was called from time to time, as well as in some instructions that I received in Geneva.

Particularly, I can refer to the case, which I witnessed personally, participating in a meeting of the Politburo Commission on arms control ('Big Five') on March 30, 1990. The meeting was devoted mainly to the rules of accounting nuclear warheads for the 'air-leg'. But the discussion turned out to be much broader, namely: do we need START Treaty in principle? Baklanov took the most radical position. Though the meeting resulted in adopting compromise instructions for further negotiations, Baklanov prepared his 'special view' for M. Gorbachev, asserting that START would damage the security interests of the Soviet Union.

Soon after the Big Five meeting, Baklanov tried to use for his purpose the publication in the Washington Post on the START



negotiations. It was an article by Jeffrey Smith giving a general review of the negotiations.<sup>9</sup> The article was based on the information that had not been disclosed before due to the confidential nature of the negotiations. It was evident that the author had been well briefed by those who knew the details of the negotiations. The article was silent about compromise and focused on Soviet concessions. It was aimed at proving that the treaty under negotiations was completely for the benefit of the U.S.

It was a critical period for arms control because the political fight over the START Treaty reached its peak both in Washington and Moscow. I do not know whether the one-sided article helped to strengthen the positions of Washington doves. But in Moscow it was used as a pretext to stop the negotiations.

Oleg Baklanov referred to this article as a 'proof' of the 'treacherous nature' of the START Treaty. He argued that 'even Americans themselves said that the treaty is completely in their interests'. His purpose was to stop the negotiations and to damage Gorbachev's political positions. Fortunately, Gorbachev managed to overrule Baklanov, and the negotiations continued.

The American side had similar problems. I can refer, particularly, to Michael R. Beschloss and Strobe Talbott who wrote: 'In Geneva, Richard Burt, the chief U.S. START negotiator, was frustrated. He would send suggestions to the administration on how to resolve the sticking points. He would reach tentative deals with his Soviet counterpart, Yuri Nazarkin, only to have them slapped down by Washington, often on personal instructions by Scowcroft'.<sup>10</sup>

We had such complications even on compromises that had been approved in Washington. I refer to the case with heavy missiles. The Soviet Union had 304 heavy missiles SS-18, and the U.S. had no heavy missiles. Besides the basic agreement on 50% cut, there were a number of unresolved issues that were discussed at the Ministerial meeting in October 1990 between Secretary Baker and Minister Shevardnadze in New York.

The package on heavy missiles as it was negotiated in New York included the elimination of 50 % of heavy missiles, a ban on heavy ICBMs of a new type, and a few other minor restraints for heavies. But our instructions also provided for the inclusion into the Treaty of

<sup>9</sup> The Washington Post (1990), 3 April 1990.

<sup>10</sup> Beschloss, Michael R.; Talbott, Strobe (1993) 'At the Highest Levels. The Inside Stories of the End of the Cold War,' Little, Brown and Company, Great Britain, p. 373.

the right<sup>11</sup> to deploy additional silo launchers for heavy ICBMs that replace those that have been eliminated.

Burt was reluctant to accept this provision. He blocked the whole package and took time out to consult with his deputy and advisers. After that, he said that he was prepared to recommend to his Secretary of State to accept the whole package on heavies, including the right to replace silos, but the Soviet side should explain motives for keeping this option open. I replied that it was possible; but that it would take time because we should send a cable to Moscow and wait for a reply (the provision in question had been included in the delegation's instructions by our military people who evidently were preoccupied with the anti-nuclear movement in Kazakhstan where there were 104 SS-18s; however, they did not clarify the motives, probably because of political sensitivity of the matter). I added: 'If you wish to finish with heavies today, I can give you my own explanation right now, but informally'. He agreed. I said that the 'necessity to replace launchers might arise as a result of accidents or threats of accidents (e.g. earthquakes) or other extraordinary circumstance, in particular due to the internal political processes taking place in our country'. 'You mean Kazakhstan?' – asked Burt. I nodded.

Minister Shevardnadze was glad that we did not need to send a cable to Moscow. Secretary Baker also looked satisfied with Burt's report to him. They confirmed our package. But unfortunately, that was not the end of the story. And its continuation was rather dramatic.

In a few days when I met with Burt in Geneva, he was as gloomy as hell. He told me what happened after the ministerial meeting. The next day U.S. defence secretary R. Cheney visited Moscow (the visit had been scheduled long before and had nothing to do with START talks). At the meeting with Defence Minister D. Yazov Cheney asked him why the Soviet side was going to replace silo launchers of heavy missiles. Yazov replied that it had no such plans. Indeed, at that time there were no such plans, though the General Staff wanted to keep this option open for the future. The agenda of the ministers' meeting did not contain arms control items and Yazov did not have at hand his arms control experts who could remind him

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<sup>11</sup> Theoretically (or purely de-jure) all the provisions on heavy ICBMs, including this right, relate to both sides. But as far as the U.S. had no heavy ICBMs, all these provisions had a practical effect for the Soviet side only.

about agreement on heavy missiles reached in New York two days earlier.

When back in Washington, Secretary Cheney spread the allegation that Secretary Baker had been deceived by the Russians. It took time to settle this very unpleasant situation. It was resolved after Ministers Yazov and Shevardnadze sent a formal letter to Minister Cheney and Secretary Baker, which explained that though at present the Soviet side had no plans to redeploy silo launchers for heavy ICBMs, this possibility cannot be ruled out for the future either for technical reasons, or 'in connection with internal political developments that are taking place in our country'.

Why did Mikhail Cheney play this card? I guess that was a part of the broader game against the START treaty in Washington.

## Internal Diplomacy

As a negotiator, I met with two major kind of difficulties – at the negotiating table and domestically. The major actors in arms control negotiations from the Soviet side were the Central Committee of the Communist party (later the President and his administration), the Foreign Ministry, the Defense Ministry (the General Staff), the Military Industrial Commission (military industries) and the KGB. All instructions for arms control negotiators were elaborated by the three-level mechanism (the so-called 'Five') and approved at the highest or high (ministerial) level. The process of agreeing upon instructions in this 'Five mechanism'<sup>12</sup> was not less difficult than negotiations 'in the field'.

As I wrote above, the work of the 'Five mechanism' was complicated by political struggle in the highest echelon of the Soviet leadership. But besides that, there were special interests of each domestic player that reflected various aspects of national security. That is why, speaking objectively, I recognize that this mechanism was necessary for taking well-balanced decisions attesting to the national security interests of the country. However, the accommodation of all divergent and sometimes controversial views required tolerance, effort, and experience.

<sup>12</sup> This mechanism is described in detail by Aleksandr B. Savel'yev and Nikolay N. Detinov in 'The Big Five. Arms Control Decision-Making in the Soviet Union' (1995), Praeger Publishers.

A very dramatic situation emerged at the negotiations in June 1991. All major issues had been solved by that time. But there were a number of problems of purely military nature that could be solved only by the General Staffs of both sides. For illustration: there was a sensitive issue of defining a new type of ICBM and SLBM. New types were subject to different limitations than existing ones. Americans knew (evidently from intelligence sources) that the Soviet Union was developing a new type of a mobile ICBM and wanted to include it into existing types. For this purpose, they tried to increase technical characteristics for the definition – the throw-weight and size parameters. Our experts understood that they knew about our project and tried to avoid this inclusion. They managed to do this, but later this missile was unavoidably covered by the New START Treaty.

The ministerial meeting with the participation of the Deputy Chief of the Soviet General Staff and his American counterpart failed to solve the remaining problems. It was evident that the responsibilities of the deputies were not sufficient. I do not exclude that the failure of that meeting was a part of political games in both capitals.

On the U.S. National day, July 4, 1991, there was a traditional reception in the residence of the U.S. Ambassador in Geneva. As soon as I saw there Linton Brooks, I invited him to step aside from the crowd and to make a review of the situation at the talks. We went through all remaining unresolved issues and agreed that they could be solved only by the chiefs of our general staffs. I proposed to recommend to our respective capitals a new ministerial meeting, but with the personal participation of M. Moiseyev and Colin Powell. I told Linton that I was ready to send this proposal upon receiving from him a preliminary confirmation that C. Powell would be available.

In a few hours, Linton called me to the Mission and said that received such a preliminary confirmation. But, he added, that Colin Powell could not leave his post in Washington because of the 'Gulf war' consequences and asked to arrange this meeting in Washington (my original proposal was Geneva).

After Linton's call to me, I received the right to present to Moscow the idea of getting together the Chiefs of Staffs not only as the result of my talks with my Geneva counterpart, but as a proposal of Colin Powell (or at least as a proposal supported by him). Moscow agreed. In a few days, the meeting took place and the remaining issues were solved. Both delegations in Geneva started converting these agreements into treaty language. As it is known, the START

Treaty was signed in Moscow on 31 July 1991. I would conclude with saying that to solve problems it is important for that the right people to meet each other at the right time.

## Conclusions

Throughout the whole U.S.-Soviet/Russian dialogue, with all ups and downs, its backbone and the main problem was and still remains the defense-offense relationship. The sides changed their positions diametrically, ABM projects replaced one another, but bilateral arms control process always depended on this problem. This lesson is important for the approach to the resumption of the dialogue.

SDI as ABM 'shield' existed till the presidency of George Bush-senior. It was replaced with much more modest GPALS — Global Protection against Limited Strikes. Now we face the Phased Adaptive Approach, the main element of which is Aegis (on boats and ashore) with SM-3 interceptors, particularly in Romania and Poland, and radars in some other European and the Far Eastern countries.

Looking back, I may conclude that the Soviet side was inclined to overestimate military capabilities of U.S. ABM projects, while the U.S. side overestimated the possible effectiveness, technical capabilities and feasibility of ABM (SDI, GPALS). I do not exclude that a similar exaggeration is a problem now with the Phased Adaptive Approach.

But there is an unclearness of some important issues of the Phased Adaptive Approach, namely: (a) range of anti-missiles; (b) their velocity; (c) exclusion of the technical possibility of SM-3 interceptors to be used against targets on the surface. Open dialogue on these main issues could help to conclude an agreement regulating these issues and stimulate further progress on strategic weapons.

It is in the interests of the implementation of Article VI of NPT to further reduce levels of strategic offensive weapons provided for by the New START. That is why it is necessary to start the preparation for negotiations on a new treaty on strategic weapons, keeping in mind lessons of the previous negotiations.

Speaking in practical terms, it is necessary (a) to start the preparation for negotiations on further reductions of strategic weapons with a view of concluding a treaty that would supersede the New START; (b) in parallel to launch negotiation on an agreement that

would regulate issues relating to the Phased Adaptive Approach (a new 'ABM treaty').

The dialogue passed through a number of severe political crises – Czechoslovakia (1968), Afghanistan (1979 – early 80s), nuclear confrontation in Europe (the same period). However, contacts on the highest level helped a lot to overcome difficulties and problems in the interests of important common goals, which include the necessity to strengthen the nonproliferation regime.

Big difficulties aroused because of efforts of each side to impose on each other changes in the structure of strategic forces that were defined by geographical (i.e. that cannot be changed) reasons. The goal of negotiations should be the reduction of armaments. Attempts to use talks for changing the structure of forces would complicate them.

There are several important multilateral goals, the implementation of which is required by Art. VI. I want to stress one of them that is very closely connected with the U.S.-Russian dialogue. I mean non-deployment of weapons in the outer space. In the 80s, it was bilateral. Now it has multilateral dimensions. But the danger remains the same – the strategic destabilization. Weapons in the outer space could be used as anti-satellite, as well as against surface targets.

## CHAPTER 9

# COMPARING APPROACHES TOWARDS GLOBAL ZERO DURING THE COLD WAR

*Vladislav Chernavskikh*

Global zero, or complete nuclear disarmament, refers to the removal from service and subsequent dismantlement of all the nuclear arsenals in the world.

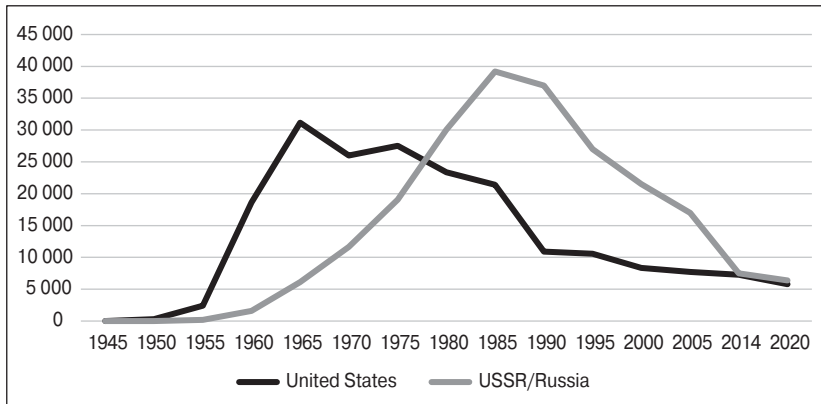
Its success depends greatly not only on the disarmament of the existing nuclear powers, but also on nonproliferation, or on ensuring that non-nuclear-weapon states (NNWS) have neither the incentive nor the opportunity to produce or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons. Nonproliferation and disarmament are inextricably linked, with positive dynamics in one field leading to positive developments in the other, as Jeffrey Knopf<sup>1</sup> and Alexey Arbatov<sup>2</sup> point out. However, the scope and importance of cooperation on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons and materials by Russia and the United States calls for a separate in-depth study. Therefore, the following two chapters will focus exclusively on the disarmament piece of the global zero puzzle.

In particular, this chapter will examine approaches and attitudes towards the issue of complete nuclear disarmament in the political establishments and nuclear decision-making mechanisms of the Soviet Union and the United States throughout the history of the bilateral arms control and disarmament process to determine if that elusive goal was ever an attainable prospect or merely a surface level commitment with no chances of subsequent realization.

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<sup>1</sup> Knopf, Jeffrey (2012) Nuclear Disarmament and Nonproliferation. Examining the Linkage Argument. *International Security*, Vol. 37, No. 3 (Winter 2012/13), pp. 92 – 132.

<sup>2</sup> Arbatov, A.; Dvorkin, V.; Ozonobischev, S. (2011) 'Vzaimosvyaz yadernogo razoruzheniya i nerazprostraneniya: realnost' ili mif?' [The Connection Between Disarmament and Nonproliferation: Reality of Myth?] Moscow, IMEMO.

**Diagram 1. U.S. and Soviet/Russian nuclear weapons stockpiles/inventories**

Source: SIPRI

Surveying the extent of the rich history of Russia-U.S. nuclear diplomacy, it becomes clear that it would be impossible to cover all of the intricacies of the arms control process and its decision-making in detail. Thus, the following chapters will examine several cases in which global nuclear disarmament appears to have had the most momentum, and look at the contemporary situation in relation to the outlined issue:

## 1945–1949. The ‘International Control’ Period

### *The establishment of the UNAEC*

The first calls for entirely forgoing nuclear weapons were made almost immediately after the end of World War II. In November 1945, the United States, UK, and Canada came forth with a joint declaration in which the three countries urged the United Nations to find a way of ‘entirely eliminating the use of atomic energy for destructive purposes and promoting its use for industrial and humanitarian purposes’.<sup>3</sup> The decision to establish a special commission under the auspices of the UN for the control of atomic energy was further

<sup>3</sup> Declaration on Atomic Bomb by President Truman and Prime Ministers Attlee and King (1945) Washington, available at [http://www.nuclearfiles.org/menu/key-issues/nuclear-energy/history/dec-truma-atlee-king\\_1945-11-15.htm](http://www.nuclearfiles.org/menu/key-issues/nuclear-energy/history/dec-truma-atlee-king_1945-11-15.htm) (20 May, 2021)



supported by the Joint Communiqué produced by the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers in December of 1945.<sup>4</sup> In the document, the foreign ministers of the United States, UK, and USSR called for the aforementioned commission to, among other things, work out recommendations 'for the elimination of national armaments of nuclear weapons'. The UN Atomic Energy Commission (UNAEC) was established soon thereafter in 1946 – as an intergovernmental body that was supposed to work out the recommendations on a creation of the international system of control over atomic energy and the elimination of nuclear armaments. The only country possessing nuclear weapons at the time was the United States.

Notably, the moral considerations that are usually invoked in relation to nuclear abolition were not the main drivers of the early disarmament negotiations. In fact, the actual underlying motives of both countries and their mistrust for each other doomed the affair from the start: despite active work of the Commission and the direct involvement of both the USSR and the United States in the negotiations, it failed.

### *Stalin and Truman did not believe in disarmament*

To begin with, both President Harry Truman and General Secretary Joseph Stalin did not believe in immediate nuclear disarmament. Truman, as David Tal underscores, believed that global disarmament would be possible only in a situation when the UN grows strong enough to maintain world peace, war itself would become unthinkable, and global peace and security would be achieved.<sup>5</sup> As for the USSR, as David Holloway points out, in 1945 Stalin told Igor Kurchatov: 'Provide us with atomic weapons in the shortest possible time. You know that Hiroshima has shaken the whole world. The equilibrium has been destroyed. Provide the bomb; it will remove a great danger from us'.<sup>6</sup> Stalin believed the White House would use the bomb to shape the post-war world order to its liking. This perception became one of the driving forces behind the Soviet nuclear program.

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<sup>4</sup> Moscow Meeting of Council of Foreign Ministers (1945), available at <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/us-treaties/bevans/m-ust000003-1341.pdf> (20 May, 2021)

<sup>5</sup> Tal, D. (2008) *The American Nuclear Disarmament Dilemma, 1945 – 1963*. NY.: Syracuse University Press. P. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Holloway, D. (1996) *Stalin and the Bomb: The Soviet Union and Atomic Energy, 1939-1956*. Yale University Press. P. 183.

Other motives instead prodded the countries to engage in the diplomatic process in the UNAEC:

- For the United States, it was the knowledge that nuclear technology will eventually become available to the Soviet Union and will continue to proliferate. The main policy objective for the White House in the short term was to involve the USSR in an 'arrangement...the general purpose of which would be to control and limit the use of the atomic bomb as an instrument of war' and establishing a 'mutual exchange of scientific information and collaboration in the development of atomic power'. This can be seen in various internal documents circulated in the White House, such as memoranda of the Secretaries of War,<sup>7</sup> <sup>8</sup>as well as the Undersecretary of State.<sup>9</sup>
- For USSR, as is evident from the rapid development of the Soviet nuclear capability, the main purpose of the diplomatic engagement was to prolong the discussions on disarmament and international control to give the Soviet Union more time to develop the bomb.<sup>10</sup>

Ultimately, both sides believed that the other wanted to achieve superiority with the help of a new weapon. Of course, those suspicions were not unfounded: both Stalin and Truman considered the bomb to be a useful military and political tool. And while the negotiations were ongoing in the UNAEC, the U.S. nuclear stockpile continued to grow. By the time of the Soviet test in 1949, it consisted of 170 bombs.<sup>11</sup> The Soviet Union in turn was rapidly developing

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<sup>7</sup> Memorandum by the Secretary of War (Stimson) to President Truman (1945) Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, General: Political And Economic Matters, Volume II, available at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v02/d13> (20 May, 2021)

<sup>8</sup> Memorandum by the Acting Secretary of War (Patterson) to President Truman (1945) Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, General: Political And Economic Matters, Volume II, available at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v02/d19> (20 May, 2021).

<sup>9</sup> Memorandum by the Acting Secretary of State to President Truman (1945) Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, General: Political And Economic Matters, Volume II, available at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v02/d17> (20 May, 2021).

<sup>10</sup> Holloway, David (1996) *Stalin and the Bomb: The Soviet Union and Atomic Energy, 1939 – 1956*. Yale University Press.

<sup>11</sup> Norris, Robert S.; Kristensen, Hans M. (2010) *Global nuclear weapons inventories, 1945 – 2010*. Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, available at <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.2968/066004008> (20 May, 2021)

its own nuclear capability. Both Soviet and German scientists were working on the bomb in the Soviet Union, while extensive networks of intelligence officers in Western countries provided information on the atomic bomb research to the Soviet intelligence agencies. By the time UNAEC debates started, working groups of scientists had already been established, sources of uranium secured, and locations for the reactors and plants prepared.<sup>12</sup>

### *The two plans*

Another reason that made it impossible for the two countries to come to an agreement on disarmament measures was the pervasive lack of trust. The centerpiece of the early UNAEC process and the testament to how much the lack of trust crippled the idea of disarmament was the collision of the two opposing visions of the future nuclear order — the so-called Baruch plan<sup>13</sup> submitted to UNAEC by the United States and the Gromyko plan<sup>14</sup> — the counterproposal by the USSR. Both countries saw each other's plans and subsequent propositions as an elaborate ruse and did not manage to reconcile their positions.

	<b>Primacy</b>	<b>Enforcement</b>	<b>UNSC Veto</b>
<b>U.S. (Baruch Plan)</b>	International control system first > disarmament later	International authority controls or owns the supply of raw materials, the production of fissionable material, and the use of that material to make bombs. Also has the power to control, inspect, and license all other atomic activities as well as punish perpetrators	UNSC forgoes its veto with respect to the control of atomic energy
<b>USSR (Gromyko Plan)</b>	Disarmament first > discussions on implementation and control later	Individual governments destroy their arsenals and pledge not to produce weapons. No international control.	UNSC veto remains in place

<sup>12</sup> Holloway, David (1996) *Stalin and the Bomb: The Soviet Union and Atomic Energy, 1939-1956*. Yale University Press. P. 220.

<sup>13</sup> The Baruch Plan (1946), available at <http://www.atomicarchive.com/Docs/Deterrence/BaruchPlan.shtml> (20 May, 2021).

<sup>14</sup> Address by the Soviet Representative (Andrei Gromyko) to the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission (1946), available at <http://fissilematerials.org/library/un46.pdf> (20 May, 2021).

	<b>Primacy</b>	<b>Enforcement</b>	<b>UNSC Veto</b>
<b>USSR (1947 proposition)</b>	Disarmament and International Control simultaneously	All atomic energy facilities are in individual government's hands. International Control Commission formed with the right to inspect the facilities.	UNSC veto remains in place

The Baruch plan or the 'international control' approach was based on two earlier documents — the 'Acheson-Lilienthal report'<sup>15</sup> and Vannevar Bush's memorandum.<sup>16 17</sup> They suggested the idea of a 'step-by-step' approach to the creation of an international authority that would oversee all sensitive atomic activities. The plan was primarily concerned with the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons and preventing rival states like the USSR from acquiring one. The abolition of nuclear weapons was something to be achieved later when the international control system, attribution, and punishment mechanisms were established and functioning. Without this particular precondition, the United States saw the idea of global disarmament to be unachievable.<sup>18</sup>

Distrust of the U.S. made three points in the Baruch plan unacceptable to the Soviet diplomats:

- Intrusive mechanisms of inspection of the international commission were seen as an attempt to interfere in the energy policies of other states. U.S. would control and dominate the commission and use it for political gain as well as put Soviet facilities and resources under its control.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>15</sup> A Report on The International Control of Atomic Energy (1946), available at <http://fissilematerials.org/library/ach46.pdf> (20 May, 2021).

<sup>16</sup> Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Scientific Research and Development (Bush) to the Secretary of State (1945) Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, General: Political And Economic Matters, Volume II, available at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v02/d26> (20 May, 2021).

<sup>17</sup> Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Scientific Research and Development (Bush) and the Commanding General, Manhattan Engineer District (Groves), to the Secretary of State (1945) Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, General: Political And Economic Matters, Volume II, available at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v02/d27> (20 May, 2021).

<sup>18</sup> Memorandum by the United States Representative on the Atomic Energy Commission (Baruch) to President Truman (1946) Foreign Relations of the United States, General; the United Nations, Volume I, available at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v01/d445> (20 May, 2021).

<sup>19</sup> Holloway, David (1996) *Stalin and the Bomb: The Soviet Union and Atomic Energy, 1939-1956*. Yale University Press. P. 221.

- Primacy of international control over disarmament was seen as an attempt to preserve the U.S. monopoly on nuclear weapons and to weaken USSR's international standing by preventing it from developing its own.<sup>20 21</sup>
- Proposition for UNSC members to forgo their veto right was also unacceptable as the Soviet Union feared it might be outvoted on the Security Council and was not willing to give up its veto on an issue that was vital to its security.<sup>22</sup>

As a Soviet diplomat and an Assistant to the Secretary General of the United Nations Arkady Sobolev noted in his conversations with the members of the U.S. delegation to the UNAEC, this proposal was seen in essence as a 'plan for world government' for which the world 'was not ready'. 'Soviet Union was not seeking equality, but, rather, freedom to pursue its own policies in complete freedom and without any interference or control from the outside,' he added.<sup>23</sup> The USSR therefore used its right of veto to block the Baruch Plan from proceeding forward.

The Gromyko Plan in turn reflected the position of the Soviet government. It proposed the abolition of the existing arsenals first, and negotiations on any form of control later. The United States saw this as unacceptable as it would 'sacrifice...the very principles which were unanimously endorsed by the United Nations' which would mean 'defrauding the peoples of the world'.<sup>24</sup> In essence, the United States could not trust the Soviet Union to uphold the proposed ban on nuclear weapons without a verification system. The plan was ultimately rejected by the UNAEC.

<sup>20</sup> Molotov's Speech Dismays U.N. Delegates (1946) National Library of Australia, available at <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/69055735> (20 May, 2021).

<sup>21</sup> Gromyko, Andrey (1990) Pamyatnoe. Novye Gorizonty [Memorable. New Horizons]. Izdatel'stvo politicheskoy literatury. P. 348.

<sup>22</sup> Holloway, David (2016) The Soviet Union and the creation of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Cold War History. Volume 16, Issue 2, available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14682745.2015.1124265?src=recsys> (20 May, 2021).

<sup>23</sup> Memorandum by Mr. Franklin A. Lindsay to the United States Representative on the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission (Baruch) (1946) Foreign Relations of the United States, General; the United Nations, Volume I, available at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v01/d494> (20 May, 2021)

<sup>24</sup> Memorandum by The United States Representative on the Atomic Energy Commission (Baruch) to President Truman (1946) Foreign Relations of the United States, General; the United Nations, Volume I, available at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v01/d482> (20 May, 2021).

The Soviet Union later modified and presented its proposal to UNAEC in 1947. The proposal in a sense foreshadowed the system established later through the NPT and the IAEA.<sup>25</sup> The new plan was based on the letter<sup>26</sup> by Dmitry Skobelitsyn – one of the Soviet representatives to the UNAEC and included three main principles:

- atomic facilities should be subject to national ownership and control;
- states should report to the International Authority on the activities at their own facilities;
- the Authority should be permitted to inspect facilities to check on those reports.

However, the proposition was ultimately rejected as it did not live up to the stringent standards of verification desired by the United States.

### *Conclusion*

By the end of Stalin's and Truman's time in power, the disarmament negotiation process was completely deadlocked. Rising confrontation stemming from the clash of two socio-economic systems moved nuclear weapons to the centerstage of military strategies. The United States viewed its arsenal as a counterbalance to Soviet conventional superiority while the USSR considered it vital to catch up with the adversary so as not to allow itself to be destroyed in a potential war with the U.S. The issue of primacy of either the verification and control system or immediate disarmament became the cause of public disagreement, while internally the two governments never truly saw nuclear disarmament as a viable option.

Even though the diplomatic processes continued in the UN First Committee and the Disarmament subcommittee,<sup>27, 28</sup> they were

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<sup>25</sup> Holloway, David (2016) The Soviet Union and the creation of the International Atomic Energy Agency. *Cold War History*. Volume 16, Issue 2, available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14682745.2015.1124265?src=recsys> (last accessed: 20 May, 2021).

<sup>26</sup> Holloway, David (1996) *Stalin and the Bomb: The Soviet Union and Atomic Energy, 1939-1956*. Yale University Press. P. 221.

<sup>27</sup> Department of State Publication. Historical Office Bureau of Public Affairs (1960) *Documents on Disarmament 1945-1959 Volume I 1945-1956*, available at [http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/publications/documents\\_on\\_disarmament/1945-1956/DoD\\_1945-1959\\_VOL\\_I.pdf](http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/publications/documents_on_disarmament/1945-1956/DoD_1945-1959_VOL_I.pdf) (20 May, 2021).

<sup>28</sup> Department of State Publication. Historical Office Bureau of Public Affairs (1960) *Documents on Disarmament 1945-1959 Volume II 1957-1959*, available at

devoid of substance. After the Soviet test in 1949, American policy planning staff received an expert policy assessment stating that even though disarmament negotiations would not lead anywhere,<sup>29</sup> the United States must continue lobbying for an international control plan in the UN all the while continuing to build up its nuclear arsenal to counter the Soviet threat.<sup>30</sup>

Having attained special Cold War significance, the character of disarmament changed, with both sides using it systematically as an instrument for conducting propaganda warfare.<sup>31</sup> Nuclear weapons became the bedrock of strategic planning of both countries,<sup>32, 33, 34, 35, 36</sup> and the stockpiles started to grow exponentially.<sup>37</sup>

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[http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/publications/documents\\_on\\_disarmament/1957-1959/DoD\\_1945-1959\\_VOL\\_II.pdf](http://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/publications/documents_on_disarmament/1957-1959/DoD_1945-1959_VOL_II.pdf) (20 May, 2021).

<sup>29</sup> Minutes of the Second Meeting of the Policy Planning Staff on the International Control of Atomic Energy (1949) Foreign Relations of the United States, National Security Affairs, Foreign Economic Policy, Volume I, available at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v01/d78> (20 May, 2021).

<sup>30</sup> Tal, David (2008) *The American Nuclear Disarmament Dilemma, 1945-1963*. NY.: Syracuse University Press. P. 34.

<sup>31</sup> Blavoukos, S.; Bourantonis, D. (2014) 'Calling the bluff of the Western powers in the United Nations disarmament negotiations,' 1954–55. *Cold War History*. Volume 14, Issue 3, available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14682745.2013.871261> (20 May, 2021).

<sup>32</sup> Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs United States Department of State (1950) 'Milestones: 1945–1952. NSC-68,' available at <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/NSC68> (21 May, 2021)

<sup>33</sup> NSC 162/2 (1953). A Report to the National Security Council by the Executive Secretary on Basic National Security Policy. Federation of American Scientists, available at <https://fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsc-hst/nsc-162-2.pdf> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>34</sup> National Security Archive (2015) U.S. Cold War Nuclear Target Lists Declassified for First Time. National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 538, available at <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/nukevault/ebb538-Cold-War-Nuclear-Target-List-Declassified-First-Ever/> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>35</sup> Holloway, David (1996) *Stalin and the Bomb: The Soviet Union and Atomic Energy, 1939-1956*. Yale University Press.

<sup>36</sup> Savelyev, A.; Detinov, N. (1995) *The Big Five: Arms Control Decision-Making in the Soviet Union*. Praeger.

<sup>37</sup> Norris, Robert S.; Kristensen, Hans M. (2010) Global nuclear weapons inventories, 1945–2010. *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, available at <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.2968/066004008> (21 May, 2021).

## **1965–1968. U.S.-Soviet cooperation on the drafting of the Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)**

### *The need for a global nonproliferation regime*

Disarmament in the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s was seen as an all-or-nothing general and complete affair that was negotiated primarily in a multilateral setting. However, by the end of the 1950s, both the Soviet Union and the United States became more open to the idea of proceeding with at least some partial measures before agreeing on a comprehensive disarmament plan. The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis became the catalyst that prompted the two sides to reassess the possibility of a nuclear escalation and ultimately led to the introduction of the bilateral arms control process as a foundation of their disarmament policies in the end of the 1960s.

By the early 1960s, the idea of a global nuclear nonproliferation regime started to manifest in the higher political circles of both the USSR and the United States. The two superpowers led the negotiations under the auspices of the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee, which culminated with the signing of the Treaty for the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1968.

Experts outline four main reasons that shaped Moscow's and Washington's desire for engagement on this issue:<sup>38</sup>

- The tense confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States between 1958 and 1962 in Berlin and Cuba made the superpowers recognize the need to reduce tensions, halt arms racing, and limit the chances of an accidental nuclear war.
- The idea that if nuclear proliferation was not stopped, there could be a domino effect resulting in dozens of new atomic powers.
- The possibility of West Germany or China gaining nuclear capability threatened the stability of Europe and East Asia which challenged American and Soviet interests.
- Grassroots antinuclear groups gained popularity throughout the world pressuring governments on anti-nuclear agenda.

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<sup>38</sup> Gavin, F. (2010) Nuclear proliferation and non-proliferation during the Cold War. *The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Volume 2: Crises and Détente.* Cambridge University Press. P. 400, available at [https://phobos.ramapo.edu/~theed/Cold\\_War/y%20Cambridge%20CW%20vol%202/Ch%2019%20Nuclear%20proliferation%20and%20non-proliferation%20during.pdf](https://phobos.ramapo.edu/~theed/Cold_War/y%20Cambridge%20CW%20vol%202/Ch%2019%20Nuclear%20proliferation%20and%20non-proliferation%20during.pdf) (21 May, 2021).



*Disarmament for the sake of nonproliferation*

Apart from nuclear nonproliferation, the NPT also concerns nuclear disarmament. At the heart of the treaty lies the so-called 'Grand Bargain': the treaty calls on the nuclear-weapon states to initiate negotiations to eliminate their arsenals (Article VI) and not to assist efforts by non-nuclear-weapon states to acquire nuclear weapons (Article I). At the same time, it requires the non-nuclear-weapon states to forgo the acquisition of nuclear weapons (Article II) and to place all of their nuclear facilities under international safeguards (Article III).<sup>39</sup>

However, in the context of the NPT, the main driving force behind the Soviet and American involvement in negotiations was not their interest in nuclear disarmament – it was their interest in nuclear nonproliferation.

In fact, there was no language resembling Article VI in the superpowers' first drafts for the NPT.<sup>40</sup> There was, however, an understanding on their part that progress on arms control and cessation of the nuclear arms race would be needed in order for the negotiations to succeed and for the Treaty to become sustainable. A common theme throughout the negotiation of the NPT was that parallel progress on arms control and disarmament would be a necessary condition for the success of nonproliferation.<sup>41</sup>

Thus, Article VI was included in the text at the insistence of the non-nuclear-weapon states.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, without its introduction, it would have been almost impossible to successfully negotiate a nonproliferation treaty that a sufficient number of them would have

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<sup>39</sup> Weiss, L. (2003) Nuclear-Weapon States and the Grand Bargain. Arms Control Today, available at [https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2003\\_12/Weiss](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2003_12/Weiss) (21 May, 2021).

<sup>40</sup> Harries, M. (2015) Disarmament as Politics: Lessons from the Negotiation of NPT Article VI. Chatham House, the Royal Institute of International Affairs, available at [https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/field/field\\_document/20150512DisarmamentPoliticsNPTHarriesUpdate2.pdf](https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/field/field_document/20150512DisarmamentPoliticsNPTHarriesUpdate2.pdf) (21 May, 2021).

<sup>41</sup> Harries, M. (2015) Disarmament as Politics: Lessons from the Negotiation of NPT Article VI. Chatham House, the Royal Institute of International Affairs, available at [https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/field/field\\_document/20150512DisarmamentPoliticsNPTHarriesUpdate2.pdf](https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/field/field_document/20150512DisarmamentPoliticsNPTHarriesUpdate2.pdf) (21 May, 2021).

<sup>42</sup> Harries, M. (2015) Disarmament as Politics: Lessons from the Negotiation of NPT Article VI. Chatham House, the Royal Institute of International Affairs, available at [https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/field/field\\_document/20150512DisarmamentPoliticsNPTHarriesUpdate2.pdf](https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/field/field_document/20150512DisarmamentPoliticsNPTHarriesUpdate2.pdf) (21 May, 2021).

signed.<sup>43</sup> During the negotiations, such states as Italy, Japan, Brazil, India, UK, Canada, Mexico, and many others suggested including specific nuclear disarmament steps and means of redress for non-nuclear-weapon states dissatisfied with its' rate, proposed linkage of nonproliferation obligations to new limitations on nuclear arms race and even legal obligations to halt it completely.<sup>44</sup>

#### **Amb. Roland Timerbaev on Article VI**

I would say there are two other vulnerabilities, both lying within the text of the treaty itself. In New York, we managed to agree on the wording of Articles I and II. But we [Soviet Union and the United States] never planned to incorporate Articles IV and VI in their current shape into the treaty, and I believe these two articles to be the weakest of all.

Under Article VI, states are obliged to pursue disarmament negotiations 'in good faith'. The initial draft of that article was proposed by Egypt, or rather by the entity then known as the United Arab Republic. Later on, other non-nuclear-weapon states joined in. There was another draft introduced by Mexico, listing practical measures that were not limited to disarmament. It was proposed, for example, to include [a] nuclear test ban and prohibition of the production of nuclear materials in the scope of the treaty. Using the Mexican draft as a starting point, the Soviet Union and the United States then presented an alternative version of Article VI. There were people in Moscow, such as Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko and his first deputy, Vasily Kuznetsov, who argued that at least some of the practical measures proposed by the non-nuclear-weapon states should be added in the final text of the NPT. But the United States, namely U.S. Ambassador to the UN Arthur Goldberg, insisted that these details should be left out of Article VI, and eventually they prevailed.

<sup>43</sup> Harries, M. (2015) Disarmament as Politics: Lessons from the Negotiation of NPT Article VI. Chatham House, the Royal Institute of International Affairs, available at [https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/field/field\\_document/20150512DisarmamentPoliticsNPTHarriesUpdate2.pdf](https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/field/field_document/20150512DisarmamentPoliticsNPTHarriesUpdate2.pdf) (21 May, 2021).

<sup>44</sup> Bunn, G.; Leonard, J.; Timerbaev, R. (1994) Nuclear Disarmament: How Much Have the Five Nuclear Powers Promised in the Non-Proliferation Treaty? The Lawyers Alliance for World Security, the Committee for National Security and the Washington Council on Non-Proliferation, available at [https://fsi-live.s3.us-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/Bunn\\_Nuclear\\_Disarmament.pdf](https://fsi-live.s3.us-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/Bunn_Nuclear_Disarmament.pdf) (21 May, 2021).

As Ambassador Jayantha Dhanapala remarked, 'Article VI... was the result of developing countries, NNWS like Mexico, whose redoubtable Ambassador Alphonse Garcia-Robles spearheaded the fight for the inclusion of this Article'.<sup>45</sup> Renowned diplomats and drafters of the NPT George Bunn and Roland Timerbaev recall that 'the Soviet Union and the United States had no choice but to heed to those views if they wanted to secure widespread adherence to a non-proliferation treaty'.<sup>46</sup>

### *Superpowers seek compromise*

The main point of dispute between the Soviet Union and the United States was the U.S. Multilateral Force project (MLF) that would permit the use of American nuclear weapons by a multilaterally manned naval force of NATO countries.<sup>47</sup> The superpowers' positions are reflected in their first drafts of the treaty that they submitted in 1965 (see Chapter 2 for more details regarding the negotiations on Articles I, II).

After effectively resolving their differences Washington and Moscow continued to cooperate to resolve issues related to the disarmament agenda. For their next draft the superpowers collaborated to rework the NNWS disarmament proposals — the negotiators got rid of references to any specific measures and obligations in the final text. The next step was to revise the draft to offer a review conference every five years of the treaty's life and change its duration from unlimited to 25 years with a possibility of extension effectively creating a mechanism akin to enforcement for Article VI.<sup>48</sup> In essence they focused on making non-specific political commitment of Article VI

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<sup>45</sup> Dhanapala, J. (2010) The management of NPT diplomacy. Daedalus, available at <https://www.amacad.org/publication/management-npt-diplomacy#A3> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>46</sup> Dhanapala, J. (2010) The management of NPT diplomacy. Daedalus, available at <https://www.amacad.org/publication/management-npt-diplomacy#A3> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>47</sup> Bunn, G.; Leonard, J.; Timerbaev, R. (1994) Nuclear Disarmament: How Much Have the Five Nuclear Powers Promised in the Non-Proliferation Treaty? The Lawyers Alliance for World Security, the Committee for National Security and the Washington Council on Non-Proliferation, available at [https://fsi-live.s3.us-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/Bunn\\_Nuclear\\_Disarmament.pdf](https://fsi-live.s3.us-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/Bunn_Nuclear_Disarmament.pdf) (21 May, 2021).

<sup>48</sup> Bunn, G.; Leonard, J.; Timerbaev, R. (1994) Nuclear Disarmament: How Much Have the Five Nuclear Powers Promised in the Non-Proliferation Treaty? The Lawyers Alliance for World Security, the Committee for National Security and the Washington Council on Non-Proliferation, available at [https://fsi-live.s3.us-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/Bunn\\_Nuclear\\_Disarmament.pdf](https://fsi-live.s3.us-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/Bunn_Nuclear_Disarmament.pdf) (21 May, 2021).

credible, rather than on including a commitment to concrete measures of disarmament.<sup>49</sup>

In George Bunn's opinion, successful cooperation was possible due to several factors:<sup>50</sup>

- Previous experience of negotiating the Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT), which showed that 'the agreement with the Soviets was possible, was useful... that we both had common interests in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and in limiting their testing to some degree'.
- Close relations with the delegates on the other side. 'By the end of my period there in '68, I had learned how to drive a Volga automobile, and drunk a good deal of vodka with fellow Soviet negotiators. There was a complete change in the attitudes and relationships between the two delegations, starting really with the Cuban missile crisis'.
- Creativity during in the drafting process 'negotiators using a "what if" or exploratory kinds of negotiations, which is often essential to reach an agreement'.

### *Conclusion*

The common understanding of the threat of nuclear proliferation led the rival superpowers to work together and find compromise on the contentious provisions of the Treaty. And while the disarmament pillar of the NPT was not the main driving motivation behind the negotiations, mutual understanding on part of the Soviet Union and the United States allowed them to find a precarious compromise not only between their own strategic interests but also between the nuclear haves and have-nots.

In the end, Article VI provided no realistic plan for disarmament or indeed a concrete commitment to perform it. It only vaguely alludes to pursuing negotiations on the issue in 'good faith'. According to Ambassador Mohamed Shaker, 'under the pressure

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<sup>49</sup> Harries, M. (2015) Disarmament as Politics: Lessons from the Negotiation of NPT Article VI. Chatham House, the Royal Institute of International Affairs, available at [https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/field/field\\_document/20150512DisarmamentPoliticsNPTHarriesUpdate2.pdf](https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/field/field_document/20150512DisarmamentPoliticsNPTHarriesUpdate2.pdf) (21 May, 2021).

<sup>50</sup> War and Peace in the Nuclear Age (1986) War and Peace in the Nuclear Age; Haves and Have-Not; Interview with George Bunn, 1986. PBS, available at [https://openvault.wgbh.org/catalog/V\\_0F767B2E981F4131A728F6FA05A9CB29](https://openvault.wgbh.org/catalog/V_0F767B2E981F4131A728F6FA05A9CB29) (21 May, 2021).

of the non-aligned States as well as some of their own allies, the two super-powers merely accepted to undertake to pursue negotiations in good faith but not, as pointed out by one American negotiator, to achieve any disarmament agreement, since it's obviously impossible to predict the exact nature and results of such negotiations'.<sup>51</sup>

Despite that, the rapid growth of nuclear arsenals, real threat of an accidental or sudden nuclear attack, and concerns over further nuclear proliferation facilitated the understanding of the futility of rigid all-encompassing disarmament plans that were tabled mainly for propaganda purposes and compelled the two superpowers to switch to a more productive mode of cooperation which eventually led to a system of bilateral arms control which defined the strategic relationship between the two countries during the Cold War.

## 1985–1991. The Gorbachev Period

### *From the peak of confrontation to détente*

In 1985 Mikhail Gorbachev became the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. He came to power in a turbulent time when the Cold War entered another period of acute confrontation after the détente of the 1970s. After 1979 U.S.-Soviet relations started to rapidly deteriorate with 1983 being referred to as the 'tensest year of the Cold War'.<sup>52</sup> By 1986, nuclear stockpiles of the two countries reached 23,317 warheads on the American and 45,000 warheads on the Soviet side.<sup>53</sup>

However, over the course of the next few years after Gorbachev became the General Secretary of the CPSU, a series of high-level USSR-U.S. summits took place. They culminated in the conclusion

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<sup>51</sup> Shaker, M. (1980) *The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty: Origins and Implementation, 1959-1979* Vol 2. (out of print). P. 567, available at [http://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/mohamed\\_shaker\\_npt\\_vol\\_2.pdf](http://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/mohamed_shaker_npt_vol_2.pdf) (21 May, 2021).

<sup>52</sup> Hoffman, D. (2015) 1983: Turning Point of The Cold War. *Security Index* No. 1 (81), Volume 13, available at <http://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/0/13413286351.pdf> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>53</sup> Norris, Robert S.; Kristensen, Hans M. (2010) *Global nuclear weapons inventories, 1945 – 2010*. *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, available at <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.2968/066004008> (21 May, 2021).

of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces<sup>54</sup> (INF) Treaty in 1987 and opened the way for the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) to be concluded later. For the first time in history, the goal of nuclear abolition did not only become front and center in nuclear diplomacy but was also substantiated by significant progress in actual arms reduction, spelling the end of the nuclear arms race and, eventually, the Cold War.

While institutional experience that the nuclear decision-making bodies and negotiators of both countries received in the 1969-1979 Strategic Arms Limitation Talks certainly aided in achieving swift progress in negotiations, there were several other underlying factors that made the rapid progress possible.

### *Reagan and Gorbachev's abolitionist beliefs*

One of the most important factors was that both Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan earnestly saw nuclear disarmament as one of their personal policy goals. In contrast to the negotiations of the past, the idea of eventual complete disarmament was not regarded as a distant prospect but as a tangible outcome to be achieved through the arms control process and general rapprochement.

In fact, in the very first letter that Reagan sent to Gorbachev, he expressed hope that the arms control negotiations would provide them with a genuine chance to make progress toward their 'common ultimate goal of eliminating nuclear weapons'.<sup>55</sup> There are many statements<sup>56</sup> from the presidential administration members who described Reagan as an abolitionist, testifying that he would often reiterate the idea of a nuclear-free world in personal conversations with his advisors and during cabinet meetings.

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<sup>54</sup> Bureau Of Arms Control, Verification, And Compliance, U.S. Department of State (1987) Treaty Between The United States Of America And The Union Of Soviet Socialist Republics On The Elimination Of Their Intermediate-Range And Shorter-Range Missiles (INF Treaty), available at <https://www.state.gov/t/avc/trty/102360.htm> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>55</sup> National Security Archive (1985) President Ronald Reagan Letter to General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev March 11, available at <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB172/Doc2.pdf> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>56</sup> Hoekstra, D. (1997) 'Presidential Beliefs and the Reagan Paradox,' *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 27, No. 3, The Presidency in the World, available at <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/27551761.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3Ac0124fb02c6d1ad9184fa64bc845765c> (21 May, 2021).

Gorbachev's unique personality,<sup>57</sup> and determination to change the acutely adversarial relationship between East and West positively informed his attitude towards nuclear abolition. According to Gorbachev's personal interpreter Pavel Palazchenko, foreign policy advisor Anatoliy Chernyaev, as well as other high-level Soviet officials, the General Secretary did not see the disarmament rhetoric as a bargaining chip in negotiations but as a genuine way to achieve the vision of the nuclear-free world that he firmly believed in.<sup>58, 59</sup>

### *Paradigm shift in the Soviet foreign policy*

Another key factor was that Gorbachev's 'new thinking' invited a radical reevaluation of Soviet foreign and military policy which resulted in relentless engagement in the arms control talks, sweeping propositions, and radical concessions on the part of the USSR. Some examples include the unilateral Soviet nuclear test moratorium of 1985,<sup>60</sup> the plan of complete abolition of nuclear weapons by the year 2000,<sup>61</sup> decision to 'untie the INF package' from the space arms issue<sup>62</sup>, SS23/OTR-23 missiles inclusion into the INF treaty,<sup>63</sup> as well as the decision to exclude Britain's and France's nuclear arsenals from the INF negotiations in order to push it forward.

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<sup>57</sup> Zubok, V. (2002) Gorbachev and the End of the Cold War: Perspectives on History and Personality. *Cold War History*, 2:2, available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/713999954?needAccess=true> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>58</sup> Palazhenko, P. (2018) Interview with the author. Moscow, November 15, 2018

<sup>59</sup> Sokov, N. (2007) 'Reykjavik Summit: The Legacy and a Lesson for the Future,' Nuclear Threat Initiative, available at <https://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/reykjavik-summit-legacy/> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>60</sup> National Security Archive (1985) Mikhail Gorbachev Letter to Ronald Reagan, available at <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB172/Doc28.pdf> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>61</sup> National Security Archive (1986) General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev Letter to President Ronald Reagan, available at <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/dc.html?doc=3131897-Document-01-General-Secretary-Mikhail-Gorbachev> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>62</sup> National Security Archive (1987) 'Politburo February 26, 1987. On Soviet-American Relations and Negotiations on Nuclear and Space Armaments,' available at <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB238/russian/Final1987-02-26%20Politburo.pdf> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>63</sup> National Security Archive (1987) Politburo July 9, 1987 [Excerpt], available at <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB238/russian/Final1987-07-09Politburo.pdf> (21 May, 2021).

As General Lieutenant Nikolay Detinov and General Staff Chief Marshal Sergei Akhromeev state in their memoirs,<sup>64, 65</sup> all decisions during arms control negotiations were taken after careful process of developing a common understanding on what the Soviet position should be. It follows then that not only at the top levels but also at the lower, deputy, levels of the Soviet leadership it was becoming more and more obvious that gaining superiority in nuclear arsenal quality or quantity would not ensure a secure position but would instead bring forth a new cycle of the arms race. Strong support of the ideas of disarmament in the Politburo and removal of the more conservative military officials<sup>66</sup> created a strong basis for renewal of the arms control process.

Vladislav Zubok notes:

Gorbachev and his reform-minded assistants began to view disarmament as an inextricable part of the process of reforming not only the Soviet Union but the entire global order. Throughout, we see Gorbachev's surprising and consistent nuclear abolitionism. Gorbachev's emphasis on nuclear disarmament was enduring and went far beyond the usual concerns of normal statesmanship.<sup>67</sup>

Factors outlined above created a unique environment in which apprehension towards the bomb in the political establishment of the two countries converged with an overall new approach towards strategic relationship between them — one that invited trust, verification, and concessions.

### *Geneva Summit*

The 1985 Geneva Summit was the very first in the line of Reagan-Gorbachev high-level meetings. It concluded with a joint statement<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Savelyev, A.; Detinov, N. (1995) *The Big Five: Arms Control Decision-Making in the Soviet Union*. pp. 111-139. Praeger.

<sup>65</sup> Akhromeev, S. F.; Kornienko, G. M. (1992) *Glazami marshala i diplomata. Kriticheskiy vzgljad na vneshnjuju politiku SSSR do i posle 1985 goda* [Through the Eyes of a Marshal and a Diplomat. A Critical View on the Soviet Foreign Policy before and after 1985], Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya.

<sup>66</sup> Zubok, Vladislav (2000) *Gorbachev's Nuclear Learning*. Boston Review, available at <https://bostonreview.net/archives/BR25.2/zubok.html> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> Joint Soviet-United States Statement on the Summit Meeting in Geneva (1985), available at <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/joint-soviet-united-states-statement-the-summit-meeting-geneva> (21 May, 2021).



that outlined the areas of agreement between the two leaders and listed topics for further negotiations. The joint statement also included a phrase that Reagan had already used a number of times in his speeches up to that moment – an affirmation that a ‘nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought’. The statement, which was the first joint public affirmation of the phrase, was repeated later in other joint Reagan-Gorbachev communiqués and appeared in the preamble of both START and START II Treaties.<sup>69</sup> Five main factors led to the inclusion of the statement in the final document:

- *Reagan and Gorbachev’s personalities*

As mentioned above, both Reagan and Gorbachev personally detested nuclear weapons and believed in the eventual global nuclear abolition. The humanitarian message of the statement pertained to their sensibilities.

- *Common longer-term goal*

Both countries wanted the summit to be a success to have the opportunity to continue negotiations on arms control issues.

- *Political image*

Both leaders wanted to create a political image of a peacemaker both for domestic and foreign audiences.<sup>70</sup>

- *The ‘war scare’ of the early 1980s*

Reagan’s nuclear buildup and aggressive rhetoric, NATO’s nuclear wargames like Able Archer 83, and deployment of Pershing II missiles in Europe have instilled a genuine fear in the Soviet leadership that the U.S. was planning a nuclear strike on the Soviet Union.<sup>71</sup> Getting a guarantee against it, even just in the form of a joint statement, was important for Gorbachev.

- *Norm of the nuclear nonuse*

The statement wasn’t born right there at the summit. It was a natural evolution of a nuclear use taboo that was present in different forms in some of the previous détente-era U.S.-Soviet agreements.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Potter, William; Dunn, Lewis (2020) ‘Time to Renew the Reagan-Gorbachev Principle,’ available at <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2020-03/features/time-renew-reagan-gorbachev-principle> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>70</sup> Isleifsson, S.; Chartier, D. (2011) *Iceland and Images of the North*. The Reykjavik Academy.

<sup>71</sup> Hamilton, R. (2018) ‘1983: The Year of Living Dangerously,’ available at <https://www.fpri.org/article/2018/12/able-archer-at-35-lessons-of-the-1983-war-scare/> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

Both sides did not expect any breakthrough agreements to be concluded during their first meeting and decided to focus their attention on something that can help to create a consensus amid divisions on more substantive security and arms control issues. Letters exchange between Gorbachev and Reagan reveals early plans to make a joint statement specifically on the inadmissibility of nuclear war.<sup>73</sup> Ambassador Dobrynin recalls that in preparation for the 1985 Geneva summit there was a memo presented before Politburo drafted by the KGB, Foreign Ministry, and the Defense Ministry that read that: 'the best we can expect [from the Geneva summit] is a joint statement that both sides will proceed from the assumption that nuclear war is unacceptable and unwinnable'.<sup>74</sup>

The statement in the case of the Geneva summit served as a foundation upon which further progress then was built. After the summit, the renewed arms control and disarmament dialogue started gaining momentum.

### *Soviet global nuclear disarmament plan*

In the context of global zero, the next summit in Reykjavik deserves special attention as the event that not only helped to resolve a number of practical issues, which moved the INF and START negotiations forward and ensured further nuclear reductions, but also remained in history as a near successful attempt of leaders of nuclear powers to agree on the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.<sup>75</sup>

Leading up to the Reykjavik summit, a detailed program of total elimination of nuclear weapons was put forward by the top brass of the Soviet Union. Sergei Akhromeev and Deputy Foreign Minister Georgy Kornienko state in their memoirs that General Staff 'understood the danger of accumulating huge nuclear potential as destructive for the planet' and believed that the United States would share this concern. The plan was supposed to, at the very least, foster

<sup>73</sup> Reagan Presidential Library (1985) Memorandum for the President, available at: <https://www.thereaganfiles.com/19850912.pdf> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>74</sup> Savranskaya, S.; Blanton, T. (2016). *The Last Superpower Summits: Reagan, Gorbachev and Bush. Conversations that Ended the Cold War* (Melyakova A., Ed.). Budapest; New York: Central European University Press, available at <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7829/j.ctt1kk65kn>, p.11.

<sup>75</sup> Sokov, N. (2007) *Reykjavik Summit: The Legacy and a Lesson for the Future*. Nuclear Threat Initiative, available at <https://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/reykjavik-summit-legacy/> (21 May, 2021).

significant cuts to nuclear arsenals and reduce risk of a military confrontation.

The plan and its reception by the United States clearly demonstrate that while the Soviet Union changed its position on nuclear abolition quite drastically, the White House was not ready for grandiose revisions of its national security postulates, with the idea of nuclear deterrence remaining steadily in place even through the process of negotiations. It also demonstrates the conflicting positions that doomed the global disarmament pivot which culminated at Reykjavik.

Gorbachev himself took the plan very seriously. Ultimately, the goal for Reykjavik, as he states in his instructions for the negotiation group, was making first steps towards agreement based on the plan.<sup>76</sup> After sending the proposed program for abolition to Reagan he announced it publicly before the CPSU Central Committee in January 1986.

The program envisioned three stages:

- 1) A 50-percent reduction of Soviet and U.S. strategic nuclear weapons (in the period of over 5 to 8 years) and an agreement to eliminate all medium-range nuclear weapons in Europe.
- 2) Starting in 1990, Britain, France, and China would join the process by freezing their arsenals, and all nuclear powers would eliminate their tactical nuclear weapons.
- 3) Starting in 1995, elimination of all remaining nuclear weapons is to be completed by 1999.

Other crucial elements of the Soviet program included:

- a multilateral ban on deployment of space weapons;
- strict adherence to the ABM Treaty;
- a nuclear testing ban.

After the plan's announcement Reagan launched a thorough process within the administration to study the feasibility of the Soviet proposal and ways to respond, given his own interest in nuclear abolition. He wrote in his diary: 'Some wanted to tag it as publicity stunt. I said no. Let's say we share their overall goals & now want to work out the details. If it is a publicity stunt, it will be revealed by them'.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> National Security Archive (1986) Anatoly Chernyaev's Notes: Gorbachev's Instructions to the Reykjavik Preparation Group, available at <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB203/Document05.pdf> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>77</sup> Anderson, A.; Anderson, M. (2009) Reagan's Secret War: The Untold Story of His Fight to Save the World from Nuclear Disaster, Crown/Archetype. P. 272.

As a result of policy study, several options were presented before the president.<sup>78</sup>

- 1) Not to take any steps in response, basically treating Gorbachev's proposal as propaganda.
- 2) To provide a general response without detailed multi-years plans and to concentrate on the first phase of Gorbachev's proposal.
- 3) To reciprocate with a specific plan, starting with INF and START reductions and to meet Gorbachev's concerns about Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) and ABM while proposing substantive changes to U.S. positions on START and INF.

There was a multitude of views on the issue in the U.S. administration,<sup>79,80,81</sup> but Reagan himself favored a moderate approach<sup>82</sup> stating that he welcomes the Soviet proposals and suggested moving ahead with bilateral 50 percent reductions in strategic nuclear forces, as the United States have proposed in Geneva, while also actively negotiating an INF agreement.

However, that was the extent to which the White House was ready to go at that moment. Declassified U.S. documents demonstrate that

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<sup>78</sup> National Security Archive (1986) Arms Control Support Group paper for Senior Arms Control Group OWL 20 Responding to Gorbachev's January Proposals, available at <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu//dc.html?doc=3131898-Documents-02-Arms-Control-Support-Group-paper-for> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>79</sup> National Security Archive (1986) The White House Draft Memorandum for the President from John M Poindexter Guidance for the Arms Control Support Group, available at <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu//dc.html?doc=3131923-Documents-27-The-White-House-Draft-Memorandum-for> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>80</sup> National Security Archive (1986) The White House Memorandum from John M Poindexter to the President Background Material for the February 3 NSPG Meeting on Responding to Gorbachev, available at <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu//dc.html?doc=3131904-Documents-08-The-White-House-Memorandum-from-John> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>81</sup> National Security Archive (1986) The White House National Security Decision Directive Number 210 Ronald Reagan Allied Consultations on the U.S. Response to General Secretary Gorbachev's January 14 1986 Arms Control Proposal, available at <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu//dc.html?doc=3131906-Documents-10-The-White-House-National-Security> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>82</sup> National Security Archive (1986) The White House National Security Decision Directive Number 210 Ronald Reagan Allied Consultations on the U.S. Response to General Secretary Gorbachev's January 14 1986 Arms Control Proposal, available at <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu//dc.html?doc=3131906-Documents-10-The-White-House-National-Security> (21 May, 2021).

despite the apparent change in Soviet foreign policy the United States and its allies were still wary of the proposed disarmament plan, seeing it as a possible propaganda stunt.<sup>83</sup> Until the conventional and other force imbalances, regional conflicts, obtaining Soviet commitment to the peaceful competition were addressed, nuclear deterrence was to remain 'fully effective'. Additionally, the NSC guidance on public handling of Soviet arms control proposals<sup>84</sup> instructed the members of the administration to emphasize security conditions to be achieved before 'we can seriously contemplate a nuclear-free world'. The guidance outlined problems with Soviet positions that should be pointed out as 'unacceptable,' for instance, the 'grandiose public concept for eliminating nuclear weapons'.

### *The Reykjavik Summit*

Famously, during the Reykjavik summit the issue of complete nuclear disarmament came straight up: Reagan said, 'It would be fine with me if we eliminated all nuclear weapons'. Gorbachev replied, 'We can do that,'<sup>85</sup> while George Shultz exclaimed: 'Let's do it'.<sup>86</sup> This marked the first time when the leaders of the two opposing super-powers vocally expressed their joint support for nuclear abolition during official arms control talks. Considering the breakthroughs achieved on the topic of reductions in nuclear arsenals in that period, it is fair to say this was quite possibly the closest two countries ever got to a substantial global zero agreement or, at least, a blueprint

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<sup>83</sup> National Security Archive (1986) National Security Council John M Poindexter Memorandum for the President Allied Views on a Response to Gorbachev Reports from Ambassadors Nitze and Rowny Undated, available at <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/dc.html?doc=3131909-Document-13-National-Security-Council-John-M> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>84</sup> National Security Archive (1986) National Security Council Memorandum for John M Poindexter from Steven E Steiner Response to Gorbachev Public Diplomacy Plan, available at <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu//dc.html?doc=3131913-Document-17-National-Security-Council-Memorandum> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>85</sup> Bunn, G.; Rhineland, J. (2007) Reykjavik Revisited: Toward a World Free of Nuclear Weapons. World Security Institute and Lawyers Alliance for World Security, available at [https://fsi-live.s3.us-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/Bunn-Rhineland-Reykjavik\\_Sept07.pdf](https://fsi-live.s3.us-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/Bunn-Rhineland-Reykjavik_Sept07.pdf) (21 May, 2021).

<sup>86</sup> Gelder, S. (2008) No Nuclear Weapons: An Interview with George Shultz, Nuclear Age Peace, Foundation available at (last accessed: August 7, 2019)<https://www.wagingpeace.org/no-nuclear-weapons-an-interview-with-george-shultz/> (21 May, 2021).

for it. As George Schultz recalls the situation was unique because Reykjavik brought together two leaders who passionately believed in nuclear disarmament and both were prepared to act on that belief.<sup>87</sup>

Ultimately though, the issue of the Reagan administration's SDI – a space-based ballistic missile defense system – buried the potential agreement. Reagan earnestly believed SDI to be a necessary component of a nuclear-free world. All the while, the Soviet side saw it as destabilizing and dangerous, recognizing it as an attempt by the United States to gain first-strike advantage.

Nikolai Sokov argues,<sup>88</sup> that the two countries were simply not yet ready to tackle a fundamental decision such as global disarmament – they lacked the conceptual foundation, even minimal experience in actual reductions, and, above all, many important issues were left outside the purview of negotiations.

Nevertheless, Reykjavik became an important stepping stone on the way to the signing of the INF and START I treaties in the coming years. It also encapsulates the bold optimism towards disarmament that overtook to some extent the political leadership of both countries and displays the value of mutual trust and the importance of flexibility in arms control negotiations.

## Conclusion

From the heights of their nuclear confrontation the two superpowers came to unprecedented massive strategic and short/intermediate forces reductions establishing stable sustainable nuclear cooperation by the beginning of the 1990s. Abolitionist ideas among the Soviet and U.S. leadership as well as a massive shift in the Soviet perception of its own place in the world and notions of the relationship between nuclear weapons and security opened the way for fruitful arms control agreements and eventual push for the United States to shift its perception of the Soviet threat as well. And while Gorbachev's and Reagan's visions of the nuclear-free world never came to be, they paved the way for significant lowering of the nuclear threat.

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<sup>87</sup> Sokov, N. (2007) Reykjavik Summit: The Legacy and a Lesson for the Future. Nuclear Threat Initiative, available at <https://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/reykjavik-summit-legacy/> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER 10

# COMPARING APPROACHES TOWARDS GLOBAL ZERO IN THE MODERN PERIOD

*Vladislav Chernavskikh*

With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, “vertical” nonproliferation – advancement and stockpiling of existing nuclear arsenals – was becoming less of a concern to states parties to the NPT compared to the potential “horizontal” proliferation – spread of nuclear weapons to new countries.<sup>1</sup>

Russian and U.S. nuclear forces were cut dramatically: START I entered into force in 1994 and START II was negotiated and signed in 1993, while unilateral Presidential Nuclear Initiatives prompted withdrawal and elimination of a significant share of Russian and U.S. non-strategic nuclear arsenals. The Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction program enabled the nuclear disarmament of the former Soviet Republics of Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan. The South Africa dismantled its nuclear program and joined the NPT, Iraq’s program was curtailed through international effort, and an Agreed Framework was negotiated between North Korea and the United States to stop the former from acquiring weapons-grade fissile material.

This chapter will attempt to investigate approaches and attitudes towards the issue of complete nuclear disarmament in public policy, political establishments and nuclear decision-making mechanisms of Russia and the United States after the Cold War examining a few cases when the political pivot to that goal seemed the most active.

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<sup>1</sup> Leigh-Phippard, H. (1997) ‘Multilateral diplomacy at the 1995 NPT review and extension conference,’ *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 167-190, available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09592299708406048> (21 May, 2021).

## 1995–2000. NPT review process and progress on Article VI obligations

After the end of the Cold War which was followed by a significant amelioration in the strategic relationship between Russia and the U.S., substantial diplomatic progress on nuclear disarmament obligations enshrined in Article VI of the NPT was made in the framework of the NPT review process. The momentum didn't last for long – the George W. Bush administration's nuclear policy has effectively neglected the diplomatic commitments on disarmament made by its predecessor. Nevertheless, the achievements of the 1995 and 2000 NPT review conferences remain as an outstanding example of effective Russia-U.S. diplomatic cooperation on their disarmament obligations under the cornerstone treaty.

### *1995 NPT Review Conference*

The first NPT review conference to be held after the end of the Cold War, the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, had two main tasks before it: in addition to the usual mission of reviewing the treaty's implementation states parties were to negotiate and decide on whether the NPT should be extended indefinitely or for an additional set period or periods of time. Western and Eastern European groups believed that for the Treaty to be strengthened, it needed to be extended indefinitely, while the non-aligned states argued that an indefinite extension would perpetuate its weaknesses and inequalities and, thus, either wanted the NPT to be extended only for a limited period, or wanted to have another review conference at a future point to decide the future of the treaty.<sup>2</sup>

On the central issue of the 1995 conference Russian and American positions converged – both nuclear superpowers had a firm goal of extending the treaty indefinitely. 'Our main task at the '95 Conference was the extension. This was the crux of the matter, and then how we get it was another matter' – states Grigory Berdennikov, Russia's chief negotiator at the 1995 conference. Thomas Graham, director of the U.S. ACDA at the time recalls that 'The United States would never, under any circumstances, vote for

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



anything but indefinite extension. We didn't care about consensus, and that was the line we took'.<sup>3</sup>

Prior to the conference, the Clinton administration launched a diplomatic campaign, sending officials to engage with the governments of the NAM states, promoting the idea of indefinite extension. Even the highest levels of the American political establishment became involved in lobbying for the extension.<sup>4</sup> In addition, U.S., Russia UK and France issued a four-power statement on nonproliferation to the CD, in which they reaffirmed their commitment to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament. Finally, all NWS sought to provide improved security assurances to NNWS, unilaterally through the issuing of statements on negative security assurances and collectively through the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 984 on positive security assurances.<sup>5</sup>

In the end, the conference unanimously adopted a 'package deal': in addition to extending the NPT indefinitely, decisions on Strengthening the Review Process, on Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, and a Resolution on the Middle East were adopted.

Decision on Principles and Objectives outlined the so-called 'yardsticks' for assessing progress on all of the most contentious areas covered by the NPT Review Process. In regard to Article VI, it laid out a 'program of action' for further nuclear disarmament, which called for negotiating the CTBT, a fissile materials treaty, and for the "determined pursuit" by the nuclear-weapon states of "systematic and progressive efforts" to reduce nuclear arsenals.

The Decision served as an additional incentive for NNWS to support the extension – a supplementary concession from the NWS addressing their concerns about the implementation of the Treaty once it was extended. It was a price that the NWS were willing to pay to have the treaty extended by consensus. The key part was to avoid any conditions being attached to them. According to a South

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<sup>3</sup> Onderco, M.; Nuti, L. (2020) 'Extending the NPT? A Critical Oral History of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference,' Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, available at <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/media/uploads/documents/Extending%20the%20NPT%20-%20A%20Critical%20Oral%20History%20of%20the%201995%20Review%20and%20Extension%20Conference.pdf> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>4</sup> Dunn, L. (1995) 'High Noon for the NPT,' *Arms Control Today*, vol. 25, no. 6, pp. 3–9, available at [www.jstor.org/stable/23625630](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23625630) (21 May, 2021).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

African negotiator Peter Goosen,<sup>6</sup> the proposal was born out of an idea to push for compliance without jeopardizing the Treaty itself – that’s why the document opted for principles that would have moral strength and could be seen as binding without imposing a legally binding conditionality. As there was no conditionality between the elements of the package, the outcome was satisfactory for the NWS.

The decision was a significant event – it marked the first time that the NWS made such an elaborate commitment that expanded on their original obligation to strive for nuclear disarmament enshrined in the Article VI of the Treaty and created certain expectations for further progress on disarmament at the 2000 Review Conference.

### *2000 NPT Review Conference*

During the 1995-2000 review period, the NPT regime saw positive and negative developments alike. One on hand, the CTBT was negotiated, reductions in nuclear weapons have occurred under START I and START II was ratified by Russia; the UK and France have reduced their warhead quantities, types, and the number of deployment locations, and the IAEA safeguards have been strengthened as have the Zangger Committees export control mechanisms.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, U.S. Ratification of START II 1997 extension protocols and the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty succession, demarcation, and confidence-building agreements had stalled as the U.S. was planning to amend the ABM Treaty and create a new missile defense system. Furthermore, Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests in 1998 and missile tests in North Korea struck a serious blow to the nonproliferation regime and international security. The stalemate on the FMCT in the CD, rejection of CTBT by the U.S. Senate, and reaffirmations of elaborate nuclear weapons doctrines by Russia and the U.S. were also among the biggest grievances for the disarmament advocates.

Despite the initial array of overwhelmingly pessimistic forecasts<sup>8</sup> predicting that ‘the stage is set for a messy and corrosive NPT

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<sup>6</sup> Welsh, S. (1995) Delegate perspectives on the 1995 NPT review and extension conference.

<sup>7</sup> Reaching Critical Will (2000) News in Review, available at (last accessed: April 24, 2020) [http://reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/NIR2000/nir\\_24april.pdf](http://reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/NIR2000/nir_24april.pdf) (21 May, 2021).

<sup>8</sup> Johnson, Rebecca (2000) The NPT Review: Disaster Averted. Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, vol. 56, no. 4, pp. 52-57, available at <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.2968/056004013> (21 May, 2021).

Review Conference,<sup>9</sup> the 2000 NPT Review Conference went down in history as one of the most successful, concluding with a final document that solidified the 1995 indefinite extension decision and further defined the nuclear disarmament program of action or 'practical steps,' including an 'unequivocal undertaking' by the NWS to eliminate their nuclear arsenals.<sup>10</sup> Overall, the result was a robust and comprehensive outlook on the future and the past of treaty. 'When the delegates returned home, there was a sense that the treaty was in good shape'.<sup>11</sup>

One of the key components to the successful conference was the active participation of the New Agenda Coalition (NAC) – a group of seven states (Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, and Sweden) that promoted the disarmament agenda by building a compromise with the NWS. As some experts posit, the emergence of New Agenda Coalition as a powerful negotiating and pressurizing force at the Conference was more important than the outcome document itself.<sup>12</sup>

The P5 knew that in order to facilitate a successful outcome they would need to act as a unified grouping. Prior to the Conference, to clearly demarcate areas of agreement and disagreement and develop a joint statement, they've held a series of meetings. Among other things, they have agreed to avoid inflammatory rhetoric in their statements. However, a disagreement over the U.S. plans to deploy a new national missile defense system and the role the ABM Treaty's impact on strategic stability persisted.

Russia-U.S. relationship in that period was under a serious strain brought on by the conflict in Yugoslavia and NATO's European expansion. Furthermore, Russian and U.S. perspectives on strategic stability and arms control started to diverge.

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<sup>9</sup> Davis, Zachary (1999) 'NPT 2000: Is the Treaty in Trouble?' *Arms Control Today*, vol. 29, no. 8, pp. 10 – 14, available at [www.jstor.org/stable/23626163](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23626163) (21 May, 2021).

<sup>10</sup> Du Preez, J. (2008) 'Avoiding a Perfect Storm: Recharting the NPT Review Process,' *Arms Control Today*, vol. 38, no. 8, pp. 13 – 18, available at [www.jstor.org/stable/23628509](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23628509) (21 May, 2021).

<sup>11</sup> Müller, H. (2014) *The NPT Review Conferences*, in *The Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime at a Crossroads*, Institute for National Security Studies, p. 22, available at [https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/180773/memo137%20\(5\)\\_May%2020.pdf](https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/180773/memo137%20(5)_May%2020.pdf) (21 May, 2021).

<sup>12</sup> Vanaik, A. (2000) 'Sixth NPT Review Conference,' *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol. 35, no. 39, pp. 3468 – 3470, available at <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4409765> (21 May, 2021).

Russian position, delivered in the opening statement by Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov,<sup>13</sup> was that the ABM Treaty is a 'key to strategic stability and an important condition for any future strategic weapons reductions'. Any amendment to the treaty or deployment of additional missile defense systems would undermine any existing disarmament and arms control agreements. Instead, Russia proposed addressing missile threats and missile proliferation through an alternative 'Global Missile and Missile Technologies Non-Proliferation Control System' and stated that it was prepared to consider steps to reduce U.S. and Russian strategic arsenals to 1,500 warheads but only if the ABM Treaty is to stay. Minister Ivanov also underlined the Russian Duma's ratification of the CTBT and START II, which positively influenced the dynamic at the conference.<sup>14</sup>

U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, while delivering the opening statement,<sup>15</sup> welcomed Russia's recent ratification of START II and CTBT and listed other Article VI-related measures that the U.S. has been undertaking in the recent past. The U.S. statement outright rejected the notion that deployment of the missile defense system will influence strategic stability between Russia and the United States in any way since it's not going to be able to 'degrade the Russian deterrent,' and underscored that the ABM Treaty can be 'easily amended'.

The difference in the perception of that key strategic issue was a serious roadblock to achieving a unified P5 position. However, soon after the opening day of the conference, Ivanov had a meeting with President Clinton and Secretary of State Albright in Washington DC. 'The Foreign Minister and I devoted much of our time to stra-

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<sup>13</sup> United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (2000) 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Final Document Volume III Part IV, available at (last accessed: April 24, 2020)<https://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/WMD/Nuclear/pdf/finaldocs/2000%20-%20NY%20-%20NPT%20Review%20Conference%20-%20Final%20Document%20Part%20IV.pdf> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>14</sup> Johnson, Rebecca (2000) The NPT Review: Disaster Averted. Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, vol. 56, no. 4, pp. 52-57, available at <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.2968/056004013> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>15</sup> United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (2000) 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Final Document Volume III Part IV, available at <https://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/WMD/Nuclear/pdf/finaldocs/2000%20-%20NY%20-%20NPT%20Review%20Conference%20-%20Final%20Document%20Part%20IV.pdf> (21 May, 2021).

tegic arms control,'<sup>16</sup> Albright stated. During the visit, the two sides swiftly reached an agreement on a mutually satisfactory language on the ABM Treaty<sup>17</sup> to use in a joint P5 statement. It read 'preserving and strengthening the ABM Treaty as a cornerstone of strategic stability and as a basis for further reductions of strategic offensive weapons'.<sup>18</sup> The way that the sentence was constructed left enough room for interpretation – for the Russian side it meant the United States would not abrogate the treaty but there was some room left for the U.S. to claim that 'strengthening' does not permit certain modifications. This language also proved valuable later for achieving consensus on the same issue in the conference's final document.

The difference in positions remained unresolved, but to ensure that it would not lead to a deadlock in negotiations and a failure of the conference, Russia and the United States agreed to keep the ABM issue out.<sup>19</sup> By submitting a joint statement, the P5 sent a powerful message to NNWS.

With that, the stage was set for negotiations in the nuclear disarmament subsidiary body. Several compromise drafts based on weakened original NAC proposals were submitted and discussed, but negotiations were stalling. To expedite achieving a consensus, the United States approached the NAC countries and suggested a direct closed NWS-NAC meeting. All P5 members in some capacity insisted that many actions proposed by NAC must be dependent on strategic stability and undiminished security for all<sup>20</sup> Russia opposed several provisions in NAC proposals, including the 'unequivocal undertaking', on which its delegation was supported by France, and

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<sup>16</sup> Federation of American Scientists (2000) Transcript: Albright, Ivanov Joint Press Briefing at the State Dept, available at (last accessed: April 24, 2020)<https://fas.org/nuke/control/abmt/news/000427-abmt-usia2.htm> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>17</sup> Wulf, Norman (2000) 'Observations From the 2000 NPT Review Conference,' Arms Control Today, available at <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2000-11/features/observations-2000-npt-review-conference>.

<sup>18</sup> United Nations (200) 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Final Document Volume11 Part III, available at (last accessed: April 24, 2020)[https://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=NPT/CONF.2000/28%20\(Part%20III\)](https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=NPT/CONF.2000/28%20(Part%20III)) (21 May, 2021).

<sup>19</sup> Wulf, Norman (2000) 'Observations From the 2000 NPT Review Conference,' Arms Control Today, available at <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2000-11/features/observations-2000-npt-review-conference>.

<sup>20</sup> Rauf, Tariq (2000) 'An Unequivocal Success? Implications of the NPT Review Conference,' Arms Control Today, available at <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2000-07/features/unequivocal-success-implications-npt-review-conference> (21 May, 2021).

the paragraph on nonstrategic nuclear weapons. It especially vigorously requested the practical disarmament steps to be conditioned on 'strategic stability'. NAC states refused the language on the basis of it having a possibility of being used as an excuse for not following up on the disarmament commitments, while China wasn't willing to subscribe to commitments that had to do with transparency.

A breakthrough moment came when the Russian ambassador Yuri Kapralov declared that his delegation accepted the paper as it is 'in the spirit of compromise'.<sup>21</sup> That gesture compelled China and France to concede on their own national objections. Eventually, the parties managed to reach a compromise between the initial radical NAC drafts and the "weaker" drafts prepared by the P5. The consensus language was just ambiguous enough to please all sides.<sup>22</sup>

The final document that emerged from these negotiations, contained an unprecedented level of nuclear disarmament commitments on part of the NWS. Even though some states remained unsatisfied with the final version, noting that it was noticeably weaker than the original drafts submitted by NAC,<sup>23</sup> it still broke new grounds. Much of the language in the '13 steps'<sup>24</sup> was never explicitly or, sometimes, even implicitly acknowledged by the NWS before. One of the most significant first-time commitments was an 'unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament' This marked the strongest political commitment on nuclear abolition by the nuclear-weapon states up to that point and distinctly delinked the goals of nuclear and general and complete disarmament. Further strengthening that language, other strong first-time commitments were calls for a 'principle of irreversibility' in nuclear disarmament and arms control, and for 'increased transparency with regard to ...

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<sup>21</sup> Johnson, Rebecca (2000) *The NPT Review: Disaster Averted*. Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, vol. 56, no. 4, pp. 52-57, available at <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.2968/056004013> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>22</sup> Rauf, Tariq (2000) 'An Unequivocal Success? Implications of the NPT Review Conference,' *Arms Control Today*, available at <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2000-07/features/unequivocal-success-implications-npt-review-conference> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (2000) *2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Final Document Volume III Part IV*, available at <https://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/assets/WMD/Nuclear/pdf/finaldocs/2000%20-%20NY%20-%20NPT%20Review%20Conference%20-%20Final%20Document%20Part%20IV.pdf> (21 May, 2021).

nuclear weapons capabilities and the implementation of agreements pursuant to Article VI'. The text also addressed tactical nuclear arsenals by calling for 'further reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons, based on unilateral initiatives' and imposed a commitment for 'a diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies'.

Despite the NPT regime being beset by new nonproliferation-related trouble, growing dissatisfaction on part of the NNWS with the NWS performance on their Article VI obligations since the last review conference, and the discord within the P5, the Conference reached a consensus on a strong forward-looking final document. Smart management of the conference process and constructive engagement between NWS and NAC, set the right framework, but not less significant was ample flexibility on part of both the P5 and the non-aligned negotiators. Interest in the success of the Conference and well-being of the NPT was driving the negotiations. In that regard, both Russian and U.S. concessions on their initial positions and willingness to engage the opponent and look for a compromise proved to be incremental to the success. It is especially remarkable taking into account that this period was marked by a significant chill in the Russia-U.S. relationship and a newly emerging divide in their positions on strategic stability and arms control.

## **2009–2016. The 'Prague Speech' period**

### *Obama and Medvedev governments drive the abolitionist agenda*

The election of President Barack Obama came at the time of public resurgence of the global nuclear disarmament movement. The now famous Wall Street Journal articles<sup>25</sup> published by the group of the so-called 'four horsemen' as a result of Hoover Institution's conferences on the nuclear abolition brought the idea of global zero back into the public, political, and academic mainstream.

Abolitionist ideas took form and became the official U.S. policy in 2009 with Obama's famous 'Prague speech'<sup>26</sup> in which he stated that

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<sup>25</sup> Shultz, G.; Perry, W.; Kissinger, H.; Nunn, S. 'Toward a World Without Nuclear Weapons.' Nuclear Threat Initiative, available at [https://media.nti.org/pdfs/NSP\\_op-eds\\_final\\_.pdf](https://media.nti.org/pdfs/NSP_op-eds_final_.pdf) (21 May, 2021).

<sup>26</sup> The White House Office of the Press Secretary (2009) Remarks by President Barack Obama In Prague As Delivered, available at <https://obamawhitehouse>.

America is committed to 'seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons'. His Russian counterpart – President Dmitry Medvedev – was also forthcoming in his statements, affirming that 'our common task consists in undertaking everything to make deadly weapons of mass destruction to become a thing of the past,' stating that Russia will 'steadily move along the path of verifiable and irreversible reductions in nuclear weapons,'<sup>27</sup> and that it 'makes a substantial contribution to the process of nuclear disarmament'.<sup>28</sup> Reaffirming this newly found determination, in September 2009 UN Security Council summit unanimously approved a 'vision of a world without nuclear weapons'.<sup>29</sup>

At the same time, after the rejuvenated idea of global nuclear disarmament getting official endorsement from the leadership of the two biggest nuclear superpowers and later a major success in the form of the New START treaty, by the end of Obama's presidency the pivot to nuclear disarmament has entered into stagnation once again.

### *SORT vs. the New START*

In 2010 Russia and the United States concluded the New START Treaty<sup>30</sup> which established even lower ceilings for the countries' nuclear forces. Despite the significant differences in viewpoints on verification measures and the issue of American ABM systems in Europe, the negotiations were over in just a year.<sup>31</sup> To better illustrate

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archives.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-barack-obama-prague-delivered (21 May, 2021).

<sup>27</sup> RIA (2009) 'Medvedev predstavil v OON vzgljady Rossii na razoruzhenie, PRO i nacizm' [Medvedev Introduced Russia's Views on Disarmament, Missile Defense, and Nazism at the UN], available at (last accessed: August 7, 2019)<https://ria.ru/20090924/186211512.html> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>28</sup> Ploughshares Fund (2010) President Medvedev's Message to The Global Zero Summit, (last accessed: August 7, 2019)<https://www.ploughshares.org/issues-analysis/article/president-medvedevs-message-global-zero-summit> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>29</sup> UN News (2009) Security Council calls for world free of nuclear weapons during historic summit, available at (last accessed: August 7, 2019)<https://news.un.org/en/story/2009/09/314122-security-council-calls-world-free-nuclear-weapons-during-historic-summit> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>30</sup> U.S. Department of State (2010) New START Treaty, available at (last accessed: August 7, 2019)<https://www.state.gov/t/avc/newstart/c44126.htm> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>31</sup> Baker, P. (2010) Twists and Turns on Way to Arms Pact with Russia, The New York Times, available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/27/world/europe/27start.html?pagewanted=all> (21 May, 2021).



the difference in approaches towards disarmament that between Russia and the U.S. and how it manifested in the bilateral arms control process it's worth comparing the New START and the diplomacy that made the treaty possible with the previous major bilateral strategic arms control agreement – the SORT Treaty.

### *SORT Treaty*

The 2002 Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty (SORT or Moscow Treaty) between Russia and the United States obligated the parties to reduce their deployed strategic nuclear forces to 1,700-2,200 warheads. However, the treaty did not include any definitions, counting rules, elimination procedures, or monitoring and verification provisions in its text, instead relying on the START I framework.

At the time, Russia and the U.S. were already in the process of cutting their strategic nuclear forces. Both countries announced their plans for reductions prior to the negotiations. But, coming to the negotiation table, Russia and the United States had very different ideas of what a new agreement on nuclear reductions should look like.

Russia wanted a legally binding treaty modeled after START I, which would retain its basic structure and provisions but make deeper cuts in the nuclear arsenals, while the U.S. looked for an informal agreement or a statement of understanding between the two sides that would simply ascertain the plans for nuclear reductions, without imposing any specific deadlines, elimination provisions, counting rules, or strict and formal verification system.

As a result of negotiations, a compromise was brokered: U.S. conceded on the format of a legally binding treaty, while Russia agreed to forgo the inclusion of specific requirements in the treaty text.

Russian arms control policy stemmed from a traditional outlook on international security and nuclear policy and was driven by the goal of maintaining strategic stability and mutual deterrence with the United States. In addition to that, Russia wanted to address the abrogation of the ABM Treaty and U.S. plans for national missile defense. Therefore, it saw the traditional arms control process based on the principles of irreversibility, predictability and transparency as a best way to proceed with its reductions.

Signing a formal treaty with the U.S. would ensure that the two retain a rough nuclear parity and that the U.S. would continue to

reduce its forces regardless of the next presidential administrations' policy. Finally, signing of a formal treaty would indicate that Russia and the U.S. remained equal partners in the arms control process.

The United States policy towards arms control has changed significantly under the Bush administration. In general, the new administration saw arms control and disarmament treaties as an unnecessary constraint on U.S. nuclear forces. 'Arms control in the U.S. security policy has been completely replaced by a policy of countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and related threats'.<sup>32</sup>

The traditional bilateral arms control system was considered outdated. The U.S. claimed that it wanted to move away from the logic of the Cold War and didn't see Russia as an adversary. Therefore, basing its nuclear posture and size of the arsenal around the Russian capabilities was deemed unnecessary.

Instead of being exclusively a tool of mutual deterrence with Russia, nuclear weapons have been repurposed to provide the U.S. military with 'tailored deterrence' options against a new set of adversaries around the world.<sup>33</sup> Hence, The United States wanted to maintain the flexibility to size and structure its nuclear forces however it saw fit which meant that in negotiating SORT, it argued against imposing strict counting and elimination rules and the principle of irreversible reductions.

Compromise was reached because of a convergence of several factors:

- U.S. decided that a formal treaty would help President Vladimir Putin's standing with domestic critics who opposed his policies towards the United States and conceded on the form of the agreement.
- Russia realized that the U.S. was not going to concede on the text of the treaty, because the counting and elimination provisions proposed by Russia went fundamentally against the nuclear posture of the Bush administration.

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<sup>32</sup> Dyakov, A.S.; Myasnikov, E.V.; Sokov, N.N. (2006) 'The Reduction of Nuclear Weapons and the Control in Russian-American Relations: Status and Prospects,' Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology, available at <http://www.armscontrol.ru/pubs/Report-0612.pdf> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>33</sup> Woolf, Amy (2010) 'Nuclear Weapons in U.S. National Security Policy: Past, Present, and Prospects,' Congressional Research Service, available at <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RL/RL34226> (21 May, 2021).

- As the nature of the relationship between the two countries changed after the Cold War and they became 'partners', cooperating 'to advance stability, security, and economic integration,'<sup>34</sup> Russia assumed that it would be able to address its concerns about the elimination of non-deployed warheads and missile defenses of the treaty later through the treaty's bilateral consultative commission and other forums.<sup>35</sup>
- START I remained in force and provided the sides with enough information to ensure verification and predictability.

SORT was a different kind of arms control treaty born out of a unique situation in international security. Traditional arms control treaties were negotiated on a quid pro quo basis, where the two sides enjoyed an overall parity of strategic nuclear capabilities and proportionally moved towards gradually lowering those capabilities. The element of confrontation between the two countries created the necessity to use arms control to manage their strategic relationship.

However, in the case of SORT, Russia was negotiating from a much weaker position than its counterpart. Russia's military and economic weakness compared to the United States meant that Russia was going to have to lower its nuclear forces regardless of the result of negotiations, and that the U.S. didn't consider Russia to be a valid strategic threat. Therefore, it had no incentive to accommodate for Russia's point of view in negotiations. As a result, SORT became a treaty that fully endorsed and exemplified Bush's administration nuclear policy as well as reflected the new reality of the Russia-U.S. strategic relationship.

From the perspective of the Russian and U.S. obligations under Article VI of the NPT, the treaty was perceived by the international community as a major step back and was widely criticized by NNWS at the 2005 NPT Review Conference.<sup>36</sup> Lack of counting

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<sup>34</sup> United States Department of State (2002) Text of U.S.-Russia Joint Declaration, available at (last accessed 27 May, 2020) <https://2001-2009.state.gov/p/eur/rls/or/2002/10469.htm> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>35</sup> Woolf, Amy (2011) 'Nuclear Arms Control: The Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty,' Congressional Research Service, available at <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/nuke/RL31448.pdf> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>36</sup> United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (2005) 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Final Document Part III, available at (last accessed May 28, 2020) <https://>

rules and definitions, as well as verification provisions 'clearly went against the principles of irreversibility, transparency and verification established by the 2000 Review Conference'. NNWS stressed that 'reductions in deployments and in operational status cannot substitute for irreversible cuts in, and the total elimination of nuclear weapons'.

Moreover, the irreversibility of reductions under the Treaty allowed the U.S. to continue to pursue its nuclear doctrine, under which the role of nuclear weapons was greatly expanded and the threshold for their use significantly lowered. The treaty gave leeway for the Bush administration to pursue new high precision and low-yield nuclear weapons which would be used both to deter and to defeat adversaries. A clear negligence of U.S. obligations under Article VI have served to deepen the divide between nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon states and became one of the primary reasons for the failure of the 2005 NPT Review Conference.

Overall, despite providing a framework for further nuclear cuts, SORT failed to live up to the disarmament expectations which were set by the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences, while as a bilateral arms control treaty it neglected some of the more potent security concerns that Russia had at the time.

### *New START*

In general, the treaty was a product of a different relationship between Russia and the United States. Negotiations on New START and its conclusion were the result of the new U.S. presidential administration's nuclear posture and a cooperative, but pragmatic approach to Russia-U.S. relations. The approach was set in stone with the 2010 Nuclear Posture Review<sup>37</sup> and represented a clear departure from the policies of the Bush administration. Apart from reinforcing Obama's Prague speech by underlining the U.S. intentions to continue to move towards global nuclear disarmament, returning to the traditional role of nuclear weapons as a strategic deterrent, and arms control efforts as a way to achieve nonproliferation goals, the review

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documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N08/292/21/PDF/N0829221.pdf (21 May, 2021).

<sup>37</sup> U.S. Department of Defense (2010) 2010 Nuclear Posture Review, available at (last accessed: August 7, 2019)[https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/features/defenseReviews/NPR/2010\\_Nuclear\\_Posture\\_Review\\_Report.pdf](https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/features/defenseReviews/NPR/2010_Nuclear_Posture_Review_Report.pdf) (21 May, 2021).

charted three major guiding principles for managing the nuclear relationship with Russia:

- The U.S. was committed to maintaining a stable strategic relationship with Russia. At the same time, Russia's nuclear force remained a significant factor in determining the rate and scope of U.S. nuclear reductions;
- Therefore, the U.S. intended to engage with Russia in arms control negotiations to set the stage for deeper, verifiable nuclear reductions;
- The U.S. also intended to pursue high-level, bilateral dialogue on strategic stability, to foster more stable, resilient, and transparent strategic relationship. Through that engagement, U.S. intended to address Russian concerns about U.S. missile defenses and any future conventionally armed long-range ballistic missile systems to prove that they are not intended to affect the strategic balance with Russia.

This approach strongly resonated with Russia because it perfectly supplemented its own worldview:

- For Russia, strategic arms control agreements based on principles of strategic stability, parity in forces, and mutual deterrence was the backbone of its relationship with the U.S. and reaffirmed Russia's image of a global nuclear power.
- At the same time, Russia's sought cuts in its nuclear forces due to financial considerations. To retain strategic stability and parity in these conditions it needed a bilateral legally binding agreement with the U.S..
- Missile defense systems developed by the U.S. and its program of Prompt Global Strike were seen as destabilizing and harmful to strategic stability.

Bush administration's decisions to abandon the traditional idea of strategic stability and deterrence, reject arms control agreements based on parity, and leave the ABM Treaty to develop an extensive system of missile defense, were the most damaging factors that led to a deterioration in the Russia-U.S. arms control process and strategic relationship. Obama administration's nuclear policy seemed to have reversed all of them. The new approach was demonstrated in practice when the U.S. reached out to Russia with a proposal to negotiate a new strategic arms control treaty on the basis of irreversibil-

ity, transparency, and verification, and announced that it decided to forgo its plan for deployment of ABM systems in Poland and Czech Republic, which Russia has continuously labeled as harmful to strategic stability.

In that sense, the New START became a catalyst to improve bilateral relations, functioning as a privileged communication channel, which, because of the paramount strategic interests at stake, was supposed to become an important vehicle for further detente and mutual rapprochement.<sup>38</sup>

### Resolution of the most contentious point in the negotiations<sup>39, 40</sup>

	<b>U.S.</b>	<b>Russia</b>	<b>New START</b>
<b>Mobile ICBM's</b>	Wanted to retain START sublimit regarding mobile ICBM's	Asked for easing the restrictions on mobile ICBM's since they only affected Russia.	No sublimit on mobile ICBM's
<b>Upload potential</b>	Wanted to retain 'the ability to upload' nuclear warheads	Wanted to limit the upload capability of the U.S. strategic force and pushed for higher limits on launchers	Russia made a concession and agreed to a less restrictive limit on the number of non-deployed delivery vehicles
<b>Telemetry</b>	Wanted full exchange of missile test data (advocated for mostly by Republican U.S. senators)	Argued that unlike U.S., Russia was developing new types of missiles therefore mutual access to missile test data. would greatly favor the U.S. and should be abandoned	The Parties shall exchange telemetric information on an equal number of launches of ICBMs and SLBMs, but on no more than five launches of ICBMs and SLBMs each calendar year. The Parties shall agree on the amount of exchange of such telemetric information

<sup>38</sup> Rusman, P. (2010) 'New START, A Preliminary Analysis,' *Journal of Conflict & Security Law*, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 557-572, available at <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26295320> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>39</sup> Podvig, Pavel (2011) 'Instrumental influences. Russia and the 2010 Nuclear Posture Review,' *Nonproliferation Review*, Vol.18 No.1, pp.39-50, available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/10736700.2011.549170> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>40</sup> Woolf A. (2021) *The New START Treaty: Central Limits and Key Provisions* Congressional Research Service, available at <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/nuke/R41219.pdf> (21 May, 2021).

	<b>U.S.</b>	<b>Russia</b>	<b>New START</b>
<b>ABM systems</b>	Didn't want to impose any limits on U.S. ABM systems	<p>Advocated for a prohibition on the deployment of ABM systems outside of national territories</p> <p>When U.S. rejected, Russia insisted that the Treaty should reflect the link between offensive and defensive strategic systems</p>	<p>Statement in the preamble: Parties recognize the existence of the interrelationship between strategic offensive arms and strategic defensive arms, that this interrelationship will become more important as strategic nuclear arms are reduced, and that current strategic defensive arms do not undermine the viability and effectiveness of the strategic offensive arms of the parties</p> <p>Parties cannot convert ICBM launchers and SLBM launchers to launchers for missile defense interceptors and vice versa</p>
<b>Conventional long-range ballistic missiles</b>	Wanted to be free to pursue its Prompt Global Strike program	Initially sought to include a provision that would ban the deployment of conventional warheads on strategic ballistic missiles	<p>Statement in the preamble: 'Mindful of the impact of conventionally armed ICBMs and SLBMs on strategic stability'.</p> <p>Included the converted systems in the scope of New START. It counts all strategic delivery systems against nuclear limits, regardless of whether they carry conventional or nuclear warheads</p>

### *A Call for Further Cuts*

In 2013, The Obama administration called on Russia to start negotiations on another arms control agreement. First, with a personal letter to Vladimir Putin and then publicly in Berlin, Barack Obama proposed to:

- Conclude a framework agreement to reduce the New START limits by as much as one-third;<sup>41</sup>
- Develop a legally binding executive agreement on transparency measures that would include exchange of information

<sup>41</sup> Calmes, J. 'Obama Asks Russia to Join in Reducing Nuclear Arms,' The New York Times, available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/20/world/europe/obama-asks-russia-to-join-in-reducing-nuclear-arms.html> (21 May, 2021).

to confirm that the U.S. ABM systems are not threatening Russia's offensive forces;<sup>42</sup>

- Discuss possible reductions in nonstrategic nuclear weapons, promising to work with NATO allies to seek bold reductions in both Russian and U.S. tactical weapons in Europe<sup>43</sup>

Further nuclear reductions proposed by the Obama administration were in line with the goals outlined in the administration's nuclear posture review which called to 'address non-strategic nuclear weapons, together with the non-deployed nuclear weapons of both sides, in any post-New START negotiations with Russia' and followed the Resolution of Advice and Consent to Ratification issued by the U.S. Senate when the New START Treaty was ratified. At the same time, it is reasonable to assume that an executive agreement on transparency measures for the ABM systems was a proposal that pushed the limits of what Obama administration could offer. Any legal treaty on limiting the ABM systems would never be able to pass through the U.S. Senate – the New START Resolution of Advice and Consent to Ratification made it clear that the Capitol Hill didn't view limitations or transparency vis a vis U.S. missile defense as a viable matter for arms control negotiations.<sup>44</sup>

Some analysts posited that for the Obama administration further nuclear reductions were important domestically as they allowed for budgetary savings and would be consistent with the policy of nuclear disarmament that was announced in 2009 and fixed in the nuclear posture review. Since unilateral reductions would be subject to a massive backlash from the U.S. Senate a bilateral agreement with Russia was sought.<sup>45</sup> But, putting aside possible domestic considerations, in essence, Obama administration's idea was a logical follow-up to the New START. In a situation when Russia-U.S. relationship was beset by political strife, the U.S. appealed to arms control and promised to address some of Russia's strategic concerns to engage in a strategic dialogue that would serve to facilitate cooperation.

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<sup>42</sup> Chernenko, E.; Safronov, I. (2013) 'Doveritel'nye gramoty' [Letters of Credence], Kommersant, available at <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2187951> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> United States Department of State (2010). New START Treaty: Resolution Of Advice And Consent To Ratification. <https://2009-2017.state.gov/t/avc/rls/153910.htm>

<sup>45</sup> Chernenko E. (2013) 'Razoruzhenie, ot kotorogo trudno otkazat'sja' [Disarmament that is hard to resist], Kommersant, available at (last accessed 27 May, 2020) <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2215128> (21 May, 2021).



However, unlike back in 2009, this time Russia wasn't too keen to accept the invitation. Russian officials have stated that:

- Suggested reductions will make Russian and U.S. nuclear arsenals comparable to those of other nuclear weapons states which meant that further reductions will have to be reviewed in a multilateral format.<sup>46</sup>
- Transparency on missile defense is the right first step, but it's not enough. Russia continued to insist on legal guarantees in form of a treaty that the U.S.-NATO missile defense is not directed against the Russian nuclear deterrent.<sup>47</sup>
- Decisions on further nuclear cuts need to take into account many factors affecting strategic stability. Among those factors are missile defense, precision-guided conventional weapons and prompt global strike program, and offensive weapons systems in outer space.<sup>48</sup>

In 2009, when the two sides started their negotiations on New START, the original START was on the verge of expiration, leaving the strategic relationship between the two countries unchecked. In that situation Russia saw it necessary to engage with the U.S. when the new administration signaled its readiness to establish a new arms control regime on mutually beneficial grounds. In 2013, when the basic arms control architecture was already established under New START, and nuclear reductions to the level that Russia considered optimal were guaranteed, its negotiating position became tougher. Russia saw no reason to engage in negotiations without significant benefits on issues that it saw as the main threats to strategic stability.

Fundamentally, the two countries had different goals in further arms control agreements. While Washington has sought to lower the New START limits and to bring nonstrategic nuclear weapons and reserve strategic warheads into the negotiations, Moscow prioritized

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<sup>46</sup> Kimball, D.; Morley, J. (2013) 'Obama Calls for Deeper Nuclear Cuts,' Arms Control Association, available at <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2013-07/news/obama-calls-deeper-nuclear-cuts> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>47</sup> Chernenko E. Safronov I., Tarasov P. (2013) 'Barak Obama otmenil Vladimira Putina' [Barack Obama cancelled Vladimir Putin], Kommersant, available at <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2250165> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>48</sup> Chernenko E. (2013) 'Razoruzhenie, ot kotorogo trudno otkazat'sja' [Disarmament that is hard to resist], Kommersant, available at <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2215128> (21 May, 2021).

constraining missile defenses and precision-guided conventional<sup>49</sup> weapons as well as making progress on its concerns over weapons in space. Russia's apparent unwillingness to enter a new agreement on nuclear reductions on American rules, and further deterioration of Russia-U.S. relations turning into an acute escalation brought by the crisis in Eastern Ukraine and Crimea, turned the possibility of reaching a new arms control agreement to zero.

### *Nuclear arsenal modernization programs*

Another setback was the extensive process of nuclear modernization undertaken by both Russia and the United States.

According to former government officials<sup>50</sup> Obama's administration had to appropriate substantial additional funding to National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) for the purpose of nuclear modernization to encourage the 'hawks' in the Congress to support the New START treaty. The United States set out to modernize all aspects of the entire nuclear enterprise, including development of new nuclear delivery systems, and life extension and modernization of all its enduring nuclear warhead types and nuclear weapons production facilities.<sup>51</sup>

The key decisions to modernize Russian nuclear arsenal were taken in the late 1990s, during the deliberations on the START II Treaty. The modernization program developed at the time focused on maintaining overall numerical parity with the United States and on preserving the industrial base involved in the development and production of nuclear weapons and delivery systems.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Pifer, S. (2016) 'The Future of U.S.-Russian Arms Control,' Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, available at <https://carnegieendowment.org/2016/02/26/future-of-u.s.-russian-arms-control-pub-62899> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>50</sup> Hewitt, K. (2019) 'Experts discuss the politics of New START and strategic nuclear modernization,' Brookings, available at <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2019/01/17/experts-discuss-the-politics-of-new-start-and-strategic-nuclear-modernization/> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>51</sup> Thompson, L. (2015) 'Obama Backs Biggest Nuclear Arms Buildup Since Cold War,' Forbes, available at <https://www.forbes.com/sites/lorenthompson/2015/12/15/obama-backs-biggest-nuclear-arms-buildup-since-cold-war/?sh=4ffc15242a0f> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>52</sup> Podvig, Pavel (2018) 'Russia's Current Nuclear Modernization and Arms Control,' Journal for Peace and Nuclear Disarmament, 1:2, pp. 256-267, available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/25751654.2018.1526629?needAccess=true> (21 May, 2021).

U.S. withdrawal from the ABM treaty and subsequent failure to reach a new agreement with the United States on missile defenses, as well as the inability of creating a joint Russia-U.S./NATO missile defense system in Europe made nuclear modernization a top defense priority for the Russian leadership.<sup>53</sup>

### *Russia and the United States in the NPT Review Process in 2010–2015*

The two conferences that took place during the 'Prague Speech Period' in 2010 and 2015 are especially indicative of the overall political situation's corrosive influence on the disarmament process. Combination of a multitude of previously mentioned negative factors resulted in two strikingly opposite review conferences.

#### *2010 Review Conference*

At the 2010 Review Conference Russia and the United States were acting almost unanimously. The two countries submitted a joint note verbale, underscoring importance of the New START treaty in making steps towards nuclear disarmament.<sup>54</sup> Their country statements also shared similar language, with both stressing commitment to a vision of a world without nuclear weapons.<sup>55, 56</sup> The joint nuclear-weapons states' statement at the same time reaffirmed P5's commitment to the fulfillment of their obligations under Article VI of the NPT and 'responsibility to take concrete and credible steps

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<sup>53</sup> Trenin, Dmitry (2019) 'Russian views of U.S. nuclear modernization,' Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, 75:1, pp. 14-18, available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00963402.2019.1555991> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>54</sup> 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (2010), available at [http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2010/pdf/npt\\_conf2010\\_wp75.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2010/pdf/npt_conf2010_wp75.pdf) (21 May, 2021).

<sup>55</sup> Statement by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton to the 2010 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (2010), available at [http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2010/statements/pdf/usa\\_en.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2010/statements/pdf/usa_en.pdf) (21 May, 2021).

<sup>56</sup> Statement by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey A.Ryabkov at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (2010), available at [http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2010/statements/pdf/russia\\_en.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2010/statements/pdf/russia_en.pdf) (21 May, 2021).

towards irreversible disarmament'.<sup>57</sup> Both actively refused to commit to more progressive ideas related to disarmament. They have rejected the action point stipulating that the nuclear weapon states should commit to cease the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and to end the development of advanced new types of nuclear weapons, objected to a call for the closure of nuclear weapon test sites, and expressed their unwillingness to set benchmarks or timeframes for implementing their obligation under Article VI.

Several goals informed U.S. behavior at the conference. First, there was a strong desire to repair the damage to America's position in the regime and avoid a repeat of the failed 2005 conference. Both were necessary to help to promote and strengthen international support for Obama's new disarmament agenda. In addition, the U.S. was aiming to strengthen the nonproliferation pillar, in particular, to impose stricter export controls and push to universalize the IAEA Safeguards Additional Protocol (AP), while avoiding any new radical disarmament commitments.<sup>58</sup> That goal was largely shared by Russia. The Russian delegation supported the U.S. when it came to the disarmament pillar, especially strongly opposing any references made to the elimination of the nonstrategic nuclear weapons.<sup>59</sup>

The conclusion of New START played a huge role. The new treaty was fully compliant with Russian and U.S. obligations under Article VI, and with the 1995 and 2000 Review Conferences decisions. Reductions under the treaty were irreversible, verifiable and transparent and it set out a goal of deep cuts in both nations' arsenals. Conclusion of the Treaty created favorable conditions for the Conference and facilitated willingness on part of the NNWS to work towards consensus on further steps towards nuclear

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<sup>57</sup> Statement by the People's Republic of China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America to the 2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference (2010), available at [http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2010/statements/pdf/russia5\\_en.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2010/statements/pdf/russia5_en.pdf) (21 May, 2021).

<sup>58</sup> Miller, S. (2010) 'A Deeply Fractured Regime: Assessing the 2010 NPT Review Conference,' *The International Spectator*, vol. 45 no. 3, pp. 19-26, available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/03932729.2010.519549> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>59</sup> Orlov, Vladimir (2010) 'Opjat' trojka' [Grade Three, Again], available at <http://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/11/13663840220.pdf> (21 May, 2021).

disarmament.<sup>60</sup> Many of the states expressed a sense of sense of optimism which they had ascribed to the signing of New START, with some delegations calling it a new window of opportunity for bilateral and multilateral negotiations to strengthen the three pillars of the Treaty.

Ultimately, the disarmament commitments contained within the final document were comparatively unambitious, which in the opinion of some experts, shows that the nuclear-weapon states were not yet ready for strong commitments to back up their pro-disarmament rhetoric.<sup>61</sup> Most analysts conclude that the 64-Point Action Plan didn't advance the disarmament agenda and even took some steps backward compared with the 2000 'thirteen steps'.<sup>62</sup> Measures prescribed by the action plan were wrapped in 'soft language'<sup>63</sup> representing the lowest common denominator of an agreement.

However, while revealing clearly evident differences between the nuclear and non-nuclear state parties on disarmament issues, the 2010 final document brought a valuable political success that strengthened the validity of the NPT. It was a testament to the value of a coordinated and well-prepared P5 position, Russia-U.S. cooperation and ability to make necessary concessions and successfully look for compromise on both sides. At the same time, success at the 2010 Review Conference created even more obligations for NWS, while it was obvious that their disarmament agenda wasn't as ambitious as the action plan itself.

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<sup>60</sup> Sagan, S.; Vaynman, J. (2011) 'Lessons Learned from the 2010 Nuclear Posture Review,' *Nonproliferation Review* Vol. 18 No 1, pp. 237-262, available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/10736700.2011.549183> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>61</sup> Acheson, R. (2010) 'Beyond the 2010 NPT Review Conference: What's next for nuclear disarmament?' *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, vol. 66, no. 6, pp. 77-87, available at <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0096340210387040> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>62</sup> Orlov, Vladimir (2014) 'Est' li budushhee u DNJaO. Zametki v preddverii Obzornoj konferencii 2015 g.' [Is there a future for NPT? Notes on the eve of 2015 Review Conference], *Security Index*, №4 (111), pp. 27-48, available at <http://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/12/14095839880.pdf> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>63</sup> Müller, H. (2014) *The NPT Review Conferences*, in *The Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime at a Crossroads*, Institute for National Security Studies, available at [https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/180773/memo137%20\(5\)\\_May%2020.pdf](https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/180773/memo137%20(5)_May%2020.pdf) (21 May, 2021).

## *2015 Review Conference*

Following the breakdown in Russia-U.S. relations amid the Ukrainian conflict, the 2015 NPT Review Conference was overshadowed by tough, relentless confrontation between Russia and the United States. The two countries publicly exchanged severe accusations with the U.S. blaming Russia for violating the INF Treaty as well as the Budapest Memorandum while Russia accusing the United States and NATO countries of undermining the NPT by pursuing the 'nuclear sharing' policy. Dissatisfied with the slow progress in disarmament, a growing group of 'disarmament radicals' actively confronted the NWS, demonstrating a growing rift amongst the state-parties.<sup>64</sup>

Despite the differences on many other talking points, the general attitude towards global disarmament was the same in both countries: it would only be possible after significant changes in the global security environment.

Joint P5 statement<sup>65</sup> reaffirmed that only 'incremental, step-by-step approach taking into account all the factors that could affect global strategic stability' is the only practical option for making progress towards nuclear disarmament.

U.S. statement<sup>66</sup> and working paper<sup>67</sup> went into some detail on measures needed to achieve global zero. The statement, for example, emphasized the 'need to change the notion of how we see security' to proceed with disarmament and that progress towards nuclear abolition is also about the steps that we 'take to develop, innovate, to build a more peaceful world'.

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<sup>64</sup> Orlov, Vladimir (2015) 'The Glass Menagerie of Non-Proliferation,' Russia in Global Affairs, available at <https://eng.globalaffairs.ru/number/The-Glass-Menagerie-of-Non-Proliferation-17708> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>65</sup> Statement by the People's Republic Of China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America to the 2015 Treaty On The Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Review Conference (2015), available at [http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/statements/30April\\_UKJoint.pdf](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/statements/30April_UKJoint.pdf) (21 May, 2021).

<sup>66</sup> Remarks at the 2015 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty Review Conference John Kerry Secretary of State (2015), available at [http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2015/statements/pdf/U.S.\\_en.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2015/statements/pdf/U.S._en.pdf) (21 May, 2021).

<sup>67</sup> Implementing the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons: Disarmament. Working paper submitted by the United States of America (2015), available at <https://undocs.org/NPT/CONF.2015/WP.44> (21 May, 2021).

The Russian statement<sup>68</sup> underscored that advancement towards 'nuclear zero' was only possible through the involvement of all nuclear-weapon-capable States without exception. Such a requirement is obviously quite unrealistic in the foreseeable future considering the existence of states outside of the NPT and the fact that Russia and the U.S. still hold, by far, the largest arsenals among the NWS – a fact that other P5 members are quick to point out every time the question of reduction of their own national arsenals comes up.

The 2015 NPT Review Conference ended without the adoption of a final document, largely due to the failure to agree on provisions regarding the WMD-free zone in the Middle East. However, growing tensions between nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon states as well as the decline of the disarmament agenda in Moscow and Washington were evident throughout.

### *Conclusion*

Despite the renewed interest in global zero and subsequent commitments by Moscow and Washington to bring forth global nuclear disarmament, cuts to the existing stockpiles were seen as underwhelming by disarmament activists and some NNWS while no other new concrete measures or clear obligations have been undertaken. Deterioration of the bilateral relationship spilled over into the NPT review process, further splitting the NWS and NNWS over the issue of disarmament. It clearly demonstrated that a whole array of significant strategic issues was hidden behind the nuclear disarmament commitments. Ultimately, further reliance on nuclear weapons as fundamental aspects of national security strategies, ongoing nuclear forces modernization, and further rapid deterioration of cooperative relationship ended the notion of possibility to make progress towards global zero through bilateral arms control in any foreseeable future.

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<sup>68</sup> Statement by Mikhail I. Uliyanov Acting Head of the Delegation of the Russian Federation at the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (General debate) (2015), available at [http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/statements/27April\\_Russia.pdf](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/statements/27April_Russia.pdf) (21 May, 2021).

## 2016–2021. The Trump Administration

### *Changes in nuclear disarmament rhetoric*

Since 2016 when Donald Trump became the president of the United States, the strategic relationship and arms control process between Moscow and the Washington, sullied by the conflicts of interest in Ukraine and Syria, as well as the issue of alleged Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election, has been severely damaged. The Trump administration has clearly demonstrated that nuclear disarmament had no part its foreign policy, even in theory. Russia, in the state of severe confrontation with the United States, has also dropped its` previously bold rhetoric.

Through official statements and papers, U.S. has postulated its new outlook on disarmament and arms control: The current geo-strategic environment is characterized by a return of great power competition. Blame was placed on Russian and Chinese nuclear programs. The Trump administration officials claimed that the U.S. was not going to engage in arms control for arms control`s sake – arms control must reinforce national security and be verifiable and enforceable. The U.S. was not going to allow itself to fall behind in capabilities and was willing to 'ruthlessly and effectively' compete to provide incentives for its adversaries to negotiate.

On the Russian side, the abolitionist rhetoric, once prominent in the short period after the 2009 Prague speech, has disappeared from the official discourse. On the contrary, Russian president Vladimir Putin has stated that 'nuclear weapons are a factor for world peace and security<sup>69</sup> as well as repeatedly outlined strengthening of Russia`s nuclear forces as a policy priority'. 'We believe that such initiatives [global disarmament] are at least premature,' said Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Ryabkov. 'The movement towards nuclear disarmament must be balanced and phased'.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia (2016) 'Zasedanie Mezhdunarodnogo diskussionnogo kluba "Valdaj" [Meeting of the Valdai international discussion club],' available at <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/53151> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>70</sup> RIAC (2018) 'Rossija schitaet prezhdevremennym nachinat' process vseobshchego jadernogo razoruzhenija' [Russia considers it premature to begin the process of global nuclear disarmament], available at <https://russiancouncil.ru/analytiks-and-comments/comments/rossiya-schitaet-prezhdevremennym-nachinat-protsess-vseobshchego-ядernogo-razoruzheniya-podrobnee-n/> (21 May, 2021).



Russia also continued to pursue its nuclear forces modernization and announced the development of a new generation of strategic nuclear delivery systems of which only two can potentially be accountable under New START.<sup>71 72</sup>

### *'Next-Generation Arms Control'*

The 2018 U.S. Nuclear Posture Review exemplified the Trump administration's attitude towards the possibility of nuclear disarmament.<sup>73</sup> The document among other points:

- Did not call for any reductions of the U.S. nuclear arsenal;
- Unequivocally rejected the ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty;
- Lowered the nuclear use threshold to first use in case of 'significant non-nuclear strategic attacks';
- Proposed to develop two new types of low-yield weapons;
- Promoted the fundamental role and vital necessity for national security of nuclear weapons as a deterrence tool.

The U.S. nuclear posture under Trump was not concerned with questions of disarmament-focused arms control and operated under drastically different assumptions about the U.S. nuclear arsenal than the Obama administration-era document, significantly increasing the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. national security.

Former Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Nonproliferation Christopher Ford stated that the disarmament policy discourse in the post-Cold War years has turned into a 'moralistic, identity-political policy focus that posits disarmament can be pursued without any reference to security'. Comparing disarmament advocates who call for the preservation of the existing arms control

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<sup>71</sup> Kristensen, H.; Korda M. (2019) 'Russian nuclear forces, 2019,' *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 75:2, pp. 73-84, available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00963402.2019.1580891> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>72</sup> Reif, K. (2018) 'New Russian Weapons Raise Arms Race Fears,' *Arms Control Association*, available at <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2018-04/news/new-russian-weapons-raise-arms-race-fears> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>73</sup> Baklitsky, Andrey (2018) 'The 2018 Nuclear Posture Review and Russia's Position,' *Express Analysis*. *Dialogue Club International*, available at <http://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/9/15186203240.pdf> (21 May, 2021).

architecture to madmen, Ford indicated that the U.S. intends to promote 'arms control for adults' instead.<sup>74</sup>

The new vision of that 'adult' approach practiced by the Trump administration was further elaborated on in a paper published by the Office of the Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security:<sup>75</sup>

- The primary challenge facing arms control today, according to State Department, is the need to rein in Russian and Chinese nuclear build-ups. It is therefore imperative that both Russia and China engage the United States in trilateral arms control negotiations.
- If Russia and China don't engage in a trilateral arms control framework proposed by the U.S., the Pentagon might re-examine its force posture planning and make needed changes to prevent a strategic outmatch.
- There is a need for competitive strategy against great-power challengers, Russia and China. Arms control agreements therefore must advance U.S. strategic interests.
- The next generation of arms control will have to address the Russian nonstrategic nuclear arsenal and new types of Russian strategic systems
- Meanwhile, the U.S. is working to restructure global disarmament discourse in a more constructive security-informed direction with the CEND initiative.

In essence, the U.S. rejected the idea of bilateral engagement with Russia in favor of a new trilateral arms control framework involving China. But the new arms control framework proposed by the United States failed to gain traction. China has strongly rejected the notion that it might join to discuss its nuclear weapons in a trilateral format. In China's view, the sizes of Russian and U.S. stockpiles were too disproportionate in relation to its own arsenal. Russia supported China by stating that Russia and the U.S. first have to proceed in a

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<sup>74</sup> Ford, C. (2020) 'The Politics of Arms Control: Getting Beyond Post-Cold War Pathologies and Finding Security in a Competitive Environment,' United States Department of State, available at <https://2017-2021.state.gov/the-psychopolitics-of-arms-control/index.html> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>75</sup> Ford, C. (2020) U.S. Priorities for "Next-Generation Arms Control," United States Department of State, available at <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/T-paper-series-1-Arms-Control-Final-1-508.pdf> (21 May, 2021).

bilateral mode since they possess the overwhelming share of nuclear weapons.

Effects of the new policy could be felt in how the Trump administration handled the issue of extending New START and in its decision to abandon the INF Treaty.<sup>76</sup>

Russia had been repeatedly stating on the official level that it is not interested in an arms race and was ready to extend New START immediately, without any preconditions. At the same time, Russia argued, extending the treaty could give time to develop a new, possibly multilateral, strategic arms control system.<sup>77</sup>

However, the U.S. kept postponing the extension. The Trump administration claimed that it needed to evaluate the New START question in the broader context of how to get to the future vision of a trilateral arms control agreement that includes both Russia and China, but also brings in Russia's nonstrategic nuclear weapons.<sup>78</sup> The document was finally extended only after Joseph Biden took office in 2021.

### *2018 and 2019 NPT Preparatory Committees*

The disarmament agenda at the 2018 and 2019 Preparatory Committees for the 2020 NPT Review Conference was mostly formed under the influence of two factors:

- The pressure on the P5 from the NNWS intensified significantly with the signing of the Treaty on Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) in 2017;
- The confrontation between Russia and the United States was spilling over into the arms control sphere.

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<sup>76</sup> Nuclear threat Initiative (2019) Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (INF Treaty), available at <https://www.nti.org/learn/treaties-and-regimes/treaty-between-the-united-states-of-america-and-the-union-of-soviet-socialist-republics-on-the-elimination-of-their-intermediate-range-and-shorter-range-missiles/> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>77</sup> TASS (2020) 'Dmitrij Medvedev k 10-letiju SNV-3: neprodlenie dogovora budet imet' ser'eznye posledstvija' [Dmitry Medvedev on the 10th anniversary of New START: Not renewing the treaty will have grave consequences], available at <https://tass.ru/opinions/8184511> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>78</sup> PBS (2020) 'State Dept. official on Trump's vision for nuclear arms control,' available at <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/state-dept-official-on-trumps-vision-for-nuclear-arms-control> (21 May, 2021).

These two factors constituted the main points of convergence in the two countries' statements. The first one united them in the face of the pressure from the NNWS while the second one demonstrated deep strategic insecurities sabotaging the disarmament process.

In this environment, United States presented its new approach towards the idea of global disarmament in a working paper entitled *Creating Conditions for Nuclear Disarmament (CCND)*.<sup>79</sup> Washington expanded upon the idea in 2019 submitting another paper<sup>80</sup> which specified operationalization of the new approach (redubbed *CEND – Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament*). Russia presented a working paper outlining its own views on disarmament in 2019.<sup>81</sup>

In both papers, as well as the countries' statements, we can find clear points of convergence on the issue of disarmament. Both Russia and the U.S.<sup>82, 83</sup> emphasized that:

- Unconditional nuclear abolition is a premature and disorienting affair;
- TPNW threatens the NPT regime and does not move the world closer to disarmament;
- A step-by-step approach that takes into account 'strategic realities' and 'underlying security issues' is therefore needed;
- There is a causal link between the international security environment and advancements in disarmament.

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<sup>79</sup> *Creating the Conditions for Nuclear Disarmament (CCND) (2020) Working paper submitted by the United States of America*, available at <https://undocs.org/NPT/CONF.2020/PC.II/WP.30> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>80</sup> *Operationalizing the Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament (CEND) Initiative (2020)*, available at <https://undocs.org/NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/WP.43> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>81</sup> *Nuclear disarmament. Working paper submitted by the Russian Federation (2020)*, available at <https://undocs.org/NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/WP.6> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>82</sup> *Statement by Director General Vladimir Yermakov Head of the Delegation of the Russian Federation at the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (2018)*, available at [http://statements.unmeetings.org/media2/18559211/russia-printer\\_20180424\\_105255.pdf](http://statements.unmeetings.org/media2/18559211/russia-printer_20180424_105255.pdf) (21 May, 2021).

<sup>83</sup> *Statement by Vadim Smirnov Deputy Director of the Department for Non-proliferation and Arms Control Deputy Head of the Delegation of the Russian Federation at the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (2018)* <http://statements.unmeetings.org/media2/18559498/russia-e-cluster-1-statement-russia-eng.pdf> (21 May, 2021).

Russian paper listed unrestricted deployment of a global missile defense system, development of non-nuclear high precision strategic offensive weapons, prospects for placement of offensive systems in space, worsening prospects for the CTBT, and NATO's practice of 'nuclear sharing' among the strategic realities hampering the advent of disarmament. The United States, in a similar context, condemned alleged violations of the existing treaty regimes by Russia.

A complete lack of restraint in inflammatory rhetoric and an overall inability of the P5 states to come to a consensus on critical issues is another trend manifested during the PrepComs. Despite meeting in 2018 and 2019 the P5 did not manage to produce a joint statement. According to Andrey Baklitsky, discussions at the P5 meetings 'quickly turn into skirmishes between representatives of China and the U.S. over the newly proposed trilateral arms control negotiations'.<sup>84</sup>

At the PrepComs Russia and the U.S. clashed incessantly over issues that have no relation to the matters at hand at the NPT. Their conflicts on Syria, Ukraine, and Russia's alleged use of chemical weapons derailed the negotiations more than once. The U.S. openly blamed Russia for the breakdown of the INF Treaty while Russia responded by blaming the United States back.

Both the 2018 and 2019 PrepComs revealed a growing divide between the nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon states-parties. On the final day of the 2018 PrepCom, many NNWS delegations expressed dissatisfaction with the absence of any willingness of NWS to engage with the TPNW and the wider humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapon.<sup>85</sup> The 2019 PrepCom in turn failed to adopt a common set of recommendations for the Tenth NPT Review Conference. The disagreement was over recommendations that called for 'the need for a legally-binding norm to prohibit nuclear weapons' and recognized 'the support of many states for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and its complementarity with the NPT'.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Baklitsky, Andrey (2020) 'Perspektivy formata "jadernoj pjatjorki"' [Prospects for the Nuclear Five Format], PIR Center, available at <https://www.pircenter.org/blog/view/id/394> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>85</sup> Reaching Critical Will (2018) NPT News in Review, Vol. 15, No. 6, available at (last accessed: August 7, 2019) <https://reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/NIR2018/NIR15.6.pdf> (21 May, 2021).

<sup>86</sup> Sanders-Zakre, Alicia (2019) 'NPT Looks Ahead to 2020 Review Conference Without Consensus Recommendations,' Arms Control Association, available at (last accessed: August 7, 2019) <https://www.armscontrol.org/blog/2019-05-10/reporting-2019-npt-prepcom> (21 May, 2021).

## *Conclusion*

In the 2016-2020 period the positions of both countries' political establishments on moving towards disarmament have effectively snapped back to the Cold War's tensest periods. Nuclear weapons were regarded as inseparable elements of national security, modernization and strengthening – a necessity. Discussion on further nuclear disarmament stumbled into a deadlock. At the same time, bilateral engagement on issues of arms control under the Trump administration consisted mostly of mutual accusations while a few remaining channels of communication on questions of strategic stability and arms control failed to yield tangible results.

## **Looking ahead and lessons learned**

In today's international climate, complete nuclear disarmament might seem to some to be nothing more than a naïve, idealistic delusion, supported and perpetuated by dovish NGOs and activist groups in tandem with vocal but ultimately powerless groupings of non-nuclear-weapon states. Attempts to enforce the vision of complete nuclear disarmament such as the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons are sharply criticized by the five nuclear-weapon states.

The stalling arms control mechanism and virtually all forms of productive dialogue between the two largest nuclear weapon states and drivers of arms control in the past, Russia and the United States have significantly deteriorated. In no small part as a consequence of the Trump administration's controversial nuclear policy<sup>87</sup>, the once robust arms control architecture has been left extremely fragile after a series of significant setbacks and the international nuclear nonproliferation regime is being put under massive strain<sup>88</sup>.

The extension of the New START Treaty and the 2021 Geneva summit between Russia and the United States have opened up a real opportunity for the two countries to achieve restoration and further advancement of the bilateral arms control process which can produce

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<sup>87</sup> <https://www.globalzero.org/blundering-toward-nuclear-chaos-2020/>

<sup>88</sup> Sarah Bidgood, Trump Accidentally Just Triggered Global Nuclear Proliferation, 2019, Foreign Policy URL:<https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/02/21/trump-accidentally-just-triggered-global-nuclear-proliferation/>

a positive dynamic in the movement towards fulfilling the nuclear weapon states' disarmament obligations under the NPT. Facilitating further change will require the two nuclear superpowers to snap out of the deeply adversarial logic which governs their relationship, limiting its influence in the area of nuclear cooperation

Case studies presented in this and the preceding chapter provide us with a number of key takeaways:

*Arms control process is dependent on both strategic and political factors*

Arms control, while effectively reducing the number of weapons, is still part of the strategy that relies on nuclear weapons as its foundation. Therefore, it is fickle and dependent on strategic deliberations of countries' governments. As long as further reductions are not strategically viable, it stalls and crumbles.

But success in arms control depends on both strategic and political factors that are at the same time intertwined and influence each other. Russian and U.S. strategic thinking and threat perception in the early years of the Cold War prevented them from arriving at agreements to cap the rapidly speeding up arms race. Their strategic perception of nuclear weapons as tools of absolute war was informed, first and foremost, by the political perception of each other as a natural enemy which could not be trusted.

In the case of New START and further nuclear cuts proposed by the Obama administration in 2013, decisions undertaken by Russia and the U.S. had strategic considerations behind them, but ultimately were political in nature: On U.S. part, New START was in an equal measure both a nuclear arms control tool and an attempt to pursue rapprochement with Russia. Any serious arms control negotiation must be preceded by amelioration of the relationship which can be achieved by sustained direct dialogue and implementation of confidence-building measures.

*A resilient backchannel dialogue between decision-makers in Moscow and Washington*

Arms control negotiations are an arduous and complex affair, especially now, taking into account the development of new types of destabilizing strategic and conventional weapons. A backchannel

system greatly aided in developing consensus during SALT negotiations, when an arms control architecture had to be developed from scratch. It also demonstrated its usefulness during deliberations on the NPT, when the prime negotiators would occasionally discuss points of contention outside of the official meetings. Another example would be the 'walk in the woods' during the Reagan-Gorbachev negotiations on INF between Paul Nitze and Yuri Kvitinsky. If those practices were established into a constant support line akin to the Kissinger-Dobrynin channel, it would significantly facilitate arms control negotiations in the future.

*Nuclear weapons perception as a guarantee of security has to change*

Any progress toward nuclear disarmament would require the five NWS to revise their security policies. When it comes to Russia and the United States, the adversarial relationship creates more demand for nuclear weapons, feeding on the existing external insecurities of the two countries which inhibit the disarmament process. In the past, global shift in Soviet strategic thinking allowed for radical advancements on nuclear abolition; The Soviet Union saw nuclear weapons as a detriment to global security, not its guarantor, which significantly moved the disarmament process forward.

*Moral norms and public pressure may influence leadership's personal agenda.*

Leadership's personal attitude towards the bomb plays a huge role in advancing disarmament. It is important to try to cultivate moral norms that would make it more likely for the leadership to remain under pressure from the public or change their personal views on the matter. Both Gorbachev and Reagan held abolitionist beliefs which significantly helped to achieve swift progress on the disarmament negotiations. Today, the notion of nuclear weapons as an inevitable reality became so normalized that both Russia and the United States see it fit to allude to possible deployment of their arsenals, and in the case of the U.S., lower the usage threshold in nuclear doctrine. Those attitudes remove political will from the disarmament equation and threaten the progress achieved so far.



*Political will means flexibility in negotiation*

Political will, born from the combination of changes in strategic thinking and primacy of abolitionist attitudes, is a great aide in solving any differences that can occur between the states during disarmament talks. Vested interest in disarmament creates flexibility which is a necessary component of successful negotiations on questions of strategic importance.

Negotiations on the INF treaty and the NPT itself, for example, were all beset by numerous disagreements between the parties that required reaching a compromise on a variety of contentious issues. However, the political resolve on part of the governments has allowed the negotiators to have a lot more room for compromise.

*Personal relationships between the negotiators matter*

Negotiations, while based on tangible strategic and tactical planning, are still conducted by people. As the examples of negotiations on the New START treaty and drafting of the NPT have demonstrated, close personal relationships between the negotiators inspire creativity and beget initiative leading to a swift and effective compromise even when the overall relationship between the two countries is not exceptionally positive. Russian head negotiator of New START Anatoly Antonov recalls:

You'll see that when we finished our negotiations with the United States, we agreed with Rose Gottemoeller that we had a lot of issues to be discussed between the United States and Russia. I remember that last day when we were sitting together, and (...) we were almost crying because we spent the whole year together. And then you'll see that even without instruction from Moscow, I proposed to continue our strategic dialogue regardless mandate we fulfilled.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Antonov, A. (2019) 2019 Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference. The Future of U.S.-Russia Arms Control, available at <https://s3.amazonaws.com/ceipfiles/pdf/NPC19-FutureUSRussiaArmsControl.pdf> (21 May, 2021).

*Russia-U.S. cooperation during the NPT Review Conferences is an important element of success*

On most of the issues related to Article VI, Russia and the United States have always had very similar positions. They usually found themselves on one side of the argument against the more disarmament-minded non-nuclear-weapon states. Taking into account the centrality of their roles in the treaty and influence over their allies, Russia and the U.S. represent a powerful negotiating force. Ultimately, the conferences that saw a high level of preparation and an undeviating pursuit of a joint position between Russia and the United States – whether in bilateral format, or as part of the P5 – saw the highest degree of successful resolutions of contentious issues during negotiations.

*Cooperation between the nuclear weapons states and the NPT groupings is necessary*

With the emergence of a wide variety of groups of states in place of traditional regional groupings of the Cold War the ability to meaningfully engage with them is becoming one of the most important factors of success for a Review Conference. Middleman groupings and groupings that largely align with the NWS help to build consensus with the more radically minded states parties. Ultimately, while the review conferences operate on the rule of consensus, smaller states don't go against their groups and are not likely to create issues in forging a unilateral agreement.

*Diplomatic engagement outside of the NPT is extremely beneficial*

The example of the 1995 Review Conference has shown that another important part of building the consensus are diplomatic campaigns outside of the conference negotiations. With a concrete, clear goal for the conference and a well-developed set of convincing arguments Russia and the U.S. can start building a consensus long before the start of the conference through direct bilateral diplomatic engagements, as well as multilateral forums dedicated to agenda items on which the agreement is being sought.

*Rhetoric on NPT Article VI has to be backed up by concrete actions*

The fact remains that one of the most efficient ways to ensure a successful review conference is having an ongoing bilateral, or other, process that would demonstrate that Russia and the U.S. are not coming to the conference to try to talk their way out of fulfilling Article VI obligations to disarm. A tangible result on disarmament, no matter how small, is a perfect foundation for a position that has the potential to lead to a consensus.

*High-level engagement creates an environment that is more conducive to results*

Examples of Obama and Clinton's administration's handling of the Article VI issues' rhetoric, as it relates to the success of the NPT Review Conferences of 1995 and 2010, have shown that involvement of the highest levels of the government facilitates an environment more conducive to reaching an agreement. A political campaign which promotes ideas of disarmament in general and progress on specific issues such as CTBT or the threat of nuclear terrorism clearly signals the importance of the NPT itself and the importance of a review conference's success.

In conclusion, the lessons of nuclear diplomacy outlined in the study clearly demonstrate that despite the current stalemate in the arms control process, Russia and the United States have the power to turn the situation around. Most of the conditions and tools that facilitated a positive dynamic on questions of strategic cooperation and disarmament in the past are still in place or can be brought back provided there is a political intent. By drawing lessons from history, the two nuclear superpowers have the potential to be, as they have several times in the past, at the forefront of the movement towards global zero.

## CHAPTER 11

# STABILITY BY ANY OTHER NAME: DIFFERING NATIONAL INTERPRETATIONS OF STRATEGIC STABILITY

*Collin McDowell*

Throughout the past decade, various high-level dialogues and negotiations addressing strategic stability have been held between Russia and the United States. However, these talks have failed to make substantive differences in bridging the divide between the United States and Russia. Disagreements still exist over the scope and content of these dialogues, with each country having their own particular opinions on what subjects should be discussed.<sup>1</sup> In view of the degraded strategic environment and the recently announced U.S./Russian strategic stability dialogues, serious analysis should be conducted of the factors that each nation believes are vital to strategic stability.<sup>2</sup> This understanding will be vital for both powers to avoid the pitfalls of the past and to increase the odds that the dialogues will be able to limit the possibility that the nuclear taboo will be broken. As it stands, the Russian and American understandings of which factors impact strategic stability have broadened over the past decade, limiting the prospects for effective dialogue on the subject.

It should be noted that this chapter is not concerned with establishing which nation holds the "correct" understanding of strategic stability. As Alexey Arbatov puts it, "it is difficult to find concepts that are more commonly used – and abused – than strategic stability and nuclear deterrence."<sup>3</sup> This is not something unique to any

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<sup>1</sup> Baklitskiy, Andrei, Sarah Bidgood, and Oliver Meier. "Russian-U.S. Strategic Stability Talks: Where They Are and Where They Should Go." Deep Cuts Commission, October 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Sharon Squassoni, "Biden in Geneva: Strategic Stability Is a Conduit for Arms Control," Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, June 17, 2021,

<sup>3</sup> Arbatov, Alexey. "The Danger of Withdrawing From the INF Treaty." Carnegie Moscow Center, October 26, 2018.

particular state or actor. However, if progress is to be made in ameliorating the security environment and easing the tension between the United States and Russia, there needs to be a common understanding of the priorities and factors impacting each nation's understanding of the subject. To accomplish this, this chapter will focus on a close analysis of doctrinal and guiding documents written by United States and Russia between 2010 and 2020 to understand the degree to which each country's interpretation conforms to a narrow definition of strategic stability.

The decision to focus on a close analysis of doctrinal documents stems from the fact that such documents are expressions of the policies and motivations of a country, agreed upon and signed off on by the leadership of the country. They represent a declaration of their country's institutional and military priorities. While it would be naive to believe that some degree of political posturing or signalling would be absent in these documents, the topics focused upon in such documents can reveal a great deal of information about the factors that each state believes impact strategic stability. Additionally, in the words of Kristen Ven Bruusgaard, "although strategic debates, capabilities and military doctrines cannot authoritatively predict what leaders will do in a crisis, they constrain and shape what it may be possible for leaders to do. When it comes to nuclear strategy, such insights are crucial in seeking to ensure that leaders' theories about the utility of nuclear weapons in war will never be tested."<sup>4</sup>

For the purposes of this chapter, the baseline definition of strategic stability will be one where "strategic stability describes 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)."<sup>5</sup> This definition, attributed to comments made by Edward Warner, is one of the narrowest definitions of strategic stability available. It adheres closely to the "Soviet-United States Joint Statement on Future Negotiations on Nuclear and Space Arms and Further Enhancing Strategic Stability."<sup>6</sup> This statement, which

<sup>4</sup> Kristen Ven Bruusgaard, "Russian Nuclear Strategy and Conventional Inferiority," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 44, no. 1 (2020): pp. 3–35, pg. 6

<sup>5</sup> Acton, James M. "Escalation through Entanglement: How the Vulnerability of Command-and-Control Systems Raises the Risks of an Inadvertent Nuclear War." *International Security* 43, no. 1 (2018): 56–99.

<sup>6</sup> "Soviet-United States Joint Statement on Future Negotiations on Nuclear and Space Arms and Further Enhancing Strategic Stability." George Bush Presidential Library and Museum, June 1, 1990.

is the first use of the term agreed upon by the United States and the Soviet Union, viewed strategic stability as inextricably connected with "first-strike stability," a subset of crisis stability that is mainly concerned with the technical ability of a nation to field a successful retaliatory capacity, thereby deterring the adversary from "launching a large-scale damage-limiting first strike if it believed nuclear war had become imminent."<sup>7</sup> However, this chapter's definition is less focused on the technical aspects of a secure second-strike capability and more concerned with the possibility of nuclear first use and the qualitative buildup of arms. This decision was taken primarily due to the author's assessment that the use of nuclear weapons in a limited capacity would be more likely in the modern context than a "splendid" first strike intended to preemptively destroy an opponent's nuclear capacity.

## **Russian Doctrinal Documents on Strategic Stability**

When attempting to develop an understanding of the official Russian position on strategic stability, one must analyze the full range of documents in which the government uses the term. Guiding documents of the Russian Federation in such subjects as information policy and foreign policy include descriptions of how strategic stability relates to these fields. Given the almost-traditional refrain that arms control discussions and strategic stability dialogues must take into account "all aspects and factors that influence strategic stability, without exception," an understanding of the full scope of factors influencing strategic stability is necessary to pave the way for any potential progress.<sup>8</sup> Given the focus of this chapter, special attention will be paid to the 2010 and 2014 iterations of the Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation (Military Doctrine) and the 2020 Basic Principles of State Policy of the Russian Federation on Nuclear Deterrence (Basic Principles Document).

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<sup>7</sup> Acton, James M. "Escalation through Entanglement: How the Vulnerability of Command-and-Control Systems Raises the Risks of an Inadvertent Nuclear War." *International Security* 43, no. 1 (2018): 56 – 99.

<sup>8</sup> Marrow, Alexander. "Russia Says It's Ready for Hypersonic Missile Talks with U.S." *Reuters*. Thomson Reuters, April 14, 2020.

## 2010 Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation

The 2010 Military Doctrine was released in February of 2010, months before the signing of the New START Treaty. While the 2010 Military Doctrine did not include a definition of strategic stability, analysis of the document's use of the term can shed some light on the Russian interpretation of the concept. The 2010 Military Doctrine is also methodical in its approach, offering definitions for several key concepts and providing lists of both internal and external military dangers and threats. This analysis will focus on unpacking several of the threats and dangers that could impact the Russian understanding of strategic stability, as well as focusing its attention on moments where the term itself is used. An understanding of how these factors have evolved over time can give a more complete and holistic understanding of the Russian concept of strategic stability.

In the 2010 Military Doctrine, "attempts to destabilize the situation in individual states and regions and to undermine strategic stability" are listed among the primary military dangers faced by Russia.<sup>9</sup> The document does not state which countries are affected by the entanglement between political destabilization and strategic stability. It seems likely, however, that this is a reference to regional destabilization caused by the Color Revolutions. These uprisings, such as the 2003 Rose Revolution in Georgia, the 2004/2005 Orange Revolution in Ukraine, and the 2005 Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan, resulted in a weakening of Russian influence in areas that Russia had traditionally considered its sphere of influence as these states sought political alternatives to their current system.<sup>10</sup>

If this interpretation of the statement is accurate, it implies a much broader interpretation of strategic stability than was covered by the traditional definition. It would be a much more literal definition of the term, perhaps, in that the shifting political leanings of certain former Soviet states would threaten the stability of Russia's long-term strategic goals. Nonetheless, it would be an expansion of the term of art far beyond its original boundaries. If this was the only time that the term was used in the document, it could perhaps be viewed as a separate concept. However, later in the 2010 Military Doctrine, one

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<sup>9</sup> "Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation." Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 5, 2010. Para. 8.b

<sup>10</sup> Lane, David. "'Coloured Revolution' as a Political Phenomenon." *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 25, no. 2-3 (2009): 113–35. Pg. 129

of the main tasks for the Russian Federation's military is "to maintain strategic stability and the nuclear deterrence potential at adequate levels," which suggests that the original definition of the term had relevance to the authors of the 2010 Military Doctrine.<sup>11</sup> With this in mind, it seems likely that the susceptibility of states in the Russian sphere of influence to regime change through protests can be seen to influence the Russian interpretation of strategic stability.

The 2010 Military Doctrine also expresses the Russian concern with "the creation and deployment of strategic missile defense systems undermining global stability and violating the established correlation of forces in the nuclear-missile sphere, and also the militarization of outer space and the deployment of strategic non-nuclear precision weapon systems."<sup>12</sup> This one subparagraph covers a number of subjects, all of which have some bearing on the Russian interpretation of strategic stability. These are factors which are often highlighted by Russian government officials speaking about strategic stability. For example, Foreign Minister Lavrov, speaking in 2011 at the 66th Session of the UN General Assembly, said that "progress in (the area of nuclear arms reductions) is inseparable from coordinated efforts to move forward on all aspects of strengthening international security and strategic stability. This includes the development of universally acceptable approaches to the missile defense issues, accounting of the impact of strategic conventional arms, prevention of weaponization of space, and elimination of qualitative and quantitative imbalances of conventional arms."<sup>13</sup> While Foreign Minister Lavrov went further than the conditions espoused in the 2010 Military Doctrine by tying conventional arms imbalance to strategic stability, much of what he said lines up perfectly with the Military Doctrine's assessment of the dangers posed by missile defense systems, the weaponization of space, and strategic non-nuclear weapons systems.

Should the potential of the systems described by Foreign Minister Lavrov ever threaten the survivability of the Russian strategic

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<sup>11</sup> "Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation." Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 5, 2010. Para. 19c

<sup>12</sup> "Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation." Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 5, 2010. Para 8.d

<sup>13</sup> Lavrov, Sergey V. "Statement by H.E. Mr. Sergey V. Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, at the 66th Session of the UN General Assembly ." UN.org. United Nations, November 27, 2011. Pg. 3



nuclear forces, then the incentives for an American disarming strike would rise, reducing crisis stability. It is for this reason that ballistic missile defense (BMD) systems in particular had been traditionally viewed under the purview of strategic stability, as evidenced by the development of the ABM Treaty.<sup>14</sup> While doubts about the operational efficacy of BMD systems abound, the present effectiveness of the systems is secondary to the perception that these systems might one day become truly effective.<sup>15</sup> If these systems are a danger in the minds of the Russian leaders, they are a factor influencing the Russian perception of strategic stability.<sup>16</sup>

The 2010 Military Doctrine details a series of military threats, which differ from military dangers in the level of probability that a military threat will lead to a direct military conflict. One of these threats consists of "the impeding of the operation of systems of state and military command and control of the Russian Federation, the disruption of the functioning of its strategic nuclear forces, missile early warning systems, systems for monitoring outer space, nuclear munitions storage facilities, nuclear energy facilities, atomic and chemical industry facilities, and other potentially dangerous facilities."<sup>17</sup> The focus on the dangers of disrupting nuclear command and control systems, a fear shared by the United States, is connected with crisis stability; if one state were to lose the ability to react effectively an incoming strike, then the other side could believe that they would have the ability to pull off a disarming strike with little fear of retaliation.

Finally, the conditions surrounding nuclear use encapsulated in the 2010 Military Doctrine should be examined to examine what could affect crisis stability. According to the document, "the Russian Federation reserves the right to utilize nuclear weapons in response to the utilization of nuclear and other types of weapons of mass destruction against it and (or) its allies, and also in the event of aggression against the Russian Federation involving the use of conventional

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<sup>14</sup> Blackwell, Robert. "The ABM Treaty and Ballistic Missile Defense." Council on Foreign Relations, January 1, 1996.

<sup>15</sup> Lewis, George N. "Ballistic Missile Defense Effectiveness." AIP Conference Proceedings 1898, no. 1 (November 15, 2017).

<sup>16</sup> Podvig, Pavel. "Russia's Current Nuclear Modernization and Arms Control." *Journal for Peace and Nuclear Disarmament* 1, no. 2 (October 16, 2018): 256–67.

<sup>17</sup> "Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation." Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 5, 2010. Para. 10.b

weapons when the very existence of the state is under threat."<sup>18</sup> Analysts at the time note that this was a much milder set of conditions than expected.<sup>19</sup> However, this declaration was complicated by the presence of a secondary nuclear doctrine, "The Foundations of State Policy in the Area of Nuclear Deterrence until 2020," which was signed at the same time, but remained classified.<sup>20</sup> The classified nature of this document is part of the reason that the United States placed such firm belief in the existence of an "escalate to de-escalate" policy; after all, "there is no reason to classify nuclear doctrine if it is the same as the public version."<sup>21</sup>

## 2014 Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation

The 2014 and the 2010 iterations of the Russian Military Doctrine were quite similar, both stylistically and in their views of military dangers. However, a few key differences between the two documents bear discussion. These include the document's tendency to use the terms "regional stability" and "global stability" to describe areas where the term "strategic stability" might have previously been used, the addition of new military dangers and threats which are tied to stability, and differences in the definitions of some levels of military conflict.

The 2014 Military Doctrine only used the term "strategic stability" once, when it said that one of the primary tasks of the Russian Federation's military in terms of cooperation with other states was "to strengthen international security and strategic stability at global and regional levels on the basis of the rule of international law, and first of all the UN Charter provisions."<sup>22</sup> This use of the term was much broader than the traditional definition of strategic stability. It tied the Russian interpretation of strategic stability to a security

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<sup>18</sup> "Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation." Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 5, 2010. Para. 22

<sup>19</sup> Борисов, Тимофей. "Николай Патрушев: Что Нового в Военной Доктрине России." *Российская газета*. *Российская газета*, November 20, 2009.

<sup>20</sup> Sokov, Nikolai. "The New, 2010 Russian Military Doctrine: The Nuclear Angle." James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, February 5, 2010.

<sup>21</sup> Schneider, Mark B. "Escalate to De-Escalate." *Proceedings*. U.S. Naval Institute, February 2017.

<sup>22</sup> "The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation." *Посольство России в Великобритании*, December 25, 2014. Para. 55.a

environment that discouraged the use of military force to achieve military-political objectives.

However, this document often used the phrase "global and regional stability" as a substitute for "strategic stability". For example, where once the 2010 Military Doctrine described the destabilization of states as a danger which undermines strategic stability, the 2014 Military Doctrine described it as a danger which undermines global and regional stability.<sup>23</sup> As in the 2010 Military Doctrine, descriptions of the threat of missile defense systems, the weaponization of space, and the development of strategic, non-nuclear, high-precision weapons systems, were labelled as a threat to global stability.<sup>24</sup> In perhaps the most notable shift from strategic to global/regional security, the 2014 Military Doctrine states that one of the main tasks of the Russian Federation's military is to "to maintain global and regional stability and the nuclear deterrence potential at a sufficient level."<sup>25</sup> This adds credence to the claim that factors that are labelled as threats to global stability and regional stability in the 2014 Military Doctrine can also be interpreted as factors that the Russian government views as threats to strategic stability.

This leads to one of the more interesting additions to the list of military threats and dangers included in the 2014 Military Doctrine. The document lists the "use of information and communication technologies for the military-political purposes to take actions which run counter to international law, being aimed against sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity of states and posing threat to the international peace, security, global and regional stability" as one of the main external military dangers facing the Russian Federation.<sup>26</sup> The 2014 Military Doctrine discussed the juxtaposition of information and communications systems and global/regional stability in another context. One of the main tasks of the Russian military, as stated in the document, is to reduce the risks of using information and communications technologies for "military-political purposes," which could result in threats to "global and regional stability."<sup>27</sup> Given the aforementioned tendency of the 2014 Military Doctrine

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<sup>23</sup> "The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation." Посольство России в Великобритании, December 25, 2014. Para 12.b

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. Para. 12.d

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. Para. 21.c

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. Para 12.l

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. Para 21.s

to use global and regional stability interchangeably in the place of strategic stability, this would appear to be another factor impacting Russian calculations of strategic stability.

## Relevant non-military doctrines and statements

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, Russian official documents outside of the realm of strictly military matters exist dealing with the subject of strategic stability. To develop a complete understanding of the Russian interpretation of the subject, these documents must also be analyzed.

The Doctrine of Information Security of the Russian Federation, released in 2016, goes to some length about technology's effects on strategic stability. Cybersecurity as it pertains to securing the nuclear command and control capabilities of a country would have a place under this chapter's definition of strategic stability. A cyberattack threatening these capabilities would have severe implications for crisis stability; a country who feels that an attack on their ability to field a nuclear response is underway would have strong incentives to launch a preemptive nuclear strike.<sup>28</sup> However, this document highlighted the dangers of transboundary information circulation being used for geopolitical goals and goals of a military-political nature.<sup>29</sup> When examined in conjunction with the 2014 Military Doctrine, it becomes evident that "protecting the information sovereignty of the Russian Federation" is a factor in Russian strategic stability calculations.<sup>30</sup>

The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, also released in 2016, also discussed strategic stability in Russian policy. This document was conventional in its descriptions of strategic stability; it described the development of new weapons systems, missile defense systems, and the weaponization of space as threats to strategic stability. Additionally, it spoke of the need to devise new arms control agreements, and it discussed the Russian desire to partici-

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<sup>28</sup> Stoutland, Page O., and Samantha Pitts-Kiefer. "New Report Finds Nuclear Weapons and Related Systems Increasingly Vulnerable to Cyberattack." *Nuclear Threat Initiative*, September 26, 2018.

<sup>29</sup> "Doctrine of Information Security of the Russian Federation." The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, December 5, 2016. Para. 8.e, 10, 20

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* Para. 8.e

pate in multilateral efforts aimed at creating the conditions wherein additional nuclear reductions can take place.<sup>31</sup> These are all clear measures aimed at strengthening arms race stability in the classical sense through constraint-based measures. While the document insisted that these reductions could only take place "when taking into account all factors affecting global strategic stability, without exception," the document professed a serious intent to pursue these measures.<sup>32</sup>

However, the document strayed from a strict focus on the effects of nuclear weapons and related offensive and defensive weapons systems on strategic stability. The document described bilateral and multilateral relations with other countries, particularly nuclear weapons states, as a factor which can affect the state of strategic stability. The document states that cooperation between such states "with a view to resolving issues related to strategic stability" can strengthen strategic stability.<sup>33</sup> The achievement of a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East, the strengthening of nuclear export controls on dual-use technologies, and the prevention of acts of nuclear terrorism were also tied together with strategic stability.<sup>34</sup>

The 2016 Joint Declaration of the President of the People's Republic of China and the President of the Russian Federation on Strengthening Global Strategic Stability detailed a list of shared concerns and factors that the two leaders believed affected strategic stability. The main emphasis of the Joint Declaration was on the threat posed by the prospect "that individual States and politico-military alliances seek to gain a decisive advantage in the military or military-technology fields... to serve their own interests in international affairs through the threat or use of force."<sup>35</sup> Aside from the various military factors that have been discussed at other points in this chapter, the Joint Declaration also explicitly linked strategic stability with various political factors. It stated that "the international community is accustomed to viewing "strategic stability" as a purely military

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<sup>31</sup> "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (Approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on November 30, 2016)." The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, November 30, 2016. Para. 6, 27.d-f)

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. para. 73

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. Para. 27.k

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. Para 27.h-k

<sup>35</sup> Joint Declaration of the President of the People's Republic of China and the President of the Russian Federation on Strengthening Global Strategic Stability § (2016). <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/834364?ln=en>. Pg. 2

concept in the field of nuclear weapons. This fails to reflect the breadth and multi-faceted nature of contemporary strategic issues."<sup>36</sup>

The Joint Declaration listed several features that would define their shared view of the political nature of strategic stability in international affairs, including a shared respect for the rule of law as it pertains to the use of force and coercive measures, respect for the legitimate interest of nations in settling regional and international issues, and the principle of non-interference in the affairs of other countries.<sup>37</sup> These three political issues highlighted covered a wide array of issues that have been of concern to Russia and China in terms of actions taken by Western States, including the use of sanctions as a coercive measure by the United States, opposition to moves such as the annexation of Crimea and expansion in the South China Sea, and the accusations of human rights abuses in both states. If these political factors are included in the Russian interpretation of strategic stability, dialogues which address "all factors which impact strategic stability" would necessitate a reversal of policy by the United States on several major points.<sup>38</sup>

## **2020 Basic Principles of State Policy of the Russian Federation on Nuclear Deterrence**

The Basic Principles Document, released in June 2020, was a short document detailing the threats that nuclear deterrence was intended to neutralize and the conditions under which the Russian Federation would consider the use of nuclear weapons. The document discusses neither strategic stability or global and regional stability, as previous doctrinal documents have done. However, the threats that are underscored by the 2020 Basic Principles Document can still illuminate areas of concern for the Russian Federation in terms of factors that could impact crisis stability. Additionally, the document's discussion of the purpose of nuclear deterrence is helpful when considering factors affecting the Russian interpretation of crisis stability.

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid. pg. 3

<sup>37</sup> Ibid. Pg. 3

<sup>38</sup> Lavrov, Sergey V. "Statement by H.E. Mr. Sergey V. Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, at the 66th Session of the UN General Assembly ." UN.org. United Nations, November 27, 2011.

The military risks that could lead to the development of military threats included a number of situations that have been highlighted in previous doctrinal documents, including the 2010 and 2014 Military Doctrines. These included the establishment of missile defense systems, the development of missile defense and strike systems in outer space, and the deployment of non-nuclear high-precision and hypersonic weapons.<sup>39</sup> The 2020 Basic Principles Document also highlighted the risks posed by the deployment of nuclear weapons on the territories of non-nuclear weapon states, a clear reference to NATO's nuclear sharing arrangement.<sup>40</sup> In another clear reference to NATO, the 2020 Basic Principles Document stressed that its system of nuclear deterrence was implemented "with regard to individual states and military coalitions (blocs, alliances) that consider the Russian Federation as a potential adversary and that possess nuclear weapons and/or other types of weapons of mass destruction, or significant combat potential of general purpose forces."<sup>41</sup>

The document also offered expanded guidelines for the use of nuclear weapons, although the degree to which this represents an actual shift in Russia's policy is debatable. While previous guidelines on the use of nuclear weapons were still present in the 2020 Basic Principles document, the conditions of use of nuclear weapons were expanded to include retaliation when the Russian Federation received reliable data on the launch of ballistic missiles towards its territory, and the "attack by adversary against critical governmental or military sites of the Russian Federation, disruption of which would undermine nuclear forces response actions."<sup>42</sup> These conditions have interesting implications for Russian definitions of strategic stability. Statements made by President Putin had previously implied that Russia had a launch-on-warning system in place, allowing for Russia to field a quick nuclear response to information stating that missiles were approaching Russia.<sup>43</sup> Doctrinal confirmation of

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<sup>39</sup> "Basic Principles of State Policy of the Russian Federation on Nuclear Deterrence." The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, June 2, 2020. Para. 12.a-e

<sup>40</sup> "Basic Principles of State Policy of the Russian Federation on Nuclear Deterrence." The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, June 2, 2020. Para. 12.f

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* Para. 13

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.* Para. 19a-d

<sup>43</sup> Putin, Vladimir. "Meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Club." Valdai Club. Speech presented at the Plenary session of the 15th anniversary meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Club, October 18, 2018.

this fact could serve to strengthen crisis stability by removing misconceptions arising from uncertainty about the alert status of Russian nuclear forces. However, the second condition, dealing with the disruption of Russian military sites that could impact Russia's ability to field a nuclear response, could be harmful for crisis stability. On its face, this is a reasonable concern; disruption of command and control capabilities would indeed threaten the assured retaliatory capacity of the Russian Federation. However, the entanglement of Russian conventional and nuclear capabilities could lead to an unintentional violation of this condition. According to Hans Kristensen and Matt Korda, many of the non-strategic nuclear weapons systems in Russia's arsenal are dual capable.<sup>44</sup> In the event of an armed conflict breaking out, an adversary might attempt to attack a base where it believes that conventional weapons are deployed, only to realize later that the missiles in question were equipped with nuclear weapons, triggering a retaliatory response from Moscow. This posture is not unique to Russian nuclear doctrine; the 2018 Nuclear Posture review reveals that this is a condition that the American government feels could necessitate a nuclear response.

As discussed in doctrinal documents, the factors that impact the Russian understanding of strategic stability can be categorized into two broad categories. The first category includes military threats, such as the establishment of BMD systems, the weaponization of outer space, and the ability of long-range precision-guided munitions to potentially threaten Russia's second-strike capability. The second category involves political factors, which include issues such as the stability of nations in Russia's sphere of influence, the potential destabilizing impact of transnational information circulation and communications technologies, and non-interference in national affairs. In other words, the Russian interpretation of strategic stability "(places) strategic stability within the larger context of political, military, and economic relations between Russia and the West."<sup>45</sup> The breadth of the Russian interpretation of strategic stability complicates efforts to hold strategic stability dialogues which can sufficiently address "all factors that impact strategic stability."

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<sup>44</sup> Kristensen, Hans M., and Matt Korda. "Russian Nuclear Forces, 2020." Taylor & Francis. *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, March 9, 2020.

<sup>45</sup> Berls, Robert E., Leon Ratz, and Brian Rose. "Rising Nuclear Dangers: Diverging Views of Strategic Stability." Nuclear Threat Initiative, October 23, 2018. <https://www.nti.org/analysis/reports/rising-nuclear-dangers-diverging-views-strategic-stability/>.



## **American Doctrinal Documents on the Subject of Strategic Stability**

An analysis of doctrinal documents regarding the American interpretation of strategic stability reveals that the American view of strategic stability is primarily concerned with nuclear weapons and the potential for their use, rather than the effects of conventional weapons or missile defense systems. While there are few references to political factors impacting strategic stability, the need to provide assurances to U.S. allies under the nuclear umbrella is seen as a major factor impacting crisis stability. These concerns have also impacted American understandings of arms race stability, especially as they pertained to Russia's broad range of non-strategic nuclear weapons, which those strategists who place credence in the "escalate to de-escalate" doctrine believe would be used for coercive purposes. These factors played a large impact in the development of the 2018 NPR, which laid out an extensive list of conditions under which the United States would consider the use of nuclear weapons, risking crisis stability in an attempt to maintain the strength of the American deterrent threat.

### **2010 Nuclear Posture Review**

Analysis of the 2010 NPR should be guided by a number of considerations. The first among them are the policy shifts encapsulated in the document that are intended to increase crisis stability and arms race stability in a general sense. The second is through analysis of the steps that the United States undertook to reinforce strategic stability with Russia through the establishment of bilateral dialogues on the subject of strategic stability. The third is how the conditions for use of nuclear weapons in the 2010 NPR related to the NPR's discussions of maintaining deterrence capabilities and strategic stability while reducing the size of its strategic nuclear forces.

Many of the actions detailed under the 2010 NPR were geared towards strengthening crisis stability or arms race stability through technical and political means. The commitment to modifying the American ICBM forces so that each missile would only have a single warhead, a process called "deMIRVing", is one example of the 2010 NPR's attempts to strengthen crisis stability through

technical means.<sup>46</sup> This shift removed some of the incentives for an attempted disarming strike by creating conditions which "require an adversary contemplating attack to use more warheads in attacking ICBMs than the number of U.S. warheads they would destroy."<sup>47</sup> If the majority of the warheads in the American nuclear arsenal were grouped in a few stationary silos, the incentives for a disarming first strike could be increased. There were other potential reasons behind this step beyond a desire to strengthen crisis stability. As de-MIRVing the ICBM forces of the United States and Russia was a measure included in the negotiations for the START II Treaty, this decision could have been meant to show political goodwill by freely taking on obligations that would have been included in the treaty had it entered into force. It's possible that there was a strategic element to this decision as well; if the United States shifted its focus away from MIRVed ICBMs, it could load more warheads onto its MIRVed SLBMs under the restrictions of the New START Treaty.

The 2010 NPR also focused on improving the nuclear command, control, and communications infrastructure of the United States, maximizing the time available for the president to react to potential threats and reducing the likelihood that misperceptions caused by equipment malfunction would lead to the exchange of nuclear weapons.<sup>48</sup> In situations where early-warning systems detect incoming missiles, every second would count. Allowing the president the maximum amount of time to determine whether or not the warnings are the result of a false alarm would reduce the potential for escalation as a result of any misperceptions.

The decision to retire the TLAM-N, a cruise missile tipped with a nuclear warhead, could be seen as a step towards reducing misperceptions that could threaten crisis stability.<sup>49</sup> There were a number of benefits to this decision. The first among them was the political benefits that would come from signaling that the Obama administration intended to follow through with its promises to reduce the salience of nuclear weapons in security doctrines. Additionally,

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<sup>46</sup> "Nuclear Posture Review Report". Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, April 6, 2010. pg. 25

<sup>47</sup> Committee on Armed Services., James Miller, and Ellen Tauscher. Document, Nuclear Posture Review: hearing before the Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate, One Hundred Eleventh Congress, second session, April 22, 2010 §. 63–689 (2011). Pg. 59

<sup>48</sup> Nuclear Posture Review Report, 2010, pg. 26

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.* pg. 28

there was very little cost to the move, as the role of the TLAM-N was made redundant by the role of American SLBMs.<sup>50</sup> Finally, this move ensured that the United States would be able to use its arsenal of conventional cruise missiles in the event of conflict without worrying that the adversary would perceive this as an escalation to the nuclear level, thereby strengthening crisis stability. Misperceptions from the use of cruise missiles could still arise, particularly if the cruise missiles are targeted at command and control centers with integrated nuclear and non-nuclear roles.<sup>51</sup> However, the likelihood of nuclear escalation resulting from these misperceptions would be lower than if the cruise missile in question could potentially be carrying a nuclear warhead.

In an attempt to strengthen arms race stability, the 2010 NPR stated that the United States would refrain from developing new nuclear warheads or warheads that would provide for new nuclear capabilities, relying instead on Life Extension Programs (LEP) using components taken from existing warhead designs. This seems to have been an overture to Russia, whose modernization program is highlighted several times throughout the document.<sup>52</sup> By stating that the United States would refrain from modernization efforts that would expand the role of nuclear weapons by adapting them to address new military missions, the 2010 NPR implicitly invited Russia to follow the same actions in order to limit the destabilizing impact of new nuclear weapons systems and the increased role they were perceived to play in Russian nuclear strategy.

Additionally, this could be regarded as an attempt to lay down a foundation for future bilateral dialogues with Russia on strategic stability. The 2010 NPR highlighted the pursuit of high-level bilateral dialogues with Russia as a move aimed at "fostering more stable, resilient, and transparent strategic relationships" between the two nations, thereby reducing the incentives for first use that could arise from doctrinal and strategic misunderstandings.<sup>53</sup> The NPR stated that the dialogues would "allow the United States to explain that

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<sup>50</sup> Nuclear Posture Review Report, 2010, pg. 28

<sup>51</sup> Acton, James M. "Escalation through Entanglement: How the Vulnerability of Command-and-Control Systems Raises the Risks of an Inadvertent Nuclear War." *International Security* 43, no. 1 (2018): 56–99.

<sup>52</sup> "Nuclear Posture Review Report". Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, April 6, 2010. pgs. Iv, x, 4, 19, 28, and 29

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.* pg. 28

our missile defenses and any future U.S. conventionally-armed long-range ballistic missile systems are designed to address newly emerging regional threats, and are not intended to affect the strategic balance with Russia."<sup>54</sup> In return, the Obama administration would seek explanations for Russia's nuclear modernization programs, request clarification of Russian nuclear doctrine, and discuss what steps could be taken to alleviate American wariness of the Russian non-strategic nuclear weapons capabilities.<sup>55</sup>

From the proposed subjects of these dialogues, we can extrapolate a wealth of information about American priorities in its definition of strategic stability. The Obama administration's concerns with nuclear doctrine and modernization programs were in keeping with a view of strategic stability which focused exclusively on nuclear weapons. Additionally, the presentation of the bilateral discussions reflected a desire to bring Russia's understanding of the concept in line with the American concept and away from concerns about BMD and conventionally-armed long-range ballistic missile systems. These desires never came to pass. The dialogues on strategic stability hit rocky ground amidst disagreements on BMD systems and non-strategic nuclear weapons. In August 2013, the United States announced that it would be postponing a session of the BPC, due in part "to lack of progress on missile defense, arms control, trade and commercial relations, global security issues, and human rights." Following the Russian annexation of Crimea, the United States fully suspended its participation in the BPC.<sup>56</sup>

The American focus on BMD systems and conventionally-armed long-range ballistic missile systems reflected the need for the United States to meet the commitments of extended deterrence while reducing its nuclear forces. The NPR addressed this directly, stating that by "maintaining a credible nuclear deterrent and reinforcing regional security architectures with missile defenses and other conventional military capabilities, we can reassure our non-nuclear allies and partners worldwide of our security commitments to them and confirm that they do not need nuclear weapons capabilities of their own."<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid, pgs. 28–29

<sup>55</sup> Nuclear Posture Review Report, 2010, pg. 29

<sup>56</sup> Schreck, Carl. "Freeze Settles On U.S.-Russia Commission Amid Ukraine Standoff." *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*, March 28, 2014.

<sup>57</sup> "Nuclear Posture Review Report". Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, April 6, 2010. Pg. 32

(NPR, 2010, p. 7). The 2010 NPR went into further detail about these regional architectures, stating that they “include effective missile defense, counter-WMD capabilities, conventional power-projection capabilities, and integrated command and control – all underwritten by strong political commitments. “However, as stated in the previous chapter, the conventional and BMD capabilities of the United States were viewed as intensely destabilizing under the Russian interpretation of strategic stability. As such, attempts to strengthen strategic stability through decreasing the role of nuclear weapons had the opposite effect; by increasing the American dependence on systems that were viewed as intensely destabilizing by Russia, modernization programs in Russia intended to defeat BMD systems were seen as all the more necessary, degrading arms race stability.

The NPR’s discussion of arms control measures, as exemplified by the nascent New START Treaty, is also deserving of analysis. As the document noted, “an early task of the NPR was to develop U.S. positions for the New START negotiations. In so doing, the review explored how a range of force structures might affect strategic stability at lower numbers.”<sup>58</sup> The doctrine addressed some of the details involved in its determinations, such as the unavoidable necessity of keeping a functioning nuclear triad, the need to maintain a secure second-strike capability, and the need to adjust its calculations to account for non-nuclear weapons systems intended to be used in developing PGS capabilities.<sup>59</sup> However, the NPR focused on the maintenance of strategic stability with Russia despite substantial cuts to the American nuclear arsenal, rather than the benefits to arms race stability that could be provided by the treaty’s transparency measures.<sup>60</sup> The lengthy descriptions of how strategic stability was maintained at lower force postures signaled to allies of the United States that the protection of the nuclear umbrella hadn’t been weakened by the treaty.

On three other occasions, the document linked strategic stability to the need to reassure American allies of their commitments to the American system of extended deterrence. While two of these instances discussed the need to maintain these assurances

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<sup>58</sup> “Nuclear Posture Review Report”. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, April 6, 2010. Pg. 20

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.* Pg. 20-21

<sup>60</sup> “Nuclear Posture Review Report”. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, April 6, 2010. Pg. 19

in the midst of force reductions, the third occasion stated that "enduring alliances and broad-based political relationships are the foundation of strategic stability and security."<sup>61</sup> Aside from the discussions on the subject of strategic stability dialogues, the nature of alliance commitments was the only area where the 2010 NPR diverged from strictly nuclear interpretations of strategic stability and entered the realm of the political interpretations of the term.

Finally, the NPR's language on the use of nuclear weapons must be addressed, to determine the degree to which the United States would rely upon nuclear deterrence to prevent conventional conflict. According to the 2010 NPR, "the fundamental role of U.S. nuclear weapons... is to deter nuclear attack on the United States, our allies, and partners...The United States would only consider the use of nuclear weapons in extreme circumstances to defend the vital interests of the United States or its allies and partners."<sup>62</sup> The phrasing, which was quite similar to the phrasing to that involved in the Russian military doctrine, was the result of a compromise between two options regarding the role of nuclear weapons in American security policy. Some contributors to the 2010 NPR, including Ben Rhodes, the author of President Obama's 2009 Prague Speech, favored a no-first-use policy.<sup>63</sup> To that end, early drafts of the report included language stating that the "sole purpose" of American nuclear weapons would be to deter a nuclear attack on the United States and its allies. However, this was met with strong resistance, including from Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, who suggested that a "sole purpose" doctrine could lead nuclear threshold countries such as Japan and South Korea to develop their own nuclear weapons, while at the same time unilaterally constraining the United States' military options.<sup>64</sup> Secretary Gates' suggested that the NPR should state that the "primary purpose" of nuclear weapons was to deter nuclear attack. This phrasing suggested a wealth of other purposes behind the possession and deployment of nuclear weapons and would allow the United States to retain a broader range of options than the "sole purpose" phrasing.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid. Pg. 33

<sup>62</sup> Ibid. Pg. 17

<sup>63</sup> Kaplan, Fred M. *The Bomb: Presidents, Generals, and the Secret History of Nuclear War*. New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2021. Pg. 231

<sup>64</sup> Ibid. Pg. 229

<sup>65</sup> Ibid. Pg 229

In the end, President Obama worked out a compromise between the two views. The existence of a "narrow range of contingencies in which U.S. nuclear weapons may still play a role in deterring a conventional or CBW attack against the United States or its allies and partners" precluded the ability of the Obama administration to offer a no-first-use guarantee.<sup>66</sup> (NPR, 2010, p. 16). Stating that nuclear weapons were "fundamental" to the deterrence of nuclear attack would satisfy the concerns of his Secretary of Defense, while the NPR's statement that the United States would act "with the objective of making deterrence of nuclear attack on the United States or our allies and partners the sole purpose of U.S. nuclear weapons" would satisfy those in his administration who believed that anything less than a no-first-use declaration would be a betrayal of the values espoused in the Prague Speech.<sup>67</sup>

This compromise is emblematic of the 2010 Nuclear Posture Review's entire approach. The document was a compromise of practicality and idealism. It laid out several attempts to strengthen strategic stability according to the traditional definition, while at the same time strengthening the promises that the United States would still deliver on its extended deterrence obligations. The document's emphasis on reducing the role of nuclear weapons in military strategy suggests a narrow and focused understanding of strategic stability, and its promises not to use LEPs as an excuse to endow nuclear weapons systems with new military functions shows a desire to limit the factors that could degrade arms race stability.

## 2018 Nuclear Posture Review

The Trump administration's Nuclear Posture Review, released in 2018, was notable in several ways, not the least of which were its positions on the use of nuclear weapons to deter conventional warfare and its proposed nuclear modernization program. The focus on strengthening strategic stability is notably absent in this document; the phrase is only mentioned six times in the hundred-page

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<sup>66</sup> "Nuclear Posture Review Report". Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, April 6, 2010. Pg. 16

<sup>67</sup> Ibid. Pg. 17; Kaplan, Fred M. *The Bomb: Presidents, Generals, and the Secret History of Nuclear War*. New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2021. Pg. 231

document, three of them in the executive summary.<sup>68</sup> This lack of emphasis on strategic stability places some limitations on using this document to assess the Trump administration's positions on strategic stability. However, a close analysis of the 2018 NPR can contribute to understanding the evolving concept of strategic stability in the United States during the Trump administration. Similarly to the 2010 NPR, this iteration of the NPR served as much as a signaling device as it does a policy document. In much the same way that the threat perceptions detailed in the Russian military and nuclear doctrine augmented the statements of Russian leaders and experts, the 2018 NPR can reveal a wealth of information on the factors that affected the Trump administration's perceptions of strategic stability and the actions it took to advance these views.

The 2018 NPR highlighted the dangers of the return to great power competition that had begun to emerge in the years since the 2010 NPR. Instead of focusing primarily on the prevention of nuclear proliferation and nuclear terrorism, it focused on state-level actors whose actions could trigger the alliance obligations of the United States. Along with Iran, China, and North Korea, the 2018 NPR painted a worrying picture of Russian intentions, detailing the doctrinal, technological, and political threats that Russia posed to the United States.<sup>69</sup> Doctrinal threats from Russia included the fact that "Russia now perceives the United States and NATO as its principal opponent and impediment to realizing its destabilizing geopolitical goals in Eurasia," and underscored the seriousness of the U.S. belief in the "escalate to de-escalate" strategy.<sup>70</sup>

American perceptions of the Russian escalate-to-de-escalate doctrine deserves some discussion in this chapter for their implications on the state of crisis stability. As crisis stability describes a situation characterized by the absence of "erroneous assessments of enemy intent, miscalculation, and misperception," the willingness with which American and NATO strategists to buy into this concept deserves some attention. The American belief in the escalate to de-escalate policy sprang from several sources. As briefly discussed, the first among them was the result of suspicions about the classified version of Russia's nuclear doctrine. Suspicions grew about poten-

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<sup>68</sup> "Nuclear Posture Review Report". Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, February 2, 2018. Pgs. vi, vii, xvii, 26, 31, 73

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.* Pg. 26

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.* Pg. 30



tial discrepancies between the officially released doctrine and the classified version, especially in light of statements issued by Nikolai Patrushev, the secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, implying a stronger role for nuclear weapons in Russian security doctrine.<sup>71</sup> Russian nuclear modernization efforts and the discrepancy in the comparative size of American and Russian non-strategic nuclear arsenals were areas of concern, as they suggested a doctrine that relies on their use "to escalate its way out of a failing conflict."<sup>72</sup>

Concerns about the vulnerability of the Baltic states also played a factor following the events in 2014 in Ukraine. Some analysts theorized that Russia would be able to retake the Baltic states before NATO could have a chance to react, defending their gains against the NATO counterattack through a combination of anti-access/area-denial systems and tactical nuclear weapons.<sup>73</sup> Finally, concerns existed about the degree to which Russia's defense policy relied on their nuclear capability, especially following NATO's actions in Kosovo. According to analysis by Dr. Nikolai Sokov, "from the perspective of the Russian military, reliance on nuclear weapons was a logical response to the glaring inadequacy of conventional forces premised on the perception that nuclear weapons had greater utility than deterrence of a large-scale nuclear attack."<sup>74</sup> This would give some credibility to those who believe in the "escalate to de-escalate" strategy. However, Sokov cited official documents suggesting that "reliance on nuclear weapons (was) seen as a temporary 'fix' intended to provide for security until conventional forces (were) sufficiently modernized and strengthened."<sup>75</sup> In more recent literature, Kristen ven Bruusgaard concurred with Sokov's point, believing that the Russian emphasis on deterrence through the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons was lessened once Russia's conventional capabilities were brought up to a sufficient level.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Schneider, Mark B. "Escalate to De-Escalate." Proceedings. U.S. Naval Institute, February 2017.

<sup>72</sup> Scaparotti, Curtis M. "NATO's Military Commander Concerned About Russia's Tactical Nuclear Weapons in Europe." Atlantic Council, May 3, 2017.

<sup>73</sup> Colby, Elbridge, and Jonathan Solomon. "Facing Russia: Conventional Defence and Deterrence in Europe." *Survival* 57, no. 6 (November 23, 2015): 21 – 50.

<sup>74</sup> Sokov, Nikolai. "Russia's Nuclear Doctrine." Nuclear Threat Initiative, August 1, 2004.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> Kristin Ven Bruusgaard, "Russian Nuclear Strategy and Conventional Inferiority," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 44, no. 1 (2020): pp. 3-35,

However, the 2018 NPR did not share the opinions of Sokov and Bruusgaard. Russian nuclear modernization programs and their focus on developing a comparatively wide arsenal of non-strategic nuclear weapons were highlighted as technical threats to the United States. The American perception that Russia would use non-strategic nuclear weapons for coercive purposes weakened conditions of both crisis stability and arms race stability between the United States and Russia. In an attempt to close the numerical gap between the United States and Russia in terms of non-strategic nuclear weapons, the 2018 NPR announced that the Trump administration would develop the W76-2 low-yield SLBM warhead and bring back the nuclear sea-launched cruise missile that had been retired in the 2010 NPR.<sup>77</sup>

The 2018 NPR was more concerned with establishing the credibility of the American deterrence posture and associated assurances than it was in building an environment where the conditions of strategic stability could be strengthened. It must be noted that much of the language in this document seemed intended to reassure allies and partners who were concerned about flagging alliance commitments. President Trump's earlier remarks that American fulfilment of its Article 5 commitments to NATO were contingent on equitable burden-sharing and assertions that NATO was "obsolete" resulted in worries that the strength of the transatlantic link was weakening.<sup>78</sup> To a substantial degree, the 2018 NPR functioned as a signaling document to American allies, demonstrating the willingness of the United States to maintain its security assurances despite comments made by the President.

The 2018 NPR stated that its strategy of tailored deterrence would "ensure Russia understands it has no advantages in will, non-nuclear capabilities, or nuclear escalation options that enable it to anticipate a possible benefit from non-nuclear aggression or limited nuclear escalation. Correcting any Russian misperceptions along these lines is important to maintaining deterrence in Europe and strategic stability."<sup>79</sup> While this statement served as a strong commitment to America's European partners, it walked a fine line by emphasizing the ties between conventional aggression and strategic stability.

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<sup>77</sup> "Nuclear Posture Review Report". Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, February 2, 2018. Pg. 54

<sup>78</sup> Santora, Marc. "Trump Derides NATO as 'Obsolete.' Baltic Nations See It Much Differently." *The New York Times*, July 10, 2018.

<sup>79</sup> "Nuclear Posture Review Report". Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, February 2, 2018. Pg. 31

The 2018 NPR's statement on the employment of nuclear weapons should be analyzed with this statement in mind. The 2018 NPR states that "Russia must...understand that nuclear first-use, however limited, will fail to achieve its objectives, fundamentally alter the nature of a conflict, and trigger incalculable and intolerable costs for Moscow."<sup>80</sup> This does not represent a fundamental change in doctrine. The fact that intolerable costs will follow from the use of nuclear weapons has been a hallmark of deterrence since the Soviet Union and the United States entered the world of mutually assured destruction. However, the document expanded upon this declaratory policy in great detail, laying out a list of conditions under which the U.S. would consider the use of nuclear weapons.

These considerations began by echoing the language of the 2010 NPR, stating that "the United States would only consider the employment of nuclear weapons in extreme circumstances to defend the vital interests of the United States, its allies, and partners." However, the 2018 NPR went a step beyond the 2010 iteration of the review, stating that nuclear weapons use would be considered in response to non-nuclear strategic attacks, which "include, but are not limited to, attacks on the U.S., allied, or partner civilian population or infrastructure, and attacks on U.S. or allied nuclear forces, their command and control, or warning and attack assessment capabilities."<sup>81</sup> Instead of the limited circumstances involved in President Obama's compromise between "sole purpose" and "primary purpose," the 2018 NPR envisaged a world where nuclear weapons would play a broader role. While the U.S. has traditionally kept the option of using nuclear escalation to counter conventional attacks open, the 2018 NPR referenced the role of nuclear weapons in deterring conventional attacks "at least thirty times."<sup>82</sup> Additionally, threatening a nuclear response to attacks on nuclear command and control structures had concerning implications given the increasing entanglement of conventional and nuclear command and control structures.

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<sup>80</sup> "Nuclear Posture Review Report". Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, February 2, 2018. pg. 30

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.* Pg. 21

<sup>82</sup> Hersman, Rebecca. "Nuclear Posture Review: The More Things Change, The More They Stay the Same." Center for Strategic and International Studies, February 6, 2018. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/nuclear-posture-review-more-things-change-more-they-stay-same>.

The combination of intensive nuclear modernization programs and the expanding role of nuclear weapons in American security doctrine implies that the Trump administration did not subscribe to the same understanding of strategic stability as the Obama administration. The 2018 NPR emphasized the strength of the American nuclear deterrent as a means of avoiding conventional war and assured American allies of U.S. commitment to extended deterrence rather than limiting the incentives for the use of nuclear weapons. In his presentation of the 2018 NPR, Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Nonproliferation Chris Ford stated that the NPR aimed "to make both great power conflict and nuclear weapons use less likely by preserving our ability to deter aggression in the face of evolving adversary postures — which, these days, means convincing the would-be aggressor that he will not be able to confront us with an insoluble strategic dilemma by being able to threaten the use of, or indeed actually employ, one of the growing range and diversity of nuclear weapons and delivery systems currently being developed by Russia and China."<sup>83</sup> Framed like this, one could almost be convinced that the 2018 NPR was nothing less than a final realization of the 2010 NPR's vision of a world where deterring nuclear attack is the sole purpose of nuclear weapons. However, Ford neglected to discuss the various roles that nuclear weapons played in the 2018 NPR in deterring acts of non-nuclear aggression against a variety of targets.

Perhaps a fuller understanding of Ford's beliefs on the subject of strategic stability can be found in his earlier writings. In 2013, Ford contributed a chapter to a book published by the Strategic Studies Institute of the U.S. Army War College entitled "Strategic Stability: Contending Interpretations." In it, he describes his own particular view of strategic stability, which "defines strategic stability as a situation in which no power has any significant incentive to try and adjust its relative power vis-a-vis any other power by unilateral means involving the direct application of armed force against it. General war, in other words, is precluded as a means of settling differences or advancing any power's substantive agenda."<sup>84</sup> This view of strategic stability is noticeably broader than this chapter's definition of strate-

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<sup>83</sup> Ford, Christopher A. "Nuclear Weapons Policy in the Trump Administration ." U.S. Department of State. U.S. Department of State, May 30, 2018.

<sup>84</sup> Ford, Chris A. "Anything But Simple: Arms Control and Strategic Stability." Essay. In *Strategic Stability: Contending Interpretations*, edited by Elbridge A. Colby and Michael S. Gerson, 201 – 69. Carlisle Barracks PA: U.S. Army War College, 2013. Pg. 202

gic stability and expands the area of crisis stability as it pertains to deterrence. With its focus on using flexible nuclear options to deter non-nuclear aggression, the 2018 NPR seemed to be based on Ford's interpretation of strategic stability.

If the burden of deterring general war is placed too heavily on nuclear weapons, then there may come a time in which the deterrent threat of the United States is tested. Events have the tendency of outpacing the ability of actors to control them; reaction, not action, becomes the driving force of events. The American system of extended deterrence and the nuclear umbrella that is associated with it has always meant that the United States could be forced to make a choice between breaking the nuclear taboo or accepting the degradation of the credibility of the American extended deterrence commitments. To use nuclear weapons would involve both immediate political costs and result in the near inevitability of escalation, but to forgo the use of nuclear weapons would incur severe reputational costs and a weakening of the American network of allies. By raising the stakes for conventional action taken against the partners of the United States, the 2018 NPR accepted a degradation of crisis stability in return for raising the credibility of their deterrent threat.

Concerns about potential vulnerabilities to nuclear coercion had a heavy impact on the American interpretation of strategic stability. The factors impacting strategic stability in the U.S./Russian relationship were three-fold. First, there were concerns that Russian aggression could lead to a situation where America and its NATO allies would need to act with conventional weapons, and that Russia would resort to first use or the threat of first use of nuclear weapons as a measure to protect the gains that they had achieved. This would be an example of an outside force negatively affecting crisis stability. The second threat to crisis stability came from within; in the case of conventional aggression against an ally of the United States, alliance commitments under the nuclear umbrella could necessitate an escalation to the nuclear level. Finally, there were arms race stability concerns arising from Russian nuclear modernization efforts and their arsenal of tactical nuclear weapons, which suggested that Moscow saw the potential to use tactical nuclear weapons as warfighting tools rather than elements of deterrence. These three concerns shaped Washington's interpretation of strategic stability into something which closely resembled the definition of the concept advanced

by Chris Ford in 2013, in which the strength of strategic stability was dependent on the degree to which it could prevent the outbreak of general conflict.

## Conclusions

The Russian and American governments have very different understandings of strategic stability. These interpretations are affected by both their strategic interests and their perceptions of the threats their country faces, which have undergone significant changes over the last decade. Some aspects of the Russian and American national understandings of factors that impact strategic stability have come to resemble each other, such as the need to prevent the outbreak of armed conflict between Russia and the United States. However, the differences between the two interpretations have the potential to limit the ability for strategic stability talks to result in practical results. Understanding the various factors that impact these interpretations is the first step on the path towards progress towards making progress on various subjects of concern for both countries.

While arms race stability considerations dominated American concepts of the term in the beginning of the decade, the reemergence of great power competition led to a shift to a concern with crisis stability, a factor that was aggravated by the extensive American alliance commitments. Furthermore, the growing reliance on nuclear weapons to prevent not only nuclear exchanges, but non-nuclear aggression expanded the American conception of threats to crisis stability. The American view of arms race stability in the latter half of the 2010's was concerned with the need to cover up gaps in the ladder of escalation to prevent nuclear coercion and the implementation of the perceived "escalate to de-escalate" doctrine, leading to the development of the W76-2 low yield warhead and the decision to start a program of work on developing a new nuclear SLCM. Additionally, the American interpretation of strategic stability only encompasses nuclear weapons, rather than incorporating BMD systems and other non-nuclear considerations.

The Russian conception of strategic stability has remained relatively constant, if broader than the concept of strategic stability relied upon in this thesis. Military threats to strategic stability in the Russian viewpoint include American and NATO missile defense systems,

especially those based in Europe, the growing capabilities and precision of American long-range conventional weapons, and the weaponization of space. Political concerns included the destabilizing impact of protests in countries that Russia had considered to be in its sphere of influence, the equal implementation of international law as Russia interprets it, and the destabilizing impact of information and communication technologies.

The upcoming bilateral dialogues on strategic stability are a promising method of limiting the likelihood that U.S./Russian competition will escalate to the nuclear level. If those involved are realistic in their expectations of what these talks can accomplish and avoid taking an all-or-nothing stance, the dialogues could serve as a foundation to be built off of in the coming years. Risk reduction measures in particular would serve as a promising subject for the talks. Rather than focusing on systems which only one side views as a threat to strategic stability, such as non-strategic weapons or missile defenses, risk reduction measures that take into account areas of convergence in national interpretations of strategic stability could potentially lead to tangible results. An agreement to refrain from targeting command and control systems, for example, could serve both sides and potentially pave the way towards addressing the entanglement of conventional and nuclear weapons systems. If these dialogues are to succeed, the United States and Russia will both have to learn from the failures and misunderstandings of the past in order to secure our future.

## CHAPTER 12

# **NUCLEAR SHARING ARRANGEMENTS: MILITARY-TECHNICAL ASPECTS AND CONTROVERSIES**

*Nikita Degtyarev, Sergey Semenov*

As discussed in Chapter 1, the debate on the NATO nuclear sharing arrangements reemerged after the end of the Cold War. Judging by the bilateral exchanges between 2014 and 2021, first and foremost, Russia and the United States disagree on the history of the issue. While the official U.S. stance is that the Soviet Union explicitly agreed to the U.S. interpretation of Articles I and II compatibility with nuclear sharing arrangements, available archival documents and literature do not support such assertions and suggest that there was only a tacit agreement that questioning the U.S. interpretation in public would hinder the deal.

One of the ways to move forward is to analyze the military-technical aspects of nuclear sharing. This chapter regards nuclear sharing as a multi-layered phenomenon comprised of six major elements: the deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe, the availability of the U.S. nuclear stockpile to support NATO operations, the provision of appropriate training and information to the allies' servicemen, relevant decision making and consultative procedures within the NATO Nuclear Planning Group (NPG), SNOWCAT missions, and appropriate interpretations of the relevant NPT provisions.

The chapter seeks to answer three questions. Did the Soviet Union or other signatories of the NPT agree to all of the aforementioned elements? Did the USSR have its own nuclear sharing within the Warsaw Pact, which was in line with the U.S. understanding? Finally, if there indeed was a tacit understanding between Moscow and Washington, what prompted Russia to change its stance on the issue in the 2010s?



## NATO Nuclear Sharing Arrangements: A Primer

Since 1954, the United States has been deploying its nuclear weapons in Europe. Initially, the nuclear weapons were to be employed only by U.S. military personnel and there was no clear concept of how the United States would coordinate nuclear policy with other NATO allies. The allies, in return, were not completely assured that the United States would use nuclear weapons in defense of Europe. These concerns gave rise to discussions within the U.S. policymaking circles on how to better engage NATO allies in regard to nuclear policymaking. In 1956, the United States started the deliberations on making nuclear capabilities, including means of delivery and appropriate training, available to NATO allies other than the United Kingdom. Such a move was intended to advance the objectives of MC.48 and achieve greater dispersal of nuclear forces<sup>1</sup>. At the same time, the Department of Defense made a more far-reaching proposal envisaging the transfer of custody over nuclear weapons to a multilateral body – a concept that later became known as multilateral nuclear forces (MLF).<sup>2</sup>

Conventionally, the nuclear sharing arrangements are analyzed as a reduced version of the MLF. However, in hindsight, the MLF proposal served as a political cover-up for the development of military-technical aspects of nuclear sharing. Relevant arrangements began to be made in 1955 when an Agreement for cooperation on atomic information was concluded between NATO members. Under the agreement, the United States would provide information necessary for (a) the development of defense plans; (b) the training of personnel in the employment of and defense against atomic weapons; and (c) the evaluation of the capabilities of potential enemies in the employment of atomic weapons.<sup>3</sup> In 1964 the agreement was

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<sup>1</sup> [Assistant Secretary for European Affairs Burke] Elbrick to the Acting Secretary, "Program to Increase NATO Nuclear Capability and Secure Certain Base Rights," 7 November 1956, with attached memoranda and cover memorandum, including undated memorandum to President Eisenhower, Secret <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/dc.html?doc=6990045-National-Security-Archive-Doc-07-Assistant>

<sup>2</sup> "Memorandum from the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense to the President, "Provision of Nuclear Capability to U. S. Allies," Draft, 7 November 1956," National Security Archive, accessed, May 26, 2021, <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/dc.html?doc=6990046-National-Security-Archive-Doc-08-Memorandum-from>.

<sup>3</sup> "Tractatenblad van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden," Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, accessed May 26, 2021, <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/trb-1955-139>

modified. The classified technical annex to the agreement envisaged that the United States would provide information on:

- Effects of nuclear weapons use;
- Information concerning the numbers, locations, types, yields, arming, safing, command, and control of atomic weapons which can be made available in support of NATO;
- Information regarding delivery systems.<sup>4</sup>

In 1957, the United States began to provide non-nuclear-weapons NATO members with dual-capable missiles (Honest John, Matador, etc) as well as conversion kits 'enabling fighter bombers to carry atomic bombs'<sup>5</sup> as well as to train the allies' military personnel to employ those weapons. In furtherance of the sharing arrangements, the United States concluded several stockpile agreements with the allies (the Netherlands, Italy, West Germany, etc) envisaging that nuclear weapons would remain under U.S. custody, yet be made available to non-nuclear allies in support of NATO operations.<sup>6</sup> It was at that time that the United States began to conclude agreements under the Atomic Energy Act Article 144b to allow for the sharing of restricted data and training equipment.<sup>78</sup>

The developments 'on the ground' were paralleled by the public discussion of the NATO Multi-Lateral Force (MLF) announced in December 1960. It was suggested that submarines with nuclear missiles on board would be manned by multinational crews from different NATO nations (see Chapter 1 for more details). The Soviet Union was

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<sup>4</sup> "Nuclear Planning Group," NATO, accessed May 26, 2021, [https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/3/pdf/200305-50Years\\_NPG.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/3/pdf/200305-50Years_NPG.pdf), p.55

<sup>5</sup> "C. Burke Elbrick to the Secretary, "NATO Atomic Stockpile," 3 September 1957, Secret," National Security Archive, accessed, May 26, 2021, <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/dc.html?doc=6990048-National-Security-Archive-Doc-10-C-Burke-Elbrick>

<sup>6</sup> "Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Affairs William Macomber to Thomas E. Morgan, Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, 24 August 1960, Secret," National Security Archive, accessed, May 26, 2021, <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/dc.html?doc=6990059-National-Security-Archive-Doc-21-Assistant>

<sup>7</sup> "Acting Secretary of State Christian Herter to President Eisenhower, "Bilateral Agreements Under the Atomic Energy Act in Implementation of the NATO Atomic Stockpile Concept," 8 April 1959, Top Secret," National Security Archive, accessed, May 26, 2021, <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/dc.html?doc=6990054-National-Security-Archive-Doc-16-Acting>

<sup>8</sup> Dmitry Treshchanin, Tetiana Iarmoshchuk, "The Last Mystery of Occupation. Did the Soviet Union Deploy Its Nukes in Czechoslovakia," *Current Time*, <https://www.currenttime.tv/a/nuclear-weapons-czechoslovakia-ussr/29444985.html>

strongly opposed to this concept, considering it as a potential form of proliferation of nuclear weapons by the United States because military personnel from non-nuclear states would have direct access to nuclear weapons.<sup>9</sup>

While the MLF concept never materialized, the *de facto* nuclear sharing continued to evolve. An important part of that process was the conclusion of stockpile agreements, formalizing the deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons on the national territories of its European allies. It was at that time that the relevant decision-making procedures started to be discussed. This issue first popped up during negotiations with Italy, when the Italian government requested assurances that it would be consulted before the actual use of nuclear weapons.<sup>10</sup>

After the Kennedy administration came into power, the United States realized that its custody over nuclear weapons deployed in Europe and mounted upon allied delivery vehicles was virtual: a scenario under which nuclear weapons could be used without U.S. approval was more than real. At that juncture the dispersal of nuclear capabilities to NATO allies was temporarily suspended to introduce permissive action links (PAL) incorporated into U.S. warheads, thus ensuring that those would not be launched without explicit U.S. order. After the PALs were installed, the deployment of such weapons continued.

The process was crowned in 1967 with the establishment of the Nuclear Planning Group coordinating the Alliance's nuclear activities. The NPG is the senior body on nuclear matters in NATO and discusses 'specific policy issues associated with nuclear forces'. It reviews NATO nuclear policy and adapts it to changing security environments and new security developments, as well as corrects planning and consultation procedures. The NPG is responsible for discussions of policy issues related to nuclear forces, arms control,

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<sup>9</sup> Dmitry Treshchanin, Tetiana Iarmoshchuk, Robert Coalson, "The Unsolved Mystery Of Soviet Nukes In Czechoslovakia," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, September 2, 2018, <https://www.rferl.org/a/the-unsolved-mystery-of-soviet-nukes-in-czechoslovakia-/29466252.html>; Marco De Andreis and Francesco Caloger. The Soviet Nuclear Weapon Legacy // Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. 1995. URL: <https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/files/RR/SIPRIRR10.pdf>. P. 4.; Mindy Weisberger, "Secret Soviet Bunkers in Poland Hid Nuclear Weapons," Live Science, <https://www.livescience.com/64553-soviet-nuclear-bunkers-poland.html>

<sup>10</sup> 'The U.S. Nuclear Presence in Western Europe, 1954-1962, Part II,' National Security Archive, accessed, May 26, 2021, <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/briefing-book/nuclear-vault/2020-09-16/us-nuclear-presence-western-europe-1954-1962-part-ii>

and nuclear nonproliferation, including the discussion of the efficacy of NATO's nuclear deterrence, 'the safety, security, and survivability of nuclear weapons, and communications and information systems'. In the past, the NPG consisted of a limited number of states, but as of 1979, all NATO state members participate in this group (with the exception of France that has no desire to participate). They use the NPG as a forum where countries without division into nuclear and non-nuclear countries develop NATO nuclear policy and make decisions on nuclear posture. The policies agreed in the NPG are the common position of all member states since all decisions here are made on the basis of consensus. Although previously all NPG proposals needed approval from the NDAC, since 1973, the NPG has taken over the NDAC's functions and become the only official NATO organ working on nuclear issues. At the same time, the NDAC never officially ended.<sup>11</sup>

As discussed by various researchers, the nuclear sharing arrangements still provide for proliferation in times of war. As Adrian Fischer, the deputy director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency noted in 1966,

the purpose of such a treaty would be to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and, by this measure among others, to avoid the outbreak of nuclear war anywhere in the world. Once general hostilities have occurred, however, the point of prevention has been long passed, and the purpose of the treaty can no longer be served. In such circumstances the treaty would not apply, and a nuclear power would be free to transfer nuclear weapons to an ally for the use in the conflict.

## The Tacit Understanding

On September 9, 1966, George Bunn, a legal counselor at the ACDA, informed Yuli Vorontsov, a counselor at the Soviet Embassy, that the U.S. side would not accept a nonproliferation treaty that would alter the existing arrangements on the deployment of nuclear weapons within NATO or would prohibit consultations on nuclear defense.<sup>12</sup> As recalled by Amb. Roland Timerbaev, the Soviet Ministry of Foreign

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Timerbaev, P. 254

Affairs proceeded from the premise that consultations on nuclear matters would not be an obstacle to concluding a nonproliferation treaty, with the treaty omitting such activities.

This understanding was further confirmed by Gromyko and Rusk. The diplomats agreed that the existing arrangements within military alliances, including nuclear planning matters, would not be prohibited.

When recommending Articles I and II to NATO allies the United States made an interpretative statement that these provisions do not apply to means of delivery and do not outlaw consultations on nuclear defense. In addition, they do not foreclose the deployment of nuclear weapons on the territories of NATO allies if the 'two keys' principle applies to the decision-making on their deployment. According to Timerbaev, the details of what was meant by 'control' were never formally clarified during the bilateral or ENDC negotiations. The United States only informed the Soviet Union of its interpretations, with the issue of public Soviet acquiescence never raised. As Deputy Director of the ACDA Adrian Fisher states in his testimony to Congress, 'they [the Soviet Union] can't be asked to agree about certain arrangements that we keep secret'.<sup>13</sup>

The United States, however, was informed that the Soviet Union did not consider itself bound by 'unilateral interpretations'. A statement to that effect was delivered on May 27, 1967, by the Soviet representative Roschin. At the same time, the Soviet Union indeed did not openly object to the essence of the U.S. interpretation. According to Timerbaev, such interpretation reflected the existing reality and had relevance for the interests of the Warsaw Pact, given that the Soviet nuclear weapons were deployed there.

The Soviet Union probably knew about the extent to which nuclear sharing had been elaborated. While the archives of the Soviet intelligence are currently unavailable for research, such information could have been accessed by Soviet diplomats, military, and intelligence officials from open sources. For instance, in 1965, an article detailing the already existing nuclear sharing arrangements within NATO was published in the *New York Times*.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> William Alberque, "The NPT and the Origins of NATO's Nuclear Sharing Arrangements," VCDNP, accessed May 26, 2021, <http://vcdnp.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Alberque-Briefing-NPT-Nuclear-Sharing-Arrangements.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> John W. Finneyspecial, "We Are Already Sharing the Bomb," *New York Times*, November 28, 1965, <https://www.nytimes.com/1965/11/28/archives/we-are-already->

## Did the Soviet Union Have Its Own Nuclear Sharing?

In order to better apprehend if the Soviet Union had accepted the logic underlying the nuclear sharing arrangements, it is useful to analyze the Soviet policy on the deployment of its nuclear weapons outside of its national territory. The Soviet Union indeed deployed nuclear weapons in Europe, though its military planning put a premium upon Soviet-based medium-range ballistic missiles (MRBMs). Available evidence suggests that at least a dozen nuclear weapons storage facilities had been constructed in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany<sup>15</sup>.

However, the host countries did not have access to the facilities. Moreover, the existence of such assets had been a strictly guarded secret known only to the highest military-political leadership of the host country. For the rest, the facilities were portrayed as 'communications nodes'.<sup>16</sup>

There are allegations that the warheads would have been made available to the allies if the war was considered inevitable. However, no proof exists that nuclear warheads had ever been actually transferred to the allies. Moreover, nuclear information sharing within the Warsaw Pact never achieved the same degree of intensity as within NATO. For instance, the Bulgarian Armed Forces units trained for transporting nuclear weapons did not actually know the dimensions of the warheads.

The information available on the patterns of training is sporadic and based on limited sources. According to the oral history interviews with Czechoslovak generals,<sup>17</sup> the country's air force had been trained to employ nuclear weapons. The U.S. CIA estimated

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sharing-the-bomb.html; Chuprin, Konstantin, "Yadernoe Bratstvo: «Visla» gotovilas' vyty iz beregov," *Voенно-Promushenny Courier*, July 18, 2016, <https://vpk-news.ru/articles/31490>

<sup>15</sup> "Soviet Depots for Nuclear Warheads in the GDR," *Sightraider*, accessed May 26, 2021, <https://www.sightraider.com/soviet-depots-for-nuclear-warheads-in-the-gdr/>

<sup>16</sup> Jan Richter, Olga Kalinina, "Soviet nuclear arsenal in Czechoslovakia," *Radio Prague International*, May 27, 2008, <https://english.radio.cz/soviet-nuclear-arsenal-czechoslovakia-8595720#:~:text=The%20Soviet%20Army%20had%20nuclear,1970s%2C%20at%20the%20latest.%E2%80%9D>

<sup>17</sup> "Oral History Interviews with Czechoslovak Generals: Soviet-Czechoslovak Military Planning in the Cold War," *Parallel History Project On NATO And The Warsaw Pact*, accessed May 26, 2021, [https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/108640/doc\\_10532\\_290\\_en.pdf](https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/108640/doc_10532_290_en.pdf)

the prospects for actual deployment of Soviet nuclear warheads on the allies' missiles and dual-capable aircraft as 'possible, but unlikely'.<sup>18</sup>

## **From 1967 to 1991: Decline In Numbers Of U.S. Nuclear Warheads And Systems Deployed In Europe**

In 1971, the deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons peaked with approximately 7,300 nuclear warheads deployed in Europe. In total, 11 nuclear systems were deployed in Europe: mines, Nike Hercules surface-to-air missiles (SAM), Honest John surface-to-surface missiles (SSM), Lance SSM, Sergeant SSM, Pershing IA, 155mm Howitzer, 8-inch Howitzer, Walleye air-to-surface missiles (ASM), anti-submarine warfare depth bombs, and gravity bombs delivered by dual-capable aircraft.<sup>19</sup> After 1971, the decline in the number of U.S. nuclear weapons began. From 1975 to 1980, the U.S. nuclear arsenal decreased by more than one thousand nuclear warheads and about 5,800 warheads. This decrease in the arsenal occurred after long debates in Pentagon between 1973 and 1974, as well as per a directive by the Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger. This decision was the first major revision of nuclear posture in Europe since 1954. The reason behind this decrease was due to a few different concerns: the debate over the physical security of the huge arsenal, the acknowledgment that the arsenal in Europe was excessive, a war between Greece and Turkey on which territories U.S. nuclear weapons were deployed, and a series of terrorist attacks in Europe.

By 1976, all U.S. tactical nuclear weapons were equipped with Permission Action Links (PALs)<sup>20</sup> to prevent unauthorized use of nuclear weapons. In 1985, the number of warheads slightly increased

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<sup>18</sup> "Soviet Planning for Front Nuclear Operations in Central Europe," National Archives, accessed May 26, 2021, <https://www.archives.gov/files/declassification/iscap/pdf/2012-090-doc1.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> "NATO's Nuclear Forces in the New Security Environment," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, accessed February 1, 2021, [https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static/assets/pdf/pdf\\_topics/20091022\\_Nuclear\\_Forces\\_in\\_the\\_New\\_Security\\_Environment-eng.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_topics/20091022_Nuclear_Forces_in_the_New_Security_Environment-eng.pdf), p. 2.

<sup>20</sup> Hans Kristensen, "U.S. Nuclear Weapons in Europe: A Review of Post-Cold War Policy, Force Levels, and War Planning," February 2005, <https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/euro.pdf>, p. 24-26.

to 6,000 during the continuing Euromissile Crisis, and then the numbers continued to decline.

At the beginning of the 1980s, Sergeant SSM and Walleye ASM were withdrawn. So, there were 9 nuclear systems left. In 1983, two new systems were deployed in Europe: Pershing II and BGM-109G Gryphon ground-launched cruise missiles (GLCMs). In 1984, Canada removed U.S. nuclear weapons (Bomarc nuclear-armed anti-aircraft missiles and AIR-2 Genie nuclear-armed air-to-air missile<sup>21</sup>) from its territory, thus leaving NATO's club of hosts of U.S. nuclear weapons.<sup>22</sup> By 1987, two more systems were withdrawn: mines and Honest John SSM. At the end of the 1980s, after the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty entered into force in 1988, all deployed Pershing IA, Pershing II, and GLCMs in Europe since 1983 were withdrawn and dismantled. What is more, NATO still conducted the retirement process of Nike Hercules and artillery warheads.

## After the Cold War: In Search of *Raison d'être*

The unification of Germany, withdrawal of Soviet troops from Central and Eastern Europe, negotiations of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, and domestic political changes in the Soviet Union led to changes in NATO planning and strategy. In July 1990, the London Declaration, adopted after the meeting of the North Atlantic Council, stated that there was a need to alter the way of thinking about defense, including the state of U.S. conventional and nuclear forces in Europe. It was decided that modifying the size and tasks of nuclear forces significantly reduced the 'role for sub-strategic nuclear systems of the shortest range,' eliminated 'all its nuclear artillery shells from Europe,' reduced NATO's reliance on nuclear weapons, and made 'nuclear forces truly weapons of last resort'.<sup>23</sup>

However, at an NPG meeting in December 1990, it was stated that the nuclear weapons still played 'a key role in the prevention

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<sup>21</sup> Thomas Nichols, Douglas Stuart, and Jeffrey McCausland, eds., "Tactical Nuclear Weapons and NATO," April 2012, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep12088>.

<sup>22</sup> "Canada and NATO," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, accessed February 2, 2021, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/declassified\\_161511.htm%3FselectedLocale%3Den](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/declassified_161511.htm%3FselectedLocale%3Den).

<sup>23</sup> "Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, accessed January 21, 2021, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_23693.htm?selectedLocale=en](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_23693.htm?selectedLocale=en).



of war and the maintenance of stability; European-based nuclear forces provided the necessary linkage to NATO's strategic forces; and widespread participation in nuclear roles and policy formulation demonstrated Alliance cohesion and the sharing of responsibilities, and made an important contribution' to NATO nuclear posture.<sup>24</sup> So, the goal of NATO's nuclear policy was actually not altered significantly, and U.S. nuclear weapons were still going to stay on European soil to contribute to NATO's strategy of preventing wars.

In the summer of 1991, 2,500 U.S. nuclear weapons were still deployed in Europe, and more than half of the arsenal were air-delivered bombs.<sup>25</sup> The five deployed nuclear systems in Europe included: Lance SSMs, 155mm Howitzers, 8-inch Howitzers, anti-submarine warfare depth bombs, and gravity bombs delivered by dual-capable aircraft.<sup>26</sup>

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, things changed. Mainly, the threat of Soviet invasion diminished. NATO officials publicly declared that the number and role of nuclear weapons in Europe were 'unprecedentedly' reduced. The United States modernized its nuclear war planning. U.S. nuclear weapons based on national territory were capable of covering all potential targets, which were covered by the U.S. nuclear weapons deployed in Europe. However, U.S. nuclear weapons were not fully withdrawn, and NATO nuclear planning and strategy were maintained. What is more, from the end of the 1990s to the beginning of the 2000s, many countries, which in the past were NATO's potential targets, became NATO members.<sup>27</sup>

After the end of the Cold War, NATO declared that its nuclear forces did not target any specific countries. 'With the end of the Cold War, NATO terminated the practice of maintaining standing peacetime nuclear contingency plans and associated targets for its sub-strategic nuclear forces. As a result, NATO's nuclear forces no longer target any country'.<sup>28</sup> However, it did not look as great as it sounded. Although aircraft capable of delivering nuclear weapons

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<sup>24</sup> "Defence Planning Committee and Nuclear Planning Group, Brussels, 6 – 7 Dec. 1990, Final Communiqué," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, accessed January 21, 2021, <https://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c901207a.htm>.

<sup>25</sup> Hans Kristensen, "U.S. Nuclear Weapons in Europe: A Review of Post-Cold War Policy, Force Levels, and War Planning," p. 28.

<sup>26</sup> "NATO's Nuclear Forces in the New Security Environment", p. 2.

<sup>27</sup> Hans Kristensen, "U.S. Nuclear Weapons in Europe: A Review of Post-Cold War Policy, Force Levels, and War Planning," p. 5.

<sup>28</sup> "NATO's Nuclear Forces in the New Security Environment," p. 3.

was de-alerted (until 1995 readiness of dual-capable aircraft was measured in weeks, from 2002 – in months), NATO continued to have detailed nuclear strike plans 'for potential strikes... against specific countries'.

NATO also faced the issue of justifying the presence of U.S. weapons in Europe. One of the official explanations provided was that they deterred war. However, that deterrence was not enough. NATO nuclear planners started to search for a justification for the remaining nuclear weapons in Europe. The U.S. European Command (EUCOM) and U.S. Strategic Command considered the possible use of nuclear weapons 'outside of the EUCOM's area of responsibility'.<sup>29</sup>

In the mid-1990s, the U.S. withdrew its nuclear weapons from two German air bases (Memmingen Air Base and Nörvenich Air Base), two Turkish bases (Akinci Air Base and Balıkesir Air Base), and one Italian base (Rimini Air Base). However, the number of nuclear weapons was not reduced, they were only transferred to other European air bases with U.S. nuclear weapons (Ramstein Air Base in Germany, Incirlik Air Base in Turkey, Ghedi Torre Air Base in Italy). Moreover, the weapons were still supposed to be used and delivered by the host nation.

Justification of the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe was found in 1991 thanks to the Gulf War. The Gulf War raised concerns that rogue states could proliferate ballistic missiles and WMD against European states. This link between the proliferation of WMD by rogue states and U.S. forward-deployed nuclear weapons in Europe has gradually received more attention over the years.

At the same time, the reduction of U.S. nuclear weapons continued. In September 1991, U.S. President George H. Bush announced the withdrawal of all U.S. ground-launched short-range weapons deployed overseas and their destruction along with existing U.S. stockpiles of the same type and cease of 'deployment of tactical nuclear weapons on surface ships, attack submarines, and land-based naval aircraft during "normal circumstances"'.<sup>30</sup> There were only 1,400 air-delivered bombs left in Europe. Due to this number of bombs seeming excessive, the NPG decided to decrease the quantity

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<sup>29</sup> Hans Kristensen, "U.S. Nuclear Weapons in Europe: A Review of Post-Cold War Policy, Force Levels, and War Planning", p. 6.

<sup>30</sup> "The Presidential Nuclear Initiatives (PNIs) on Tactical Nuclear Weapons at a Glance," Arms Control Association, accessed January 21, 2021, <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/pniglance>.

to approximately 700 bombs. From this point forward, the NPG communique stated that only tactical weapons delivered by dual-capable aircraft would stay in Europe. Although the number of nuclear weapons declined, they were still considered as an essential part of NATO strategy for preventing war. Thus, conventional forces could not ensure that this goal was met.<sup>31</sup>

The Alliance's 1991 Strategic Concept also reflected the importance of nuclear weapons. This concept stated that 'the presence of North American conventional and U.S. nuclear forces in Europe remains vital to the security of Europe, which is inseparably linked to that of North America'; 'nuclear weapons make a unique contribution in rendering the risks of any aggression incalculable and unacceptable. Thus, they remain essential to preserve peace'. It also mentioned that 'the fundamental purpose of the nuclear forces of the Allies is political' and their deployment in Europe provides 'an essential political and military link between the European and the North American members of the Alliance'. That is why it is important to 'maintain adequate nuclear forces in Europe'. Besides, the Strategic Concept also repeated the NPG communique's idea about tactical nuclear weapons.<sup>32</sup> However, no clear explanation was provided for U.S. forward-deployment of nuclear weapons in Europe, nor why the nuclear weapons of Britain and France could not play a role in U.S. forward-deployed nuclear weapons.

In 1994, when the first U.S. nuclear posture review (NPR) was presented, John Deutch, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, stated that dual-capable aircraft to deliver nuclear weapons were maintained in Europe and acknowledged that the threat of Soviet conventional military superiority had disappeared. Nonetheless, he raised the issue of the large quantity of Russian tactical nuclear weapons.<sup>33</sup> The disparity in numbers of tactical nuclear weapons between the U.S. and Russia and the potential possibility of using these weapons against European targets, he alleged, concerned the U.S. He also mentioned the political role of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe in maintaining

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<sup>31</sup> Hans Kristensen, "U.S. Nuclear Weapons in Europe: A Review of Post-Cold War Policy, Force Levels, and War Planning", p. 30-32.

<sup>32</sup> "Towards the new Strategic Concept: A selection of background documents," North Atlantic Treaty Organization, accessed January 21, 2021, [https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf\\_publications/20120412\\_Towards\\_the\\_new\\_strategic\\_concept-eng.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_publications/20120412_Towards_the_new_strategic_concept-eng.pdf), p. 27, 31.

<sup>33</sup> The Russian tactical nuclear weapons will continue to be an issue through 2000s and 2010s.

the cohesion within NATO.<sup>34</sup> At the same time, Deutch reluctantly recognized that NATO had no clear basis for the presence of nuclear weapons in Europe and that it was hard to make a decision on the proper level of readiness of nuclear forces within NATO.<sup>35</sup>

In December 1997, the argument about Russian tactical nuclear weapons was directly raised again by the United States Commander in Chief, European Command (USCINCEUR), claiming that they remained a threat to NATO. He emphasized that Russia had a great advantage in tactical nuclear weapons and associated delivery systems and tended to have a greater reliance on this type of nuclear weapons by Russia. Furthermore, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction within the area of responsibility, the area of interest of the EUCOM, and the ability by potential proliferators to target European capitals were a growing concern and, thus, a reason for keeping U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe.<sup>36</sup>

The Alliance's Strategic Concept, officially approved in 1999, cemented the status quo, reaffirming the role of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe and highlighted the involvement of non-nuclear NATO States 'in collective defense planning in nuclear roles, in peacetime basing of nuclear forces on their territory and in command, control, and consultation arrangements'. Nuclear forces deployed in Europe were seen as 'an essential political and military link between the European and the North American members of the Alliance' and 'an essential link with strategic nuclear forces [of the United States first of all]'.<sup>37</sup>

One event, however, undermines the whole idea of 'NATO nuclear burden-sharing,' or 'an essential link'. This event was the removal of U.S. B61 bombs from the Greek Araxos Air Base in 2001, thus ending the 40-year-old deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons on the territory of Greece. The concrete reason for the withdrawal is unknown. Maybe it was a great financial burden for Greece to buy

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<sup>34</sup> "Briefing on Results of the Nuclear Posture Review, September 22, 1994," Federation of American Scientists, accessed January 21, 2021, <https://fas.org/wp-content/uploads/media/Briefing-on-the-Results-of-the-Nuclear-Posture-Review.pdf>, p. 15–16.

<sup>35</sup> Hans Kristensen, "U.S. Nuclear Weapons in Europe: A Review of Post-Cold War Policy, Force Levels, and War Planning," p. 45-46.

<sup>36</sup> "Msg (S/DECL x4), 121705Z Dec 97," Nukestrat, accessed February 1, 2021, [http://www.nukestrat.com/us/afn/99-97\\_CINCEUR121297.pdf](http://www.nukestrat.com/us/afn/99-97_CINCEUR121297.pdf).

<sup>37</sup> "Towards the new Strategic Concept: A selection of background documents," p. 41, 46.

and maintain dual-capable aircraft to deliver B61 bombs.<sup>38</sup> The case of Greece and the fact that the number of host nation air bases that store U.S. nuclear bombs has declined from 12 bases in 1990 to only six on the territory of five host nations now puts the NATO argument about nuclear burden-sharing and maintenance of B61 in Europe under question.

During the 1990s and the 2000s, NATO modernized its nuclear war planning. This modernization gave NATO 'a capability to design and execute nuclear strike options that is greater than at any time during the Cold War'. At the same time, nuclear weapons were declared to be a weapon of last resort, along with the intention to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in NATO.<sup>39</sup>

All of the nuclear weapons that remained were gravity bombs B61-3, B61-4, and B61-10. At the beginning of the 2000s, there were the same number of approximately 480 U.S. nuclear weapons in Belgium, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Turkey, United Kingdom (110 of these bombs were stored in the United Kingdom, a nuclear-weapon-state). 300 out of the 480 bombs were supposed to be delivered by U.S. F-15E and F16C/D aircraft while the other 180 bombs could be delivered by Belgian, Dutch, and Turkish F-16s, as well as by German and Italian PA-200 Tornados. Each F-15E is capable of delivering up to five bombs. The delivery capability of F-16C/D and PA-200 is up to two bombs.

It is worth noting that there are bases (Nörvenich Air Base in Germany, Akinci Air Base and Balikesir Air Base in Turkey, Araxos Air Base in Greece) from which U.S. nuclear weapons were withdrawn, but the weapons storage and security systems (WS3) were not dismantled and are in caretaker status. Theoretically, U.S. nuclear weapons can be brought back to these bases.

The B61 bombs in Europe have been modified and equipped with new capabilities several times after the end of the Cold War. In 1995, the alteration of all B61 deployed in Europe started.<sup>40</sup>

By 2002, the safety, use control, and reliability of the B61s were improved.<sup>41</sup> The purpose of these changes was to upgrade, refurbish,

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<sup>38</sup> "Towards the new Strategic Concept: A selection of background documents," p. 55–56.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, P. 41–42.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, P. 15–20.

<sup>41</sup> "Nuclear Weapons," *Lab News*, Vol. 55 (February 2003), [https://www.sandia.gov/LabNews/LN03-07-03/LA2003/1a03/nuclear\\_story.htm](https://www.sandia.gov/LabNews/LN03-07-03/LA2003/1a03/nuclear_story.htm).

or replace components of the weapons to keep them safe and reliable. An important part of the B61s' alteration is the provision of the Code Management System (CMS) for these bombs. The CMS provided greater flexibility and speed of the weapons' use-control code management capabilities and equipment. As it was pointed out in Sandia National Laboratory's news, '... maintenance and logistic burdens will be eased, with personnel training and operation simplified'.<sup>42</sup>

Apart from the storage and such modernization activity, from the 1960s till 2021, NATO has conducted nuclear strike training to have a credible wartime nuclear strike mission. Pilots of non-nuclear NATO States also practice their skills in dropping nuclear bombs. In 1994, the United States Air Forces in Europe (USAFE) maintained 15 locations for nuclear weapon drills in eight countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Turkey, Tunisia, and the United Kingdom.<sup>43</sup> At least until 1997, these drills were conducted with real nuclear weapons on board. An example of such exercises is the annual Steadfast Noon exercises or the training of NATO States on defending themselves with nuclear weapons. These exercises include many objectives. One of them is training with the use of nuclear-capable fighter bombers, which can be armed with the B61 nuclear gravity bomb. Military personal is trained on how to safely transport B61 bombs from underground storage to the aircraft and mount them under the fighter bombers. The last exercise was conducted in October 2020 on German soil with the participation of Belgian, Dutch, and Italian fighter planes.<sup>44</sup>

Now, according to the Nuclear Threat Initiative, there are about 150 American B61 tactical bombs in Europe. Six facilities with U.S. nuclear weapons are located in five countries: Belgium (10–20) (Kleine Brogel Air Base), Germany (10–20) (Büchel Air Base), Italy (60–70) (Aviano Air Base and Ghedi Torre Air Base), The Netherlands (10–20) (Volkel Air Base) and Turkey (60–70) (Incirlik Air Base).<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Ken Frazier, "Modernized System to Manage Codes for Nation's Nuclear Weapons Complete," *Lab News*, Vol. 54, no. 1 (January 11, 2002), [https://www.sandia.gov/LabNews/LN01-11-02/key01-11-02\\_stories.html](https://www.sandia.gov/LabNews/LN01-11-02/key01-11-02_stories.html).

<sup>43</sup> Hans Kristensen, "U.S. Nuclear Weapons in Europe: A Review of Post-Cold War Policy, Force Levels, and War Planning," p. 42.

<sup>44</sup> "Deutsche Luftwaffe Trainiert Für Atomkrieg," *Bild*, October 13, 2020, <https://www.bild.de/regional/koeln/koeln-aktuell/geheime-nato-uebung-deutsche-luftwaffe-trainiert-fuer-atomkrieg-73393040.bild.html>.

<sup>45</sup> "Nuclear Disarmament NATO," The Nuclear Threat Initiative, accessed February 5, 2021, <https://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/nato-nuclear-disarmament/>.

The B61 bombs are designed to be delivered by American F-15 E, F-16 C / D, Belgian, Dutch, and Turkish F-16s, as well as the German and Italian PA-200 Tornado.<sup>46</sup> It is important to understand that although U.S. nuclear weapons are located in the national territories of five NATO States, the responsibility for maintaining and protecting U.S. nuclear bombs stored in Europe lies with the U.S. Air Force. Moreover, although this arsenal can be installed on the aircraft of the country in which it is stored in the event of a war, these nuclear weapons remain under the command and control of the United States. Only the United States, as officially stated, decides whether to use it or not. The B61 bomb includes several security mechanisms designed to prevent unauthorized use:

- 1) an aircraft is equipped with Aircraft Monitoring and Control (AMAC) computers that provide safing, arming, and fusing functions of the bomb;
- 2) a pilot can input the Permissive Action Links code arming the bomb only through the AMAC system;
- 3) activation codes consist of a 6-12-digit number with a limited number of attempts to enter and come directly from Washington DC.<sup>47</sup>

Although the United States cooperates with NATO members in developing NATO nuclear policy, holds meetings and joint nuclear military exercises, and stores B61 bombs in European countries, in the end, the United States makes the decision to use the nuclear weapons.

In 2017, the United States announced plans to upgrade its existing B61 bombs to modification 12 as part of the Life extension program. The program allows keeping these bombs in the arsenal for the next 20-30 years.<sup>48</sup> The first production unit of the weapon will be completed in the fiscal year 2022.<sup>49</sup> The modernization will be fully

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<sup>46</sup> "Nuclear Disarmament NATO," The Nuclear Threat Initiative, accessed February 5, 2021, <https://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/nato-nuclear-disarmament/>.

<sup>47</sup> Kyle Mizokami, "America Built 3,155 B61 Nuclear Bombs. Around 50 Are Still in Turkey," *The National Interest*, October 19, 2019, <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/america-built-3155-b61-nuclear-bombs-around-50-are-still-turkey-89526>.

<sup>48</sup> "U.S. Nuclear Modernization Programs," Arms Control Association, accessed February 5, 2021, <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/USNuclearModernization#snapshot>.

<sup>49</sup> Ankit Panda, "U.S. Air Force's F-15E Completes Certification to Deliver B61-12 Nuclear Weapon," *The Diplomat*, June 9, 2020, <https://thediplomat.com/>

completed in 2025.<sup>50</sup> The B61-12 will have new combat characteristics, updated security and radar components, modified power supplies, etc.<sup>51</sup> One of the key points is the modernization of the tail section of the aerial bomb (removal of the parachute, installation of an improved GPS and inertial guidance system), which actually makes it a high-precision weapon, and also allows the bomb to be equipped with a nuclear warhead of lower yield. The accuracy can reach 30 meters. Also, due to the new modification, carrier aircraft do not need to fly in close proximity to the target, thereby increasing the chance of avoiding falling into the enemy's air defense range.

## Reemergence of Russian-U.S. Debate on Nuclear Sharing

The Soviet Union did not openly criticize nuclear sharing after entry into force of the NPT. Neither did the Russian Federation in the 1990s-2000s. However, in 2014 the Russian approach to this question changed, and Russia started to speak out against NATO nuclear sharing arrangements by pointing out that such arrangements violate Articles I and II of the NPT.<sup>52</sup>

Under Article I of the NPT, 'each nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes not to transfer to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly'. In the Russian view, nuclear sharing is not compatible with this obligation since the United States gives indirect control over nuclear weapons and direct control in case of real war. In addition, Article II, which specifies that NNWS undertake 'not to receive the transfer from any transferor whatsoever of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive

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2020/06/us-air-forces-f-15e-completes-certification-to-deliver-b61-12-nuclear-weapon/#:~:text=The%20B61%20mod%2012%2C%20or,completion%20in%20fiscal%20year%202022.

<sup>50</sup> "B61-12 Life Extension Program," U.S. Department of Energy, accessed February 5, 2021, <https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2020/06/f76/B61-12-20200622.pdf>.

<sup>51</sup> "U.S. Nuclear Modernization Programs."

<sup>52</sup> Statement by Mikhail I.Uliyanov, Acting Head of the Delegation of the Russian Federation at the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (General debate) // Reaching Critical Will. 2015. URL: [https://reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/statements/27April\\_Russia.pdf](https://reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/statements/27April_Russia.pdf).



devices or of control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly' is violated. In this case, NATO NNWS violate it by participating in nuclear sharing.

An analysis of the documents from the three PrepComs shows that Russia is not the only country that has concerns about U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe and the deployment of nuclear weapons outside its national territories. Moreover, the concerns regarding nuclear sharing in the NPT Review Process date back to the 1985 Review Conference. All concerned countries can be divided into two groups: those that directly accuse the United States of the existing practice and those that speak about the problems in disarmament in general. The main countries from the first group are China, Cuba, Iran, Non-Aligned Movement. They believe that U.S. nuclear weapons, as well as NATO nuclear sharing arrangements, seriously violate the NPT, leading to proliferation, and U.S. nuclear weapons need to be returned to the national territory of the country. Special attention should be paid to the Non-Aligned Movement in view of the fact that this organization represents the opinion of 120 countries, where decisions are made by consensus. The second group of countries, which includes the Philippines, Kazakhstan, Republic of South Africa, Syria, opposes the modernization of nuclear weapons in general.<sup>53</sup>

The fact that nuclear sharing has existed for more than 40 years, and references to certain 'understandings' that were reached during the negotiation of the NPT text, do not make it more acceptable for Russia.<sup>54</sup> Russia also rejects the argument that the Soviet Union and the United States, before the conclusion of the NPT, reached a mutual understanding, according to which Moscow decided not to object to NATO nuclear sharing arrangements. In addition to Russia and the United States, more than 180 states are parties to the treaty. In addition to Russia, many other states (the Non-Aligned Movement,

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<sup>53</sup> Nikita Degtyarev, Vladimir Orlov. NATO nuclear sharing arrangements and the issue of compliance with the obligations of the Member States of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons // PIR Center. 2020. (In Russian) URL: <https://www.pircenter.org/articles/2224-880793>.

<sup>54</sup> Respond of the official representative of the Russian Foreign Ministry Lukashchikov A.K. to a media question regarding the implementation of NATO "joint nuclear missions" // The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. 2015. (In Russian) URL: [https://www.mid.ru/web/guest/adernoen-nerasprostranenie/-/asset\\_publisher/JrcRGi5UdnBO/content/id/1108907](https://www.mid.ru/web/guest/adernoen-nerasprostranenie/-/asset_publisher/JrcRGi5UdnBO/content/id/1108907).

China, Iran, etc.) criticize NATO nuclear policy as incompatible with the NPT.<sup>55</sup>

Currently, the United States keeps a low profile on the nuclear sharing issue within the NPT Review Process, reiterating that the practice predates the NPT and is fully consistent with the Treaty. Moreover, the United States maintains that the arrangements benefited the nuclear nonproliferation regime, since the existing U.S. nuclear umbrella and U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe prevented the states involved in this policy to refuse to create their own nuclear weapons.<sup>56</sup>

## What Prompted the Reappraisal of the Russian Position?

Several factors may account for the reappraisal of the implicit understandings on NATO nuclear sharing.

Under Presidential Nuclear Initiatives of the early 90s, the Russian Federation withdrew its remaining tactical nuclear weapons (TNWs) from operational service. TNWs were 'removed from service and concentrated in centralized storage facilities in the Russian territory,' and were de-alerted.<sup>57</sup> Although Russia eliminated a significant part of its TNWs arsenal, removed the rest from their delivery vehicles, and stored at the central storage facilities in the national territory, the United States, as discussed above, did not stop forward deployment of the B61. On the contrary, these bombs were and are still being modernized and deployed in direct proximity to Russian

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<sup>55</sup> Interview of Mikhail Ulyanov, Director of the Department for Nonproliferation and Arms Control of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to the *Kommerstant* newspaper, published on October 19, 2015 // The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. 2015. (In Russian) URL: [https://www.mid.ru/web/guest/predotvrasenie-gonki-vooruzenij-v-kosmose/-/asset\\_publisher/wD2rNsfQhho/content/id/1878994](https://www.mid.ru/web/guest/predotvrasenie-gonki-vooruzenij-v-kosmose/-/asset_publisher/wD2rNsfQhho/content/id/1878994).

<sup>56</sup> Comment by the Information and Press Department on the U.S. Report on Adherence to and Compliance with Arms Control, Non-Proliferation, and Disarmament Agreements and Commitments // The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. 2019. URL: [https://www.mid.ru/web/guest/situacia-vokrug-dogovora-o-rsmd/-/asset\\_publisher/ckorjLVikS61/content/id/3633105#0](https://www.mid.ru/web/guest/situacia-vokrug-dogovora-o-rsmd/-/asset_publisher/ckorjLVikS61/content/id/3633105#0).

<sup>57</sup> Statement by Mikhail I. Uliyanov, Head of the Delegation of the Russian Federation to the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons // *Reaching Critical Will*. 2014. URL: [https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom14/statements/30April\\_RussianFederation.pdf](https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom14/statements/30April_RussianFederation.pdf).

borders.<sup>58</sup> This creates imbalances affecting Russian national security. U.S. B61 bombs in Europe are not just a political symbol that proves U.S. commitment to NATO, they are not just means of deterrence, they are real battlefield weapons that can be employed against Russia.<sup>59</sup>

Moreover, the United States is modernizing B61 bombs by adding variable yield option and increasing their accuracy. This design modernization indicates the U.S. willingness to use it against military targets in heavily populated areas since this weapon is more 'ethical' and more 'usable'. All this lowers the nuclear threshold which can lead to catastrophic consequences. Russia has to take this into account when planning measures to ensure its national security<sup>60</sup> because Russia's security is determined not only by the balance of the strategic nuclear arsenals of two countries (Russia and the United States) but also by other factors, including the deployed American TNW in Europe.<sup>61</sup> The issue seems to be all the more important for Russia since in fact there is an erasure of the rather conditional border between strategic and non-strategic nuclear weapons in the doctrinal guidelines of the United States and NATO.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Comment by the Information and Press Department on the new U.S. Nuclear Posture Review // The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. 2018. URL: [https://www.mid.ru/kommentarii/-/asset\\_publisher/2MrVt3CzL5sw/content/id/3054726?p\\_p\\_id=101\\_INSTANCE\\_2MrVt3CzL5sw&\\_101\\_INSTANCE\\_2MrVt3CzL5sw\\_languageId=en\\_GB](https://www.mid.ru/kommentarii/-/asset_publisher/2MrVt3CzL5sw/content/id/3054726?p_p_id=101_INSTANCE_2MrVt3CzL5sw&_101_INSTANCE_2MrVt3CzL5sw_languageId=en_GB).

<sup>59</sup> Speech by Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia Sergei Ryabkov on the topic "Issues of military security in Russia-NATO relations" at the Civic Chamber, September 22, 2016 // The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. 2016. (In Russian) URL: [https://www.mid.ru/web/guest/ukraine/-/asset\\_publisher/HfLxJk5I2xvu/content/id/2461787](https://www.mid.ru/web/guest/ukraine/-/asset_publisher/HfLxJk5I2xvu/content/id/2461787).

<sup>60</sup> Director of the Foreign Ministry Department for Non-Proliferation and Arms Control Mikhail Ulyanov's interview with the Interfax news agency, December 19, 2017 // The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. 2017. URL: [https://www.mid.ru/web/guest/ukraine/-/asset\\_publisher/HfLxJk5I2xvu/content/id/2998923](https://www.mid.ru/web/guest/ukraine/-/asset_publisher/HfLxJk5I2xvu/content/id/2998923).

<sup>61</sup> INF, New START and the Crisis in U.S.-Russian Arms Control // The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. 2019. URL: [https://www.mid.ru/web/guest/maps/us/-/asset\\_publisher/unVXBbj4Z6e8/content/id/3624875](https://www.mid.ru/web/guest/maps/us/-/asset_publisher/unVXBbj4Z6e8/content/id/3624875).

<sup>62</sup> Interview of the Director of the Foreign Ministry Department for Non-Proliferation and Arms Control Ermakov V. I. to the international news agency "Interfax", February 11, 2020 // The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. 2020. (In Russian) URL: [https://www.mid.ru/web/guest/about/professional\\_holiday/news/-/asset\\_publisher/I5UF6lkPfgKO/content/id/4033688](https://www.mid.ru/web/guest/about/professional_holiday/news/-/asset_publisher/I5UF6lkPfgKO/content/id/4033688).

Another factor that may have prompted Russia to raise the issue of nuclear sharing in public is related to the considerations of arms control. Since 2010, the United States has put a priority on adding Russia's TNWs in future arms control negotiations. Using the withdrawal of U.S. nuclear weapons as a prerequisite for any negotiations on TNW reinforces the Russian stance on the issue. In 2008, Russian Ambassador, Sergei Kislyak, admitted in an interview to *Arms Control Today* that the withdrawal of American TNW from Europe would be a serious force in changing the position of the Russian Federation on reducing or eliminating its TNW.<sup>63</sup>

Finally, the reappraisal of the stance on nuclear sharing may be considered as a Russian response to the U.S. accusing Russia of violating the Budapest memorandum and the INF Treaty.

## Conclusions

The U.S.-Russian debate on U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe and on the deployment of nuclear weapons outside national territories is one of many issues in the sphere of arms control and nonproliferation between the two states. Although positions of NATO member states should be considered, it can be said that since U.S. nuclear weapons are involved, the United States is the country that makes the final decision on the issue. This problem is aggravated because of diametrically opposed views on the international situation, mutual mistrust, fear of each other, disinformation, and lack of political will to solve the problem.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the United States and NATO gradually developed and institutionalized nuclear sharing arrangements to as a counterweight against the military superiority of the socialist camp, to prevent proliferation of nuclear weapons among European states, as well as to strengthen the unity of NATO. The evolution of nuclear sharing altered from the U.S. monopoly on NATO nuclear planning in the 1950s to the creation of the NDAC and the NPG at

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<sup>63</sup> Interview with Sergey Kislyak, Russian Ambassador to the United States // Arms Control Association. 2008. URL: <https://www.armscontrol.org/interviews/2008-11/interview-sergey-kislyak-russian-ambassador-united-states>.

the end of 1966, the platform where all NATO members started to actively participate in nuclear planning.

Reaching its peak in 1971, the number of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe was drastically reduced. Also, the alert level of delivery systems was reduced, in addition to the number of host bases and host countries. At the same time, the maintained weapons and storage facilities, as well as nuclear planning, are still being modernized and improved even after the end of the Cold War. What is more, the goal of these weapons slightly changed — it moved from fighting the Soviet threat to fighting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by rogue states and the imbalance in the number of tactical nuclear weapons in Russia. NATO nuclear sharing arrangements have found a new *raison d'être*, with this position unlikely to change in the near future.

Russia and the U.S. have different perspectives on the history of the issue. While the United States posits that the Soviet Union agreed with the United States that NATO nuclear sharing arrangements were compatible with the NPT, Russia states that there was no mutual agreement on this issue. During the drafting of the NPT, the two countries discussed NATO nuclear policy frequently. The United States and the USSR had disagreements and concerns while making the text of the Treaty, but they needed a nonproliferation treaty, so both sides made concessions. The American side forwent the idea of the MLF, agreed to not give national control to any country of American nuclear weapons, and that U.S. nuclear weapons can be used only by the United States. The Soviet side softened its position on NATO nuclear sharing arrangements with the possibility of returning to the discussion of this topic later.<sup>64</sup>

In 1970 – 1991 the Soviet Union did not challenge the U.S. understanding of the agreement since Moscow was also deploying nuclear weapons on the territories of its allies. At that time, the differences and divergencies between the U.S. and Soviet approaches could be summarized as follows:

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<sup>64</sup> William Alberque. *The NPT and the Origins of NATO's Nuclear Sharing Arrangements*. P. 39.

	<b>Soviet Union</b>	<b>United States</b>
Deployment of nuclear weapons outside of national territory	Yes	Yes
Actual deployment of nuclear weapons on allied delivery vehicles	No	Yes
Training	Probably yes	Yes
Nuclear information sharing	Extremely limited	Yes
Decision-making and consultations	Limited	Yes
Possibility of NW transfer to allies in a general war	Not excluded	Yes

After the end of the Cold War, the situation changed drastically. In the late 1980s, the Soviet Union withdrew its nuclear weapons from Europe and departed from the aforementioned practices. The United States, in its turn, retained the forward presence of its nuclear weapons in Europe. The motivations for that range from the alleged need to counter the Russian non-strategic nuclear arsenal to preserving the cohesion within NATO. Regardless of the specific motivation, the presence of deployed, combat-ready nuclear weapons in Europe created imbalances threatening Russian national security. That is why Russia had to depart from the previous understanding that the NPT interpretations underlying the nuclear sharing arrangements in public. Under new international conditions, Russia (and not only Russia) understands Articles I and II differently and more straightforwardly.

This dispute on whether nuclear sharing arrangements comply with or violate the NPT is currently unlikely to be resolved within the NPT Review Process since the debate deals with two gaps in the nuclear nonproliferation regime.

**Gap 1:** there is no clear-cut understanding in the NPT regulating the notion of control over nuclear weapons. That is why the United States has elaborated their interpretation of control as allowing for mounting nuclear weapons on aircraft or other delivery vehicles in possession of a non-nuclear-weapons state.

**Gap 2:** Unlike other disarmament treaties (Geneva protocol, CWC), the NPT does not deal with the notion of use of nuclear weapons. That is why within the nuclear sharing arrangements NNWS may technically employ nuclear weapons, which are not in their possession. The United States points out that even with nuclear weapons

on the combat aircraft the pilot of NNWS cannot activate it without permission codes from Washington, which means that the U.S. nuclear weapons are still under sole U.S. control and only the United States can decide whether to use the nuclear bomb or not. However, after getting the permission code from Washington there is only a pilot of NNWS and a nuclear bomb on the board. After all, a nuclear bomb is nuclear not due to the activation codes sent from Washington, but due to the fissile material inside it.

It would be idealistic and naïve to assume that the use of nuclear weapons could somehow be regulated within the NPT context. NWS would never agree to limit their right to employ nuclear weapons, while NNWS would never agree to introduce a clause, theoretically allowing NWS to use NW.

In the near term, only unilateral changes may help to break an impasse over the nuclear sharing issue. Oddly enough, the TPNW, if joined by Belgium or another nuclear sharing participant, may be helpful in this regard since it prohibits the deployment of nuclear weapons outside of national territories.

PART IV

**RUSSIAN-AMERICAN  
COOPERATION ON NUCLEAR  
SECURITY AND PEACEFUL USES  
OF NUCLEAR ENERGY**



#### **Amb. Timerbaev on Article IV**

Article IV, the one on peaceful use of nuclear energy, was one of the key incentives for signing the NPT for many non-nuclear-weapon states. Its main shortcoming is that it does not say exactly how parties to the treaty should facilitate peaceful use of nuclear energy in other countries. So the question is, What is meant by 'facilitate'? Take, for example, exports of uranium-enrichment equipment, including gas centrifuges. Should such equipment be supplied to non-nuclear-weapon states? Since Article IV is not specific in that regard, there are different interpretations of its text, especially since drawing a clear distinction between peaceful and military use of nuclear technologies is an impossible task.

Incidentally, recently declassified British archives contain documents showing that, during the NPT negotiations, the British tried to get the U.S. delegation to raise the enrichment issue. In particular, they argued that it would be very dangerous to leave a window of opportunity for supplying such equipment, and they wanted this to be somehow reflected in the treaty. But the U.S. delegation was confident at the time that the non-nuclear-weapon states would never manage to develop such an advanced technology, so they decided not to complicate the negotiations by this additional matter. Frankly, I am not at all sure how the Soviet delegation would react if the British or the Americans were to approach us with the proposal to include a clause in the NPT to the effect that assistance to third countries can be provided only in 'nonsensitive' areas.

## CHAPTER 13

# COOPERATIVE THREAT REDUCTION AND NUCLEAR SECURITY INITIATIVES IN BILATERAL RELATIONS

*Alexey Polyakov*

The success of the nuclear nonproliferation regime relies greatly on the ability of major stakeholders, particularly the United States and Russia, to reconcile their differences and cooperate on issues posing threat to global security. To put this theory into practice, one should think of ways to foster cooperation between the United States and Russia to get some real results by the 10<sup>th</sup> RevCon. A solution that emerges first is to put much effort to improve the climate in U.S.-Russia relations. Initially, this strategy seems persuasive; however, its fallacy is in the idea that the existing problems are so complicated that they are unlikely to be solved any time soon. Another option is to look at the history of U.S.-Russia relations to see if the countries had an experience of maintaining strategic cooperation in the sphere of nuclear security and nonproliferation even amidst general deterioration of bilateral relations. This approach would allow for a better understanding of reasons underlying the states' perseverance in solving issues of mutual concern and could assist in projecting past experiences on the current situation.

The projects worth analyzing in this regard are those that go far beyond the scope of exclusively U.S.-Russia relations to include participants from all over the world – *the G8 Global Partnership* and *the Global Initiative to Combat Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (the GICNT)*. The two initiatives are special as they both address the threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and are inspired by the cooperation between the United States and Russia within the framework of *the Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) Program* of the 1990s. Lessons learned from these initiatives could help find ways for the United States and Russia to bridge differences at the NPT Review Conference and uphold the nonproliferation regime.

To understand in what way the record of cooperation within the CTR Program, the Global Partnership, and the GICNT may be useful, one should see what lessons these initiatives brought. This chapter starts with a brief overview of each initiative describing their history, reasons for their emergence, and problems with their implementation. The following part focuses on the lessons that are crucial for future cooperation and closes with conclusions.

## **Cooperative Threat Reduction Overview**

The Cooperative Threat Reduction Program is a comprehensive initiative launched by the U.S. Department of Defense in 1992 to mitigate the vulnerability of the former Soviet nuclear stockpile in the face of new challenges brought by the dissolution of the USSR. The CTR Program is also known as the Nunn-Lugar program after Senators Sam Nunn and Richard Lugar who propounded the idea in 1991. Their intention was to ensure that the former Soviet nuclear capabilities — distributed among Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus in the early 1990s — were safe against any malicious act and concentrated on the territory of the Russian Federation to be further subject to a successful reduction under the recently signed START. The CTR Program also sought to ensure security of the Soviet tactical nuclear weapons not subject to reductions.

The CTR Program is remarkable for the scope of activities it embraced. Designed to fight challenges to nuclear security posed by the demise of the USSR, it developed into full-scale cooperation between the United States and Russia in a wide array of WMD-related projects. The significance of the Program is also substantiated by the fact that it spurred the creation of other initiatives with the participation of many countries in the following years.

The record of cooperation within the CTR Program is a valuable source of information, which can be applied in the future. As the present state of relations between the United States and Russia requires a considerable reflection on the lessons of the past, the CTR Program, with all its pros and cons, might be a perfect example of how differences can be bridged to achieve a common goal. This, *inter alia*, constitutes a major obstacle to a successful NPT review process as the international community expects the United States and Russia to elaborate a common approach to tackle challenges to the nonproliferation regime.

Thus, delving into the outcomes of the CTR Program – which is impossible without taking into account its historic background and all the hardships it had gone through to be eventually adopted and implemented – is vital to contribute to recommendations the states could follow to strengthen the nonproliferation regime by acting unanimously at the 2020 NPT Review Conference and beyond<sup>1</sup>.

## G8 Global Partnership Overview

*The Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction* (the *Global Partnership*) was launched by the G8 leaders during the summit in the city of Kananaskis, Canada in 2002. Fighting terrorism was defined as the main goal of the program: in the joint statement,<sup>2</sup> the G8 leaders expressed their concern over what 9/11 made clear: terrorists could use various means to achieve their objectives. Therefore, the leaders present at the Kananaskis summit chose, as their principal aim, to prevent terrorist groups from obtaining nuclear, chemical, biological, or radiological weapons, as well as means of their delivery and production.

With this aim, the leaders agreed to financially 'support specific cooperation projects, initially in Russia'.<sup>3</sup> Their logic in choosing Russia as the first recipient of their assistance followed the pattern of adopting the CTR Program: the vulnerability of Russia's WMD stockpiles coupled with economic instability in the country called for action to avoid the proliferation of weapons, materials, and related knowledge. Taking into consideration Russia's international obligations, its inner problems, and threats posed to international security, four areas of cooperation with Russia were defined within the framework of the Global Partnership:

- Elimination of chemical weapons;
- Dismantlement of decommissioned nuclear submarines;
- Disposition of fissile materials;
- Professional retraining of weapon scientists.

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<sup>1</sup> For more details regarding the history of the CTR program see Chapter 12

<sup>2</sup> 'Statement by G8 Leaders: The G8 Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction,' University of Toronto, Kananaskis, June 27, 2002, available at <http://www.g8.utoronto.ca/summit/2002kananaskis/arms.html> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

The partners — that is how they called each other in official documents — pledged to provide \$20 billion of financial assistance over the period of ten years.<sup>4</sup>

### Pledges to GP Programs

Country	Pledge	Funding Areas
Australia	10 million Australian dollars (over US \$7.7 million)	Submarine dismantlement
Belgium	€0.5 million (about \$651,000)	Northern Dimension Environmental Partnership (NDEF)
Canada	1 billion Canadian dollars (about US \$800 million)	CW elimination Plutonium disposition Radiological security Redirection of weapons scientists Submarine dismantlement
Czech Republic	£85,000 (over \$156,000)	CW elimination
Denmark	€17.2 million (about \$21.3 million)	Green Cross chemical weapons outreach program NDEP
European Union	€1 billion (about \$1.2 billion)	CW elimination Export controls and border security MPC&A upgrades Physical security upgrades at civilian nuclear facilities Plutonium disposition Redirection of weapons scientists Submarine dismantlement
Finland	€15 million (about \$18.6 million)	CW elimination Physical security upgrades at civilian nuclear facilities
France	€750 million (over \$930 million)	Biosecurity assistance CW elimination Plutonium disposition Radiological security Submarine dismantlement
Germany	\$1.5 billion	CW elimination MPC&A upgrades Submarine dismantlement
Italy	€1 billion (about \$1.2 billion)	CW elimination Submarine dismantlement

<sup>4</sup> The United States promised to provide \$10 billion (concrete annual contribution was supposed to be decided upon by Congress in conformity with the Soviet Nuclear Threat Reduction Act of 1991), Russia was second with a \$2-billion contribution, while the other partners assured they would make up for the remaining \$8 billion without specifying exact figures.

<b>Country</b>	<b>Pledge</b>	<b>Funding Areas</b>
Japan	\$200 million	Plutonium disposition Submarine dismantlement
Netherlands	€24 million (about US \$29.8 million)	CW elimination Plutonium disposition Submarine dismantlement
New Zealand	1.2 million New Zealand dollars (about US \$780,000)	CW elimination
Norway	\$118 million	CW elimination Physical security upgrades at civilian nuclear facilities Radiological security Submarine dismantlement
Poland	About \$100,000	CW elimination Redirection of weapons scientist
Russian Federation	\$2 billion	CW elimination Submarine dismantlement
South Korea	Unknown	Redirection of weapons scientists
Sweden	€16 million & \$20 million (nearly \$40 million)	Biosecurity assistance Export controls MPC&A upgrades Physical security upgrades at civilian nuclear facilities Radiological security Submarine dismantlement
Switzerland	17 million Swiss francs (about \$13.7 million)	CW elimination Halting plutonium production
United Kingdom	\$750 million	CW elimination MPC&A upgrades Physical security upgrades at civilian nuclear facilities Plutonium disposition Redirection of weapons scientists Submarine dismantlement
United States	\$10 billion	Biosecurity assistance CW elimination Export controls and border security Halting plutonium production MPC&A upgrades Nuclear weapons security upgrades Physical security upgrades at civilian nuclear facilities Redirection of weapons scientists Strategic nuclear weapons elimination, including elimination of weapons platforms (bombers and SSBNs)

Source: Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction: A Guidebook. Editor-in-Chief Vladimir Orlov. Moscow: Human Rights Publishers, 2006. 176 pp.

## Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism Overview

In 2006 the United States and Russia signed a joint Russian-American statement launching the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. In accordance with the document, the two countries – the first co-chairs of the Initiative – decided to promote international cooperation in combating nuclear terrorism based on and for the implementation of the International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (Nuclear Terrorism Convention), the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its 2005 Amendment, the UN Security Council Resolution 1540 and a number of other international legal instruments related to prevention of nuclear materials from falling into the hands of terrorists. The main practical objective of the GICNT is to mobilize as many countries as possible<sup>5</sup> to facilitate the fulfilment of the obligations arising from the above-mentioned international legal instruments, and to ensure international cooperation on this issue, involving, first and foremost, the IAEA.

The main areas of cooperation in the GICNT include:

- Ensuring the inevitability of punishment of terrorists and the strengthening of relevant legislation for this purpose;
- Improvement of accounting, control, and physical protection systems for nuclear materials and facilities and opportunities to detect and prevent illicit trafficking of such materials;
- Development of cooperation in the development of technical means to counter nuclear terrorism, and, if necessary, to respond to and eliminate the consequences of acts of nuclear terrorism.

The cooperation within the framework of the Initiative is carried out in accordance with international law and national legislation. Participation in the GICNT is voluntary, based on the responsibility of each state for the steps taken within its jurisdiction.

### Key lessons of cooperation

Having acquired experience in working together within these initiatives, the United States and Russia also came across many difficulties they had to overcome to continue their cooperation. The analysis of

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<sup>5</sup> As of June 2019, 88 countries joined the GICNT.

each initiative allows to draw a number of lessons to learn and use in the future including in preparing for the NPT Review Conferences.

*1. Mutual interest is the main prerequisite for cooperation.*

The history of the U.S.-Russia cooperation in the WMD-related spheres after the dissolution of the Soviet Union proves that substantial progress can be achieved only if both parties are interested in working together to pursue a certain goal. This observation applies to the initiatives analyzed in this chapter – the CTR, the Global Partnership, and the GICNT.

The main indicator of mutual interest is that the United States and Russia were initiators of the CTR, the Global Partnership, and the GICNT. They designed specific formats for each of the issues, free of rigorous rules of procedure inherent in the mentioned institutions. This shows that the United States and Russia were interested in solving the pressing issues of unique nature as soon and smoothly as possible.

Another fact proving that both the United States and Russia had mutual interest in working on a wide scope of programs related to WMD safety and security is that the cooperation lasted for more than 20 years. With the first initiative (CTR) launched in the early 1990s, the two countries continued to work together introducing new ideas such as the Global Partnership or the GICNT, extending the range of activities to include chemical weapons, nuclear submarines, and joint exercises against nuclear terrorism, and inviting dozens of other states to join their initiatives. This is unlikely to have ever happened without mutual interest.

What also deserves special attention is that cooperation does not always require a legally binding agreement if mutual interest is in place. The assistance to Russia within the CTR was initiated when a specific bilateral interstate agreement was signed. *'The Agreement Between the United States of America and the Russian Federation Concerning the Safe and Secure Transportation, Storage and Destruction of Weapons and the Prevention of Weapons Proliferation'* was a cornerstone document aimed to assist Russia in eliminating its post-Soviet WMD legacy. Concluded in 1992, it represented the only interstate agreement in this field, laid out main directions and principles of cooperation, and served as a framework for further intergovernmental agreements concerning similar projects. It expired in 2013 after the Russian government refused to prolong it.



When it comes to the Global Partnership, one can consider this initiative as a unique phenomenon in international relations because there is no multilateral legally binding document establishing this kind of cooperation and obliging partners to provide financial assistance to Russia. Instead, it represented a non-binding umbrella framework of cooperation based on bilateral agreements on precise issues, one of them being the U.S.-Russia interstate agreement of 1992 which also served as a basis for the CTR Program. The other G8 partners had only intergovernmental agreements without any indication of how much money they would provide. The UK and Japan, meanwhile, played an important role in laying out the legal basis for the contribution of the countries outside the G8. The two states allowed those willing to provide assistance to Russia to accede to already existing agreements the UK and Japan had with Russia. This made it easier for many states to take part in the Global Partnership through so-called 'trilateral mechanisms'.

Thus, the Global Partnership was a legally flexible political mechanism that allowed states to pursue their interests in the WMD safety and security field. Although their motivation could differ, all the partners had interest in working together, which made this non-binding framework initiative function for ten years.

## *2. Motivations can differ provided that mutual interest is present.*

As mentioned previously, mutual interest may lead to a successful cooperation. At the same time, mutual does not necessarily mean common, as the example of the Global Partnership shows that the partners quite often had different motivations for their involvement, which did not prevent them from maintaining the cooperation for the agreed ten-year period.

### *Russia's interests*

During the Kananaskis summit in 2002, Vladimir Putin declared that Russia's priorities within the framework of Global Partnership were the elimination of chemical weapons and the dismantlement of decommissioned nuclear submarines. Russia decided to focus on these spheres, as the Russian government could not solve the problems on its own. Moreover, by officially declaring the elimination of chemical weapons and the complex dismantlement of decommissioned nuclear submarines as its priorities at the very initiation of

the Program, Russia prevented its Western partners — at least, for some years — from diverting assistance to projects beyond Russia's primary concerns.

The problem of chemical weapons in Russia in the 1990s was two-fold. On the one hand, having acceded to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) in 1993, Russia was initially supposed to eliminate its stockpiles by 2007. However, the economic hardships of the 1990s made Russia shift the deadline to 2012. As Natalia Kalinina, adviser to the Russian Prime Minister in 2003–2004, stated: 'Economic problems were the reason for Russia's inability to implement many provisions of the CWC as well as the country's long uncertainty about ratifying the convention'.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, the situation was aggravated by the enormous size of Russia's chemical weapons stockpiles — about 40,000 tons of toxic agents that had exceeded their storage period.<sup>7</sup> For this reason, the elimination of chemical weapons was of particular concern for the Russian leadership, as their conditions posed threat both to local population near storage facilities and to neighboring countries that might have sustained environmental damage in case of emergency.

The other Russia's priority — the dismantlement of decommissioned nuclear submarines — was a major challenge that required a comprehensive approach. Having constructed and deployed over 250 nuclear submarines since the 1950s, the Soviet military did not provide for any infrastructure for the complex dismantlement of submarines, the reprocessing of nuclear waste, or the safe handling of spent nuclear fuel. Hence, in the 1990s, when the first submarines built in the 1960s were decommissioned and the economic transition from socialism to market democracy was underway, the Russian Federation had neither technical nor financial capabilities to organize their complex dismantlement.

It was the issue of safe storage and reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste that determined the priority of dealing with nuclear submarines within the Global Partnership. The nuclear fuel stored either in the decommissioned submarines offshore or on open-space platforms onshore was dangerous from the ecological

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<sup>6</sup> 'Globalnoye Partnyorstvo Protiv Rasprostraneniya Oruzhiya Massovogo Unichtozheniya,' A Factbook, PIR Center, Moscow, 2005, P. 47.

<sup>7</sup> Balykina, Tatyana (2009) 'Globalnoye Partnyorstvo "Gruppy Vosmi" Protiv Rasprostraneniya Oruzhiya Massovogo Unichtozheniya Problemy Realizacii i Perspektivy Razvitiya,' Moscow, P. 72.

point of view (in case of a leakage) and in terms of physical protection (in case of an unauthorized access to it). Sergey Antipov, then deputy head of the Russian Federal Atomic Energy Agency, warned that the radioactivity of those nuclear materials 'was comparable to several Chernobyl catastrophes'.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, Russia's participation in the Global Partnership was motivated by several reasons of different nature. First, the country had a number of pending issues left by the Soviet Union in the sphere of WMD nonproliferation that might be dangerous for environment and national security. Second, Russia had certain international obligations in eliminating its chemical stockpiles. Third, lack of technical and economic resources complicated the task of diminishing threats and fulfilling international commitments. Fourth, the G8 partners were interested in providing Russia with granted financial assistance, which made the Russian leadership accept this offer to apply the aid to solving the forgoing problems.

### *U.S. and European interests*

The challenges that Russia faced raised particular concern among its G8 partners. Their participation in Global Partnership through providing grant financial assistance to Russia rested on interests that could be divided into two groups: common and national.

Common interests included:

- 1) Elimination of the world's biggest chemical stockpile which could inflict massive damage in case of an incident;
- 2) Complex dismantlement of decommissioned nuclear submarines carried out in a fashion that no components could be used again for military purposes;
- 3) Ensuring ecologically safe storage and handling of spent nuclear fuel and radioactive materials;
- 4) Prevention of sabotage, stealth, or unauthorized use of chemical weapons or nuclear materials extracted from nuclear submarines;
- 5) Acquisition of experience that might be used in other projects in the future;
- 6) Getting access to Russia's military facilities.

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<sup>8</sup> 'Globalnoye Partnyorstvo Protiv Rasprostraneniya Oruzhiya Massovogo Unichtozheniya,' A Factbook, P. 54.

Guided by these common interests, some partners pursued their own national ones. The United States was able to use its financial aid as a tool of political influence on Russia. As for the UK and Japan, both states used the 'trilateral mechanisms' to claim their coordinating role in Global Partnership. At the same time, the 'trilateral mechanisms' served the interests of non-G8 countries willing to contribute to the cooperation but having no special intergovernmental agreements with Russia: first, such countries did not need to control the money they provided through the UK or Japan; second, this scheme allowed to boast about participating in G8 projects, which elevated their status. Norway and Finland – countries bordering Russia next to its naval bases in the north – pursued their own interests as well: the proximity to the Russian territory determined their aspiration for financial assistance and safe handling of spent nuclear fuel.

Therefore, the Global Partnership might be regarded as a mutually beneficial initiative. At the same time, only core goals related to strengthening the nonproliferation regime coincided, while the principal aims of donor-partners underlying their intentions were either to ensure their national well-being or to detract from Russia's military potential.

Although the motivations of Russia and its Western partners did not always coincide, the cooperation proved to be fruitful, which can be explained by their mutual interest in implementing numerous programs of the Global Partnership. Otherwise, Russia would have been more reluctant in giving away information concerning its WMD stockpiles and the nuclear submarines fleet, while the West would have been less willing to provide Russia with any financial assistance. However, while pursuing their own goals, the partners managed to contribute to increasing WMD security in Russia. In other words, to strengthen nonproliferation one should not necessarily do so for the sake of nonproliferation.

### *3. Political climate is an important but not a determining factor.*

In the 1990s the Russian Federation concluded a wide range of international agreements on receiving foreign technical and financial aid to ensure secure storage, elimination, and nonproliferation of weapons and materials of mass destruction. The United States was the first country to provide such assistance in 1992, with the positive experience of U.S.-Russia cooperation encouraging some European states and Japan to conclude similar – by the form and not

the scope — agreements with Russia later on. All these agreements may be conditionally called 'bilateral assistance programs,' and their emergence was due to certain trends posing danger to the nonproliferation regime in the 1990s as well as the dissolution of the USSR.

The Soviet Union disappeared from the political map to leave 15 newly independent states, which created an unprecedented situation and threatened peace and stability far beyond the region. Instead of a single nuclear power with a colossal nuclear arsenal and advanced technology, four states now hosted nuclear weapons: Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus. The primary concern was not a possible proliferation of the weapons but rather their secure storage, which did not seem plausible in the 1990s because of the economic hardship in the region.

Although in 1991 the states of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) signed *the Agreement on Joint Actions Concerning Nuclear Weapons* pursuant to which Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine committed to removing their nuclear weapons to the territory of Russia for further elimination, the consolidation of the former Soviet nuclear weapons on the Russian territory proceeded with difficulties. The 1993 Report by the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service highlighted 'influential forces seeking to preserve a permanent nuclear status of their countries'<sup>9</sup> as a major factor in hampering the process. Ukraine's actions exemplify this claim: as the Ukrainian leadership deemed the 1992 Lisbon Protocol to the START Treaty was not enough to guarantee its security, it demanded a separate agreement on security assurances, which delayed the transportation of Ukraine-based nuclear weapons to Russia and resulted in signing of the Budapest Memorandum only in 1994. Although the issue of returning the former Soviet nuclear weapons to the Russian territory is not subject to analysis in this work, it is to note that this phenomenon played a remarkable role in developing cooperation between the United States and Russia in the sphere of WMD nonproliferation.

The international community expressed concerns about the problems that Russia faced in the 1990s because of more frequent cases of breaching the WMD nonproliferation regime worldwide at that time. South Africa's decision to go public with its successful military nuclear program in 1989, a terror attack in Tokyo with the use of

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<sup>9</sup> 'Novy Vyzov Posle Holodnoj Vojny: Rasprostranenie Oruzhiya Massovogo Unichtozheniya. Otkrytyj Doklad SVR Za 1993 God,' Official Site of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service, available at <http://svr.gov.ru/material.htm> (17 May, 2021).

sarin nerve agent in 1995, nuclear tests of India and Pakistan in 1998, clandestine nuclear programs revealed in Iraq and the DPRK, and Chechen rebels' activities aimed at stealing nuclear materials and sabotaging nuclear facilities<sup>10</sup> – all this urged to strengthen measures on ensuring the nonproliferation and security of WMD, including on the territory of the Russian Federation.

Therefore, the U.S. interest in providing assistance to Russia in the 1990s had objective grounds. First, there was a danger of loose control over the Soviet nuclear forces, with some newly independent states interested in preserving the nuclear status. This threatened to further spur the proliferation of nuclear weapons and make the United States counter a greater number of nuclear-weapon states. Second, the activities of terrorist groups both within Russia and worldwide raised concerns over the feasibility of the acquisition of nuclear weapons or radiological materials by non-state actors.<sup>11</sup> At the same time, international cooperation in this sphere – and the U.S. assistance in particular – met the objectives of Russia in implementing its national projects regarding the elimination of chemical weapons and dismantlement of nuclear submarines, as well as in being compliant with its international commitments (namely, with the START Treaty and the Chemical Weapons Convention).<sup>12</sup>

That said, the circumstances under which the cooperation started in the 1990s changed over time, whereas the efforts of the states in nuclear security and nonproliferation only amplified. The atmosphere of mutual trust and aspiration for a better future in the relations between Russia and the West eroded due to a number of political developments both in Russia and in the international arena. The condemnation of Russia's actions in Chechnya, NATO enlargement, the U.S. withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missiles Treaty in 2002, the interference of the West with the domestic issues of the CIS countries in the 2000s, etc, – all this contributed to the deterioration of the U.S.-Russia relations in general.

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<sup>10</sup> In 1995, Chechen separatists put a crude radiological bomb with Cs-137 in a park in Moscow with an intention to cause panic. Also, Chechen rebels are reported to have had plans of stealing a Russian nuclear submarine and sabotaging other facilities to have leverage over the federal government.

<sup>11</sup> 'Senate Hearing 107-575,' The U.S. Government Printing Office, available at <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-107shrg80848/html/CHRG-107shrg80848.htm> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>12</sup> Russia's motivation is analyzed in detail in the section devoted to the G8 Global Partnership.

At the same time, the United States and Russia continued their projects within the CTR. Even more so, they launched the Global Partnership involving the G8 states and started another unprecedented initiative – the GICNT. This means that politics does not always define how areas of mutual interest are governed in bilateral relations. The experience of implementing these initiatives proves that no reference to an unfavorable political climate can be considered as an excuse for not making practical steps to solve common problems.

*4. The expert community and public pressure may play a decisive role if legislators fail to reach consensus.*

The idea of providing U.S. assistance to Russia in nonproliferation and threat reduction first emerged even before the collapse of the USSR, back in November 1991. A failed coup in August 1991 was a turning point for the U.S. policy makers which demonstrated the vulnerability of the Soviet strategic arsenal in the face of extraordinary events. Senator Sam Nunn had a meeting with Mikhail Gorbachev a few days after the Soviet leader was released from house arrest and asked him if he retained command and control of the Soviet nuclear forces during the coup. The Senator remembered later: *'It seemed to me that either he was not himself clear about the status of command and control of nuclear weapons during that crucial period, or he was not comfortable discussing the matter candidly with me'*.<sup>13</sup>

With a possibility of loose control over nuclear weapons inside the Soviet Union, congressional leaders and experts began to analyze this threat and to design approaches to reduce the danger posed to U.S. and global security by political instability in the waning USSR. Nunn's fears were first translated into a proposal by Les Aspin, Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee (HASC), to redirect \$1 billion in fiscal year (FY) 1992 defense funds to provide food, medicine, and other types of humanitarian assistance to Moscow. Aspin defended a direct connection between such assistance and security issues: *'During the Cold War, the threat was deliberate Soviet attack. Now, the bigger threat seems to be chaos in a nation with 30,000 nuclear weapons'*.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Shields, John M.; Potter, William C. (1997) *Dismantling the Cold War*, Harvard University, P. 16.

<sup>14</sup> Nunn, Sam; Lugar, Richard, *The Nunn-Lugar Initiative*, P. 142.

However, his endeavor — backed by Sam Nunn — faced severe opposition. Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney described the initiative as *'foolish'*,<sup>15</sup> while President George Bush claimed: *'I'm not going to cut into the muscle of defense of this country in a kind of an instant sense of budgetary gratification so that we can go over and help somebody when the needs aren't clear and when we have requirements that transcend historic concerns about the Soviet Union'*.<sup>16</sup> Anticipating a failure of their proposal in Congress amid hostile attitude to it by congressmen and lack of support by the White House, Aspin and Nunn decided to withdraw it from discussion. Thus, the first attempt to make Congress provide funding for threat reduction in the USSR was not successful.

Senators Nunn and Lugar started working closer with the academic community to draw public attention to the problem, which was a major factor that contributed to their eventual success. A team of Harvard analysts issued a study titled *Soviet Nuclear Fission: Control of the Nuclear Arsenal in a Disintegrating Soviet Union*<sup>17</sup> in which they assessed possible consequences of the breakup of the USSR for U.S. security. As head of the team Ashton Carter described it, *'the study predicted that the breakup of the Soviet Union posed the biggest proliferation threat of the Atomic Age and outlined a new form of "arms control" to stop it: joint action by the two former Cold War opponents against the common danger'*.<sup>18</sup> Presented to a number of congressmen a week after the failure of the initial proposal, it bolstered Nunn's argument by providing real figures and probable implications of not addressing the challenge.

Conscious that the Harvard study could not be enough to encourage congressmen to endorse the initiative, Nunn and Lugar turned to American citizens to put more pressure on Congress by raising public awareness about the threat posed to their security by the collapse of the Soviet Union. The Senators used *Washington Post* as a pulpit to reach out to ordinary Americans and outlined main ideas in their

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<sup>15</sup> Bernstein, Paul I.; Wood, Jason D. (2010) *The Origins of Nunn-Lugar and Cooperative Threat Reduction*, National Defense University Press, Washington, D.C., P. 4.

<sup>16</sup> Nunn, Sam; Lugar, Richard, *The Nunn-Lugar Initiative*, P. 142.

<sup>17</sup> Campbell, Kurt M.; Carter, Ashton B.; Miller, Steven E. and Zraket, Charles A. (1991) *Soviet Nuclear Fission: Control of the Nuclear Arsenal in a Disintegrating Soviet Union*, Cambridge: Harvard University.

<sup>18</sup> Bernstein, Paul I.; Wood, Jason D. (2010) *The Origins of Nunn-Lugar and Cooperative Threat Reduction*, National Defense University Press, Washington, D.C., P. 6.



op-ed *'Dismantling the Soviet Arsenal: We've Got to Get Involved'*.<sup>19</sup> Their message was clear: Congress should act to avoid severe dangers to the U.S. security and well-being.

Eventually, Nunn and Lugar managed to secure broad support for their initiative in Congress. Their legislation was proposed as an amendment to a bill on the implementation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty) and was adopted in the Senate by a vote of 86-8 on November 25, 1991. The House of Representatives adopted the measure by acclamation two days later, while the President signed it on December 12.<sup>20</sup> The result was incredible for Nunn and Lugar, as it *'represented the most dramatic reversal of opinion they had ever experienced in the Senate'*.<sup>21</sup>

The Clinton administration later multiplied the Senators' efforts by providing more support, both financial and administrative, and housed the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program within the specially designated Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) under the Department of Defense.

##### *5. Successful implementation of one initiative can translate into productive cooperation on a wider scope of issues.*

A possible claim against any cooperation between the United States and Russia is that the two powers have so many problems in their relations that it is hardly feasible to solve them, which means that even small steps seem futile. However, as the recent history shows, little achievements in one field can intensify cooperation in many others. This is how the Global Partnership and the GICNT emerged amidst the entanglement of problems the United States and Russia already had in bilateral relations.

A decade after the CTR was launched, the two states decided to raise the issue of the WMD security in Russia within the G8 format. They managed to lead a fruitful cooperation on many projects among the G8 states thanks to the positive experience of the CTR implementation. A few years later, the success of the CTR and the Global Partnership, manifested in both the steady financing of projects and accession of new donor countries, encouraged the United States and

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<sup>19</sup> Nunn, Sam; Lugar, Richard (1991) *'Dismantling the Soviet Arsenal: We've Got to Get Involved'*, Washington Post, P. 25.

<sup>20</sup> Bernstein, Paul I.; Wood, Jason D. (2010) *The Origins of Nunn-Lugar and Cooperative Threat Reduction*, National Defense University Press, Washington, D.C., P. 6.

<sup>21</sup> Nunn, Sam; Lugar, Richard, *The Nunn-Lugar Initiative*, P. 145.

Russia to continue cooperation to include other aspects of nuclear security on a global scale. Conscious that terrorists could pose danger to nuclear facilities and international efforts were needed to prevent non-state actors from infringing on international peace and stability, in 2006, in St. Petersburg, the Presidents of Russia and the United States officially launched the GICNT.

The two countries expanded the scope of their cooperation within the framework of the CTR from projects primarily related to the nuclear disarmament and security in Russia to initiatives addressing other WMD vulnerabilities and terrorism, which made their efforts truly global. This trend demonstrates that it is possible to bridge differences in various areas and achieve formidable results if counterparts at least start working together on a limited number of tasks.

*6. U.S.-Russia cooperation can encourage other countries to join efforts to strengthen the nonproliferation regime.*

As mentioned previously, the positive image of the CTR built by the achievements that the United States and Russia made throughout the 1990s encouraged other countries to join their efforts. Initially, the G8 countries followed the example of the U.S.-Russia cooperation by launching the Global Partnership. Later, the two states commenced another initiative of a global character — the GICNT which has become a steadily growing international mechanism of cooperation for ensuring nuclear security and strengthening the nonproliferation regime. Launched as an initiative involving 13 states, the GICNT has evolved to include 89 member-states and 6 observing organizations.

Apart from boosting broad international support, the GICNT has an inclusive membership. All five nuclear-weapon states acceded to it, which proves the concurring determination of the P5 in both preserving nuclear security and fighting international terrorism. The fully comprehensive character of the GICNT is also demonstrated by the participation of three states remaining outside the NPT — India, Pakistan and Israel. This shows that issues pertaining to fighting international terrorism are in high regard all over the world.

The GICNT machinery has a great potential to bring together politicians and experts. Observers note that this format 'has working-level groups, but it also brings together Deputy Minister-level people for the plenary meetings, so it has some ability to reach to the political

levels of power'.<sup>22</sup> Given that six international organizations — EU, IAEA, INTERPOL, UNICRI, UNOCT, and UNODC — have observer status, the GICNT unites policy-makers with specialists, which amplifies international efforts in strengthening nuclear security.

This international forum on countering nuclear terrorism would not have been possible if not for the initial actions of the United States and Russia. The two powers showed a striking example of cooperation, which inspired the international community to follow suit.

*7. Parties should maintain a shared vision of what their cooperation will result in and aspire for transparency to avoid misunderstanding.*

Although the United States and Russia spent many years working together on various projects, they failed to avoid divergence in their perceptions of what their efforts should eventually lead to. The functioning of the Global Partnership and its results serve as a vivid example.

First, the G8 annual reports on the progress and achievements of its projects reflect discord concerning spheres to which particular attention should be paid. Donor-partners tried to divert discussions from chemical weapons and nuclear submarines to other fields listed in the 2002 Kananaskis Statement — disposition of nuclear materials and professional retraining of weapon scientists. The western donors might have assumed that dealing with nuclear materials extracted from nuclear warheads and providing scientists with new working places in peaceful sectors would limit Russia's ability to quickly build up its military strategic potential, which, as the donors viewed, was more dangerous and destabilizing than the aging chemical stockpiles and decommissioned submarines that were unlikely to be ever used again. Moreover, this approach could prevent Russian weapon scientists from fleeing to other countries seeking WMD capabilities such as the DPRK. However, Russia defended its priorities and prevented its partners from directing money to projects other than those associated with chemical weapons and nuclear submarines.

Second, the partners also failed to agree on the geographical scope of the Global Partnership. In 2011, the G8 leaders decided to extend and expand the program to provide assistance to other regions, mainly to the Middle East, for biological and radiological

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<sup>22</sup> Erästö, Tytti; Herbach, Jonathan (2016) Ten Years of The Global Initiative To Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT): Strengths, Challenges And The Way Forward.

projects. The decision was not easy for Russia whose priorities would not be addressed properly with new recipients coming to the stage.

The fact that donors put pressure<sup>23</sup> to officially define new recipient regions before finishing and assessing the implementation of active projects in Russia hints at some mistakes made at the very beginning of cooperation ranging from its legal basis to a relatively weak stance Russia took and maintained up to 2012.

It would be unfair though to claim that Russia was deceived by its G8 partners. Despite the mentioned discrepancies on the political side of cooperation, the Global Partnership was beneficial to Russia as it helped the USSR inheritor deal with the Soviet WMD legacy more effectively. Unfortunately, the Camp David summit of G8 leaders in 2012 – ten years after the initiation of the program – did not issue any report concerning the final results of Global Partnership. Consequently, there is no official consolidated information needed for impartial assessment of the outcomes of this cooperation. However, one can use a number of sources disclosing these outcomes from different perspectives.

In 2013, a group of authors associated with Moscow-based PIR Center, who had been tracking the evolution of the Global Partnership since 2002, estimated<sup>24</sup> that Russia had received only 70% of the pledged financial assistance. They pointed out that the estimates were not exclusively in a form of money transfers but also included the services provided by westerns companies and applied to projects beyond Russia's priorities. Such distribution means that *de facto* Russia received even less money, especially for chemical and submarine projects.

One can assess the effectiveness of the elimination of chemical weapons stockpiles only through the prism of the implementation of the respective Russian Federal Program<sup>25</sup> which was a domestic legal

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<sup>23</sup> Russia's concern was well-grounded, as back in 2005 the United States and the UK started to finance projects in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) members beyond the scope agreed in 2002, which made Russian diplomats work hard to persuade their G8 counterparts to stay in line with what had been discussed before.

<sup>24</sup> Kolbin, Alexander; Cheban, Alexander (2013) 'Perspektivy Mezhdunarodnogo Sotrudnichestva v Oblasti Nerasprostraneniya OМУ i Fizicheskoj Yadernoj Bezopasnosti,' PIR-Center, Moscow, P. 47.

<sup>25</sup> The Federal Program was adopted in 1996 to outline the allocation of funds needed for the initiation of the elimination of chemical weapon stockpiles. The Program was updated 14 times by 2018 to reflect the changed composition of chemical weapons awaiting the destruction and re-allocate funds.

instrument for setting the goals and keeping record of the progress. According to the document,<sup>26</sup> as of 2012, one elimination facility out of seven was still under construction, while in 2009 the G8 leaders had agreed to terminate the elimination of stockpiles by that time. Russia achieved this goal only in 2017 – five years after the expiration of the initial mandate of the Global Partnership. The financial aspect also raises concerns, as the Federal Program stated in 2017 that the elimination of Russia's chemical stockpiles cost 330 bln roubles, only 51 bln roubles of which – less than \$1 bln – was foreign assistance.

Progress achieved in the complex dismantlement of decommissioned nuclear submarines looks more substantial. Given the absence of a final document summing up the outcomes of the Global Partnership, an international conference was organized at the initiative of Russia, Norway and Sweden in Moscow in November 2012 to review the implementation of projects related to Russia's nuclear submarines. The conference welcomed officials and specialists from G8 states and other countries that participated in the program and issued a report with the following findings:<sup>27</sup>

- 192 of the 199 decommissioned Russian nuclear-powered submarine were defueled and dismantled (67 with partners' assistance);
- Two process facilities for the safe on-shore storage of submarine reactor compartments and the facilities for spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste management were constructed;
- The safe removal of spent nuclear fuel by rail, air, and sea transport was ensured;
- 932 radioisotopic thermoelectric generators (RTG) were decommissioned and their radioactive sources were secured.

These figures prove that the cooperation on the complex dismantlement of decommissioned nuclear submarines and under other nuclear-related projects was more fruitful than on the elimination of

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<sup>26</sup> 'Federalnaya Tselevaya Programma Unichtozhenie Zapasov Himicheskogo Oruzhiya v Rossijskoj Federacii,' available at [https://base.garant.ru/10108237/119d69678b9f292ecb5eb3c91e1d81af/#block\\_1000](https://base.garant.ru/10108237/119d69678b9f292ecb5eb3c91e1d81af/#block_1000) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>27</sup> 'Globalnoe Partnerstvo "Gruppy Vosmi": Otsenka i Perspektivy Dalnejshego Sotrudnichestva v Oblasti Yadernoj i Radiacionnoj Bezopasnosti,' Atomic Energy 2.0, Moscow, 2012, available at <https://www.atomic-energy.ru/documents/37385> (17 May, 2021).

chemical weapons stockpiles. Nevertheless, the partners also failed to finish all the projects and manage to dismantle all the decommissioned submarines by 2012.

Thus, the Global Partnership in terms of cooperation in the Russian priority areas did not fully meet the expectations placed on it: the partners could not complete the implementation of the projects within 10 years. This is particularly evident in the field of chemical weapons elimination, where Russia received relatively little support. At the same time, there is a serious contribution of partners in achieving significant success in the complex dismantlement of nuclear submarines. Although not all decommissioned submarines were disposed of over the 10 years of the Program's existence, the depth and multitude of cooperation formats in this area went beyond the work on submarines dismantlement.

## Reasons for Russia's discontent with cooperation

Russia and G8 states faced a number of challenges in the implementation of the Global Partnership, especially in the elimination of chemical weapons. These problems included unsustainable allocation and inadequate spending of funds, lack of transparency, and high price rates for services provided by contractors based in donor states.

The allocation of funds was unsustainable for some political and economic considerations. The most vivid example is the U.S. decision<sup>28</sup> to freeze funding from 2000 to 2002, which was caused by suspicion in Congress that Russia had provided incomplete data on its chemical weapons arsenals. Only by 2002, Congress changed its position, and the funds began to flow in full. In terms of economy, in 2004, the EU pledged to increase its share in funding by 1 billion euros by including the respective provision in the budget for 2007–2013. However, such a provision never appeared in the financial document<sup>29</sup>. That said, France refused to include in

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<sup>28</sup> Balykina, Tatyana, 'Globalnoye Partnyorstvo "Gruppy Vosmi" Protiv Rasprostraneniya Oruzhiya Massovogo Unichtozheniya. Problemy Realizatsii i Perspektivy Razvitiya,' P. 85.

<sup>29</sup> 'EU Financial Framework,' European Commission Official Site, available at [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/eu-budget/long-term-eu-budget/2021-2027/documents\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/eu-budget/long-term-eu-budget/2021-2027/documents_en) (17 May, 2021).

the text of the bilateral agreement<sup>30</sup> with Russia the exact amount of funding for projects on the elimination of chemical weapons. It seems that the French side did not consider it necessary to bind themselves with financial obligations to pay for the services of Russian contractors.

Some evidence also indicates the lack of transparency in the allocation of funds. Throughout the entire period of operation of the Global Partnership, it seemed rather difficult to track how the UK was spending money that other partners had provided for the elimination of chemical weapons in Russia. Moreover, Tatyana Balykina, who was directly involved in the implementation of Global Partnership, notes that 'Great Britain practically did not spend the money' provided by third countries. Having received £60 million in 2002 from ten donors, as of November 2008, the UK had spent only £38 million. It is worth noting that the similar problem was observed in the case of the Japanese 'trilateral mechanism' in the dismantlement of nuclear submarines.

The cooperation also suffered from the high cost of services provided by foreign contractors. As the practice of cooperation within the Global Partnership has shown, a contractor company would spend about 30% of all funds on project management. In other words, part of the allocations intended for the implementation of projects in Russia remained in the donor countries as it covered services provided by companies based in those countries. For example, the United States was allocating funds for chemical disarmament through the American firm *Parsons*, whose expenses at times reached up to 70% of all allocated funds.<sup>31</sup>

These problems resulted in ineffective spending of the allocated funds and had a negative impact on the implementation of the projects within the Global Partnership.

Formally, the activities of the 2002 Global Partnership ended in 2012 with the dissolution of the Group of Senior Officials and its

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<sup>30</sup> 'Soglashenie Mezhdru Pravitelstvom Rossijskoj Federacii i Pravitelstvom Francuzskoj Respubliki o Sotrudnichestve v Unichtozhenii Zapasov Himicheskogo Oruzhiya v Rossijskoj Federacii,' Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, available at [https://www.mid.ru/foreign\\_policy/international\\_contracts/2\\_contract/-/storage-viewer/bilateral/page-151/45901](https://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/international_contracts/2_contract/-/storage-viewer/bilateral/page-151/45901) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>31</sup> Kolbin, Alexander; Cheban, Alexander (2013) 'Perspektivy Mezhdunarodnogo Sotrudnichestva v Oblasti Nerasprostraneniya OМУ i Fizicheskoy Yadernoj Bezopasnosti,' PIR-Center, Moscow, P. 47.

replacement by specialized subgroups to address issues in certain areas. These subgroups did not prepare any detailed reports on their activities, such as the annual reports, which is why it is impossible to evaluate the results of their activities – despite the fact that they represent the ‘expanded’ Global Partnership agreed upon in 2011. Thus, taking into account the actual absence of any practical activity in these subgroups, one can, in general, state the termination of the functioning of the Global Partnership.

The dubious results of the Global Partnership caused by the lack of mutual understanding should be taken into account in the context of the GICNT activities. Regardless of all the institutional innovations, the GICNT might present, the initiative has some minor drawbacks arising from the insufficient understanding of its goals and tactics to achieve them. To begin with, decisions adopted at its Plenary Meetings are not legally binding, which leads to selective participation in the GICNT’s projects and decreased efficiency of its activities. Another flaw appears when evaluating the role of the GICNT in improving national nuclear security systems. One should note that this initiative is not a single international attempt in this field (suffice to mention the IAEA efforts, the Proliferation Security Initiative, Nuclear Security Summits, etc.); thus, it is impossible to define the precise contribution of the GICNT to ensuring both global and national nuclear security. Last but not least, a thorough analysis of the events, workshops and exercises organized within the framework of the GICNT reveals that instead of focusing on ways to prevent terrorists and other non-state actors from obtaining nuclear materials or compromising nuclear facilities, member-states pay more attention to mitigating the consequences of such accidents.<sup>32</sup>

Having established the GICNT as a global initiative to prevent acts of nuclear terrorism and mitigate their consequences, the United States and Russia should consider some changes in its current activities and principles of functioning to make it operate successfully in the ever-changing global environment and to avoid mutual discontent that was typical for the Global Partnership. In doing so, the co-founders of the initiative could focus on ‘grey areas’ that need more clarity. The following is the list of steps that the United States and

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<sup>32</sup> ‘Key multilateral events and exercises,’ GICNT, 2018, available at [https://gicnt.org/documents/GICNT\\_Past\\_Multilateral\\_Events\\_July2018.pdf](https://gicnt.org/documents/GICNT_Past_Multilateral_Events_July2018.pdf) (17 May, 2021).



Russia could make to achieve transparency in interacting within the GICNT:

- To put an emphasis on the prevention of nuclear terrorism. As stated earlier, most of GICNT's events are aimed at sharing best practices to deal with the consequences of nuclear terrorism, sabotage or misuse of nuclear materials, which contradicts to a certain extent the core idea of the initiative – to combat nuclear terrorism rather than face its outcomes. If the United States and Russia paid more attention to detection and response measures, it would make the GICNT a truly unique international mechanism in this sphere.
- To engage industry. One of the weaknesses of the GICNT is the insufficient involvement of technicians, engineers, and nuclear scientists in its projects. Their participation in workshops and exercises would allow for greater credibility attributed to the GICNT and, therefore, attract more attention to its activities worldwide.
- To assess cyber threats. Ensuring cyber security for nuclear facilities is crucial to combat international terrorism aiming at acquisition of nuclear materials or sabotage of nuclear plants. For this reason, the United States and Russia should consider the probability of non-state actors trying to use cyber space to infringe on secure storage and handling of nuclear materials.
- To establish closer ties with the IAEA. While the IAEA has an observer status, the GICNT could pursue closer coordination with the agency. The United States and Russia could analyze possible formats of cooperation with the IAEA in such a fashion that it would add to the efforts of the international community to fight terrorism and stop proliferation of nuclear weapons and materials.
- To increase visibility and transparency. The operation of the GICNT is unlikely to gain universal support until people all over the world know about it. Using their status of nuclear-weapon states, the two powers should raise public awareness about the importance of nuclear security and challenges it faces by making the GICNT's activities public.

By following these recommendations, the United States and Russia could reach mutual understanding of the real goals of the GICNT. Mindful of the Global Partnership experience, the parties should remember the importance of a clear vision of what their cooperation will ultimately lead to.

## Conclusions

The cooperation within the CTR Program, the G8 Global Partnership and the GICNT brought a number of lessons crucial for the future of the U.S.-Russia relations. These lessons are especially applicable in the context of preserving the global nuclear nonproliferation regime that rests to a great extent on the way the United States and Russia harmonize their positions. Therefore, the policy-makers of the two powers should take into consideration the following:

Mutual interest is the main prerequisite for cooperation.

- Motivations can differ, provided that mutual interest is present.
- Political climate is an important but not a determining factor.
- The expert community and public pressure may play a decisive role if legislators fail to reach consensus.
- Successful implementation of one initiative can translate into productive cooperation on a wider scope of issues.
- U.S.-Russia cooperation can make other countries join efforts to strengthen the nonproliferation regime.
- Parties should maintain a shared vision of what their cooperation will result in and aspire for transparency to avoid misunderstanding.

These broad lessons derived from particular initiatives can be valuable in other spheres where a successful cooperation between the United States and Russia is needed. Precisely, the two nuclear powers could take them into account in order to act with more cohesion at the 2020 NPT Review Conference.

## **TIMELINE: NUNN-LUGAR PROGRAM**

**December 12, 1991** – President George H.W. Bush signed the Nunn-Lugar bill into law.

**June 17, 1992** – Washington and Moscow agreed to start a Cooperative Threat Reduction Program (CTRP), also known as the Nunn-Lugar Program, for the purpose of securing and dismantling weapons of mass destruction and their associated infrastructure in the former states of the Soviet Union. Founded by Senators Sam Nunn and Richard Lugar through the passage of the Soviet Threat Reduction Act 1991, the program aimed to address the large nuclear arsenals inherited by former Soviet states Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan after the Soviet Union's collapse.

**1992** – The U.S. Congress allocated \$ 400 million for this purpose; similar amounts were given annually.

**1992** – The International Science and Technology Center was founded and began its operations in 1994. The initial ISTC partner countries were the United States, the European Union, Japan, and the Russian Federation. The center was developed to counter the threat of 'brain drain' from the former USSR to countries wishing to acquire nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons. Since 1994, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Georgia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and South Korea have joined the Center. The headquarters was in Moscow, Russia.

**1994** – the United States launched 'Project Sapphire' – a secret operation done in concert with the Government of Kazakhstan to package 600 kilograms of highly enriched uranium from the Ulba Metallurgical Plant in the city of Ust-Kamenogorsk, where it was vulnerable to theft. The material was moved to the United States.

**1996** – Belarus became the third former Soviet state to denuclearize, joining Kazakhstan and Ukraine.

**1996** – Nunn-Lugar Domenici passed Congress to help U.S. cities prepare for WMD threats.

**1998** – U.S. and Russia began Nuclear Cities Program to convert work at 10 formerly secret cities into peaceful research.

**2001** – Following the 9/11 attacks, Congress expanded Nunn Lugar Program funding at the request of President George W. Bush.

**March 2002** – January 2003 – The United States refused to conduct another certification of the program and suspended its funding due to suspicions that Russia was hiding information about its chemical and bacteriological weapons. Moscow responded by canceling an invitation to program staff to visit eight of its the most secure nuclear facilities. The situation was resolved when the U.S. President George W. Bush ordered to allocate another \$450 million to the Russian Federation under the program without any conditions.

**2003** – Congress adopted the Nunn-Lugar Expansion Act authorizing the program to operate outside the former Soviet Union.

**2004** – Nunn-Lugar funds were committed to destroy chemical weapons in Albania.

**2007** – Nunn and Lugar visited Russia to mark the 15th anniversary of program's implementation.

**May, 2009** – Shchuchye Chemical Weapons Destruction Facility which would destroy nearly two million chemical weapons shells and nerve agents opened in Russia. About one-third of the funding to build the plant, roughly \$1 billion, was provided by CTRP.

**2010** – Senator Lugar led Pentagon arms control experts to Africa to help secure deadly biological diseases and destroy lethal armaments, in efforts to further expand program.

**August, 2012** – Under CTRP 7659 warheads were deactivated. 902 ICBMs, 191 ICBM mobile missile launchers and 498 ICBM silos, 155 bombers, 906 nuclear air-to-face missile, 684 submarine-launched missiles, 33 nuclear submarines, 194 nuclear test tunnels, more 2937 tons of chemical weapons were destroyed and 24 nuclear war-head storage sites received security upgrades. Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan has become nuclear weapons free,

**October 10, 2012** – The Russian government rejected an Obama Administration proposal to renew the CTRP agreement after 20 years of partnership. The Russian government stated that CTR was ‘not consistent with our ideas about what forms and on what basis further cooperation should be built’.

**June 14, 2013** – Prior to the expiration of the Nunn-Lugar umbrella agreement, Presidents Barack Obama and Vladimir Putin reached an agreement to continue U.S.-Russian nuclear security efforts, albeit in a truncated form. This new arrangement operates under the 2003 ‘Framework Agreement on a Multilateral Nuclear Environmental Programme’ in the Russian Federation (MNEPR) and a related protocol signed on June 14, 2013. Under the terms of this new framework, the U.S. is able to continue most of its nuclear security-related work, but ceased joint efforts pertaining to the dismantling of missiles, bombers, and chemical weapons. Russia has assumed responsibility, financial and otherwise, for carrying out the latter three dismantlement efforts.

**April, 2014** – The U.S. Department of Energy reported progress in working with Russian counterparts under MNEPR to improve the security of Russian nuclear material at fixed sites and in transit, and to strengthen regulatory requirements related to the security of nuclear and radiological material in Russia.

**2013–2014** – Nunn-Lugar funds were used to provide shipping containers and material handling equipment to support Syrian Chemical Weapons destruction. The CTRP program was the primary source of funding for destruction and external security in assisting the OPCW with respect to destroying Syrian chemical weapons.

**2015** – Russia completely left the ISTC following its decision made several years earlier. The organization is currently headquartered in Astana, Kazakhstan and has branch offices in Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Members to the ISTC Agreement are Armenia, the European Union, Japan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Norway, South Korea, and Tajikistan and the United States.

*Compiled by Elena Ziulina*

## CHAPTER 14

# COOPERATION ON PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY

*Veronika Bedenko*

The overall erosion of nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament regimes is being complicated by the uncertainties brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. With the postponement of major diplomatic events and conferences, including the 10th NPT RevCon, and compelled freeze on international traveling and in-person diplomatic interactions, the future of the nonproliferation regime remains as never before illusive.

However, the unprecedentedly challenging times of pandemics brought to the forefront areas of crucial importance where international cooperation and continuous work prevailed over all the hurdles. Despite pandemic-related restrictions on travel, the IAEA was able to continue its nonproliferation mission and carry out safeguards activities in the Member States.<sup>1</sup>

Potentially, the current global pandemic with its artificially imposed hold on international activities and subsequently created communication vacuum could give states time to reassess their policies and provide a much-needed fresh impetus to resume cooperation in such areas of paramount importance as nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation.

This chapter looks back at the history of cooperation of two key stakeholders – the Soviet Union/Russia and the United States – in the field of nuclear nonproliferation. The purpose of this paper is to remind both countries about the successful examples of bilateral cooperation on peaceful uses of atomic energy and encourage the parties to build upon the lessons learned from previous collaborations to set a positive tone for the upcoming NPT RevCon.

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<sup>1</sup> Grossi, R.M. (2020) 'Report on Safeguards Implementation During the COVID-19 Pandemic,' IAEA, GOV/INF/2020/7.

The big question is whether cooperation on peaceful uses can play a role in the restoration of US-Russian relations as the least political aspect?

## **Finding the Way Out of the Cold War**

The major agreements between the two countries in the area of peaceful uses were aimed at solving the problems of dismantling countries' nuclear legacies and, in particular, reducing the excesses in their nuclear stockpiles. By 2014, before political turmoil after the Ukrainian crisis, these agreements were mainly completed, and their main tasks were accomplished.

## **HEU-LEU Agreement**

On 18 February, 1993, the United States agreed to purchase 500 metric tons of Russian highly enriched uranium from dismantled nuclear weapons. The program was designed to reduce the risk of theft of Russian nuclear material and to speed up the dismantlement of Russian nuclear weapons. Under the program, Russia diluted or down-blended weapons-grade material to low-enriched uranium under monitoring arrangements. Then it shipped the material to the United States for fabrication into nuclear reactor fuel. The entire program was to take place over a 20-year period and was initially expected to yield the revenue to pay Russia \$12 billion for material and services. The agreement had later been renegotiated, making the amount paid to Russia contingent on market forces.<sup>2</sup>

The pact was carried out by executive agents appointed by the two governments. The U.S. executive agent was the privatized United States Enrichment Corporation (USEC), and the Russian executive agent was Tekhsnabeksport (Tenex), the commercial arm of Minatom. Tenex agreed with USEC in January 1994 to provide the LEU equivalent of 10 metric tons of HEU per year for five years and the LEU equivalent of 30 tons of HEU per year for the remaining 15 years.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Orlov, V.; Timerbaev, R.; Khlopkov, A. (2002) Nuclear Nonproliferation in US-Russian Relations: Challenges and Opportunities, PIR Library Series, P. 163.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

The program had faced several problems, including lingering disputes between the Russian and U.S. executive agents over payments. For example, one longstanding issue had been the process for paying Russia for the uranium component of the material supplied (the bulk of value being paid to Russia came from the enrichment services, not from the value of the uranium being delivered).<sup>4</sup> In January 1994, USEC agreed to pay Tenex immediately for the enrichment services and to defer payments for the uranium component. In early 1995, Minatom requested that USEC pay for the uranium component on the current basis. In June 1995, the two agents agreed that USEC would ensure the 'full and simultaneous payment for natural uranium and enrichment services'. This understanding was included in a more comprehensive settlement in the USEC Privatization Act signed by President Bill Clinton on 26 April, 1996, which ceded Russia ownership of the natural uranium component of materials received under the deal and allowed Russia to sell small amounts of uranium in the United States. The legislation also reimbursed Russia for its 1995–1996 natural uranium shipments.

An essential component of the HEU–LEU arrangement was the transparency regime that sought to verify that uranium purchased by USEC was derived from dismantled Russian nuclear weapons. The arrangements under the HEU purchase were among the most intrusive of Russian-U.S. cooperative programs.

The HEU purchase verification regime, established through a Transparency Review Committee, which was established in March 1994, was codified in a series of documents known as facility annexes. Under these annexes, six monitoring visits to each site were permitted. Initially, these annexes covered two conversion plants in Russia: the Seversk facility and the Novouralsk facility. Monitoring at the conversion facilities included: observing the transformation of HEU metal chips into gaseous HEU for blending purposes; applying indicating tags and seals to HEU and LEU containers; reviewing copies of Russian material control and accounting documents; and, at the Novouralsk facility, random sampling of uranium at the point where the HEU was blended into LEU.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid. P.164.

<sup>5</sup> Wolfsthal, J.; Chuen, C.; Daughtry, E.E. (2001) Nuclear Status Report: Nuclear Weapons, Fissile Materials and Export Controls in the Former Soviet Union, Washington, DC, p. 63.



In October 1996 transparency measures were expanded. Monitoring was extended to two more facilities — Zelenogorsk in 1996 and Mayak in 1998 — where Russia had expanded its downblending activities in response to the increased delivery requirements of the November 1996 USEC-Minatomb contract. In addition, the agreement strengthened monitoring capabilities by allowing the measurement of the uranium enrichment levels using US-manufactured portable uranium detection equipment; observation of storage areas for HEU received from dismantlement facilities; at the Zelenogorsk and Novouralsk facilities, installation of continuous monitoring equipment to measure enrichment levels and material flow rates during blending; and expansion of U.S. access at Seversk to conduct experiments on Russian nuclear weapons components arriving from Russian dismantling facilities.

The transparency agreements also established reciprocal monitoring measures at U.S. facilities so that Russia could verify that the uranium sold to the United States was not being re-enriched and used for weapons. Russia had reciprocal monitoring rights at USEC's Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant — where Russian LEU was processed upon arrival in the United States — and at the non-government-owned facilities where the material was subsequently fabricated into reactor fuel.

For President Clinton the HEU-LEU agreement was of particular urgency. From archival transcripts of Clintons talks with Yeltsin:

The [LEU-HEU] agreement will be helpful to us in working out relations with Ukraine. It is a high priority for me. We will work hard on it. [...] We keep working on Ukraine to ratify START. That's one reason why we want the HEU agreement, as leverage over Ukraine.<sup>6</sup>

As it was in the case of the CTR program, reaching HEU-LEU agreement was also in the interest of both leaders, and they were facilitating the conclusion of the deal from the very top policymaking levels, thus speeding up the process. From the same Clinton's archives, we know that Yeltsin once told Clinton the following:

The American side was not willing to discuss these issues [disagreements over prices], but now we have talked, and

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<sup>6</sup> Clinton Digital Library (1994) Declassified Documents Concerning Russian President Boris Yeltsin, (Vol. I), P. 33, 37.

the American side is willing to get together and discuss all remaining questions with regard to the agreement. And, we gave an order (ukazaniye) that the agreement should be reached in one week.<sup>7</sup>

It is clear from the transcript that there were some disagreements on the provisions and obstacles to reaching the agreement. It is remarkable how both presidents were able to step in and personally help to overcome those hurdles. Without close and honest personal interactions reaching such sensitive and comprehensive agreement would not be possible, which once again highlights the paramount importance of person-to-person communication of the leaders.

Both countries gave a high assessment of the HEU-LEU deal. In September 2000, former Minister of Atomic Energy Yevgeny Adamov argued that the HEU-LEU deal was the most efficient US-Russian program, and former Minister of Atomic Energy Victor Mikhailov called it the contract of the century.<sup>8</sup>

The HEU-LEU agreement expired in 2013 and has not been extended.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, Russia and the U.S. additionally concluded purely commercial contracts for uranium enrichment services until 2022 that are worth \$ 6 billion.<sup>10</sup>

Former Director of the Department of International Cooperation of State Atomic Energy Corporation Rosatom Mikhail Lysenko noted a significant positive role of both the Nunn-Lugar program and the HEU-LEU agreement stating that

Both agreements, with all their advantages, were periodically criticized from both sides, this is a separate issue. But it's fundamentally important that they broke the psychological

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<sup>7</sup> Clinton Digital Library (1994) Declassified Documents Concerning Russian President Boris Yeltsin, (Vol. I), P. 43.

<sup>8</sup> Orlov, V.; Timerbaev, R.; Khlopkov, A. (2002) Nuclear Nonproliferation in US-Russian Relations: Challenges and Opportunities, PIR Library Series, P. 168.

<sup>9</sup> Kramer A. E. (2013) 'Last Shipment of Nuclear Fuel From Russian Bomb Heads to US,' The New York Times, available at [https://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/15/business/international/last-shipment-of-nuclear-fuel-from-russian-bombs-heads-to-us.html?\\_r=1&utm\\_source=NSSPI+News+Digest&utm\\_campaign=beed7d79a7-RSS\\_EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_d96553fdd0-beed7d79a7-378093893](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/15/business/international/last-shipment-of-nuclear-fuel-from-russian-bombs-heads-to-us.html?_r=1&utm_source=NSSPI+News+Digest&utm_campaign=beed7d79a7-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_d96553fdd0-beed7d79a7-378093893) (27 May, 2021).

<sup>10</sup> Dzaguto, V.; Grishkovets, E. (2011) 'Rosatom to get richer in the United States,' Kommersant newspaper, Issue 51, p.9, available at <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/1607244> (27 May, 2021).

barrier of distrust and alienation in our relations that arose during the Cold War, and allowed us to accumulate invaluable experience in constructive interaction.

The HEU-LEU deal is another example of a successful cooperation story between two nuclear superpowers. It proves that countries' differences can be overcome if political interest goes hand in glove with economic incentives and benefits.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, one cannot help mentioning unprecedented transparency regime and verification measures on a reciprocal basis that helped to build trustworthy relations between the parties.

### **Plutonium Management Disposition Agreement (PMDA)**

The United States and Russia have both declared large amounts of former defense-purpose plutonium to be excess to defense needs. President Clinton announced that he had designated 50 metric tons of plutonium to be excess on March 1, 1995, and Boris Yeltsin declared that 'up to' 50 metric tons of plutonium would be made excess through the nuclear disarmament process in 1997. In sum, this material was enough to produce tens of thousands of nuclear weapons, and both countries had pledged to take steps so that the material was never again used for weapons.

These amounts represent significant portions of the plutonium produced in both countries, although both would possess large stocks of weapons-usable materials even after these amounts are dispositioned. Plutonium, unlike highly enriched uranium, is not easily rendered non-weapons-usable. The goal applied to the disposal of plutonium, originally put forward by the US National Academy of Sciences and subsequently adopted by the United States and Russia, is to place excess weapons plutonium into a form that meets the spent-fuel standard. This term is defined as a form in which excess plutonium is no more attractive for use in nuclear weapons than is the plutonium contained in commercial spent nuclear fuel. Such a standard would not completely eliminate the weapon's utility of the

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<sup>11</sup> Pavlov, A.; Rybachenkov, V. (2013) 'Looking Back: The US-Russian Uranium Deal: Results and Lessons,' Arms Control Association, available at <https://www.arm-scontrol.org/act/2013-12/looking-back-us-russian-uranium-deal-results-lessons> (27 May, 2021).

material, but it would make the material no more dangerous than the vast amounts of plutonium produced by conventional nuclear power reactors and embedded in radioactive spent fuel.

The United States and Russia have officially approved two methods to achieve the spent fuel standard: irradiation of plutonium as mixed-oxide fuel (MOX), and immobilization of plutonium with high-level radioactive waste. The United States declared its intent to immobilize approximately 17.5 metric tons of plutonium and to irradiate up to 33 metric tons as MOX fuel. At the same time, the Russian government stated its intention to rely almost exclusively on the irradiation of MOX fuel in reactors.

Clinton and Yeltsin first discussed the topic of plutonium disposition in 1996 during the luncheon meeting in Kremlin. According to Clinton's archives transcript, Yeltsin was the first one to bring MOX fuel method to the table:

*Clinton:* [...] regarding plutonium and what can be done with the idea of plutonium consuming reactors. We're ready to begin discussion of a joint project.

*Yeltsin:* We have a project that uses plutonium and uranium in one fuel that can be used in reactors. If you combine these in one brick, you can prevent it from being used for weapons purposes and it can be a fuel source.

*Clinton:* [...] We should have Carter (Deputy Defense Minister) and Kokoshin discuss this.

*Yeltsin:* Yes, we have common problem of destroying plutonium.<sup>12</sup>

After a prolonged period of negotiation, which was supported and informed by several official and unofficial scientific studies and multilateral reports, the United States and Russia concluded a formal plutonium disposition agreement at a June 2000 summit in Moscow. The agreement laid out the framework for each country to eliminate 34 metric tons of excess weapons-grade plutonium each. The original goal that each state would dispose of 50 metric tons of plutonium

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<sup>12</sup> Clinton Digital Library (1994) Declassified Documents Concerning Russian President Boris Yeltsin, Vol. II, P.12.

was scaled back at Russia's insistence that 16 of the 50 metric tons the United States had declared excess was not 'weapons-grade' and could not be used directly in nuclear weapons without further refinement.

The bilateral political agreement called for the two countries to 'seek to' begin operation of 'industrial-scale' facilities no later than December 2007, at a disposal rate of 2 metric tons of plutonium per year. The amount of material to be disposed of per year under this agreement was constrained, in part, by the limited number of reactors potentially able to use MOX fuel. Russia indicated its intent to certify and use all seven of its VVER – 1000 reactors to irradiate MOX fuel containing excess plutonium. In addition, Russia planned to convert its BN – 600 fast neutron reactor into a plutonium-burning reactor as part of the disposition effort.<sup>13</sup> The U.S.-Russian agreement completed at the June 2000 Moscow summit 'recognizes the need for international financing and assistance' for Russia to implement its plutonium disposition plans.

Left unanswered by the U.S.-Russian plutonium disposition agreement – which recognizes the possibility of additional materials being declared excess in the future – was the asymmetry between the plutonium stockpiles in both countries. The United States and Russia had previously agreed that the goal of plutonium disposition efforts should be 'reductions to equal levels of military plutonium stockpiles'. It was not clear whether this reflects current Russian or U.S. goals for plutonium disposition efforts.

On 3 October, 2016, Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered a suspension of the agreement because the U.S. did not meet its obligations. The agreement provided for the disposal of 34 tons of plutonium by each side, that is, 1/3 of weapons-grade plutonium reserves in Russia and the United States. These commitments indeed represented a notable political and practical step in the field of nuclear disarmament. The Parties have long been discussing possible disposal methods. Finally, the Protocol Amendment to the Agreement of 2010 agreed on only one specific method – irradiation of utilized plutonium as fuel in nuclear reactors. This method was chosen to ensure the irreversibility of disposal. The start of such disposal was planned for 2018. By that time, Russia has launched a plant for the production

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<sup>13</sup> Pomper, M. (2007) 'U.S., Russia Recast Plutonium-Disposition Pact,' *Arms Control Today*, Volume 37, Issue 10, p.40.

of fuel using plutonium (MOX fuel) for 'burning' in the recently built BN-800 reactor at Beloyarsk NPP. This was a major technological advancement, albeit an expensive one. At the same time, Washington announced that they were planning not to 'burn' their plutonium in the reactors, but to vitrify it (vitrification or embedding in glass) and bury it. According to the Russian side, this was a clear violation of the 2010 Protocol. As the Russian side noted, this method allowed preserving the breakout potential, because, unlike 'burning', plutonium does not disappear when vitrification occurs. In addition, only two-thirds of the MOX fuel plant in Savannah River was built, and in 2014 its construction was frozen. It was evident that the United States would not meet the deadline for the start of disposal with 'burning' in 2018. As a result, the President of Russia signed a law on the suspension by the Russian Federation of a package of agreements on plutonium. Currently, the parties would have to independently solve the pressing technological problems of the disposal of excess plutonium. Each party will now go on its unilateral course.

Numerous expert comments on the reasons for the decision converged in describing it as a mainly politically-motivated move, 'a way to register political dissatisfaction,'<sup>14</sup> and another asymmetric response to the United States' sanctions and numerous unfriendly statements by the United States government officials on Russia's actions in Ukraine and Syria.<sup>15</sup> The basis for such an assessment was formed by the contents of the Federal Law itself, as well as by a few public comments on the issue made by Russian government officials.

On April 7, 2016, President Putin stated that Russia would look into the matter and decide how to react to the situation with the PMDA.<sup>16</sup> Six months later, on October 31, 2016, the president signed the Federal Law on the suspension of the PMDA. According to the

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<sup>14</sup> Filipov, D. (2016) 'Russia suspends plutonium deal with the U.S.,' The Washington Post, available at [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/russia-suspends-plutonium-deal-with-us/2016/10/03/c502e628-8980-11e6-8cdc-4fbb1973b506\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.ea71cea0e193](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/russia-suspends-plutonium-deal-with-us/2016/10/03/c502e628-8980-11e6-8cdc-4fbb1973b506_story.html?utm_term=.ea71cea0e193) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>15</sup> Dolzhikova, D. (2016) 'Who killed the U.S.-Russia plutonium agreement, and does it really matter?' The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, available at <http://thebulletin.org/who-killed-us-russia-plutonium-agreement-and-does-it-really-matter10221> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>16</sup> 'Vladimir Putin took part in the third Truth and Justice regional and local media forum' (2016) President of Russia, available at <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/51685> (17 May, 2021).

Federal Law, there were three reasons behind the decision (in order of their appearance in the document).

First, the Federal Law mentioned 'a fundamental change in the circumstances that existed at the date the PMDA entered into force,' as well as 'the emergence of a threat to strategic stability' as a result of increased military infrastructure and the number of the United States military contingent stationed in the territories of members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) that joined NATO after September 1, 2000.<sup>17</sup> Second, the Federal Law mentioned hostile U.S. actions (including Magnitsky Act, Ukraine Freedom Support Act of 2014, sanctions against Russian legal entities and individuals, the financial damage caused by these sanctions, including the loss from the introduction of Russia's 'counter-sanctions' against the United States).<sup>18</sup> Third, the Federal Law mentioned the United States' failure to implement its obligations under the PMDA.

Six months later, on October 27, 2016, while speaking at the Meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Forum, President Putin said that the conditions for the resumption of the PMDA, enlisted in the Federal Law, were a 'starting position'.<sup>19</sup> A month before the October speech by President Putin at Valdai, the Director of the Russian Council on Foreign Affairs Dr. Andrey Kortunov in his article explained that putting forward 'starting position' usually means putting forward deliberately excessive demands in order to be able to step back a few steps while achieving a compromise solution.<sup>20</sup>

To further enhance this 'starting position' thesis, President Putin in his October speech added that the conditions which were later listed in the Federal Law, were just 'a piece of paper', while 'the plu-

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<sup>17</sup> 'Federal Law No 381-FZ on the Suspension of the Agreement between Russia and the United States Concerning the Management and Disposition of Plutonium Designated as No Longer Required for Defence Purposes and Protocols to the Agreement' (2016) *Rossiyskaya gazeta*, 248 (7116), available at <https://rg.ru/2016/11/02/plutony-dok.html> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> 'Vladimir Putin took part in the final session of the Valdai International Discussion Club's 13th annual meeting' (2016) *President of Russia*, available at <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/53151> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>20</sup> Kortunov, A. (2016) 'Rossiya Proschaetsa s Obamoy: Poslaniye Novomu Prezidentu' [Russia says goodbye to Obama: Message to a new president], *Russia in Global Affairs*, available at <http://www.globalaffairs.ru/global-processes/Rossiya-proschaetsya-s-Obamoi-Poslanie-novomu-prezidentu-SShA-18410> (17 May, 2021).

onium disposition conditions, which the United States has violated, are a crucial issue pertaining to international security and the management of nuclear materials'.<sup>21</sup> Russia, he added, has suspended the PMDA 'because the United States did not meet its obligations. As for conditions for negotiations on a wide range of issues, we can reach an agreement'.<sup>22</sup>

Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, commenting on the president's decision on October 3, 2016, said that by suspending the PMDA Russia wanted the United States 'to understand that it cannot introduce sanctions against Russia that can do relatively little harm to Americans and at the same time to continue selective cooperation with Russia when it benefits the United States'.<sup>23</sup>

Commenting on the reasons for Russia's decision to suspend the PMDA Agreement, Russian Ambassador to the International Organizations in Vienna Mikhail Ulyanov especially stressed that Russia did not withdraw from the agreement but suspended it utilizing its right under the Vienna Convention on the Law of the Treaties. In the interview to *Russia Direct* Portal Ambassador noted that one of the reasons for the decision was the U.S.'s disrespectful attitude. Amb. Ulyanov said,

Circumstances had fundamentally changed since 2011 when it was ratified. Back then, there was hope for the "reset" in Russia-US relations. Now we live in a situation that reminds us of the Cold War era. There is no trust on both sides. And it becomes more difficult to cooperate in such a sensitive area as the disposition of weapons-grade plutonium. [...] It is an abnormal situation, when the United States, on the one hand, calls us an adversary, aggressor, occupier and other bad words and, on the other hand, where it concerns non-proliferation, the tone is completely different: Russia is a very important partner, we need to cooperate regarding Syria and Iran, it is essential cooperation etc. It turns out that here we are friends and there we are adversaries. And we are adversaries where it fits for the American side, and we are friends also there, where it is comfortable for the U.S. It is unnatural. For all intents and purposes, we wanted to send a political signal

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<sup>21</sup> Valdai, 2016

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Remarks by Mikhail Ulyanov, 2016



that it doesn't work that way when you sign sanctions with one hand and stretch out another for a handshake. Americans need to determine where they stand and be more consistent.

Ambassador has also noted that suspension of the agreement would not have severe practical implications because 'according to many experts, mainly in the U.S., this agreement could not begin to be implemented within 20 or 30 years. Americans were not ready and said they need as many as 20 to 30 years. That was said by some members of the present U.S. administration'.<sup>24</sup>

According to US Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Nonproliferation Dr. Christopher Ford US and Russia have a good cooperative track of record when it comes to several projects on peaceful uses of nuclear energy and nonproliferation. Dr. Ford specifically commended joint efforts in the implementation of the 1997 US-Russia Plutonium Production Reactor Agreement (PPRA). Under this agreement US and Russia permanently shut down 14 and 13 production reactors of the Cold War era respectively. Another notable cooperative initiative is 2004 Russian Research Reactor Spent Fuel Return Agreement. Thanks to this initiative more than 2 tones of highly enriched uranium of Soviet/Russian origin was removed from 16 countries. 12 countries out of the 16 are now considered 'HEU-free'.<sup>25</sup>

Despite the Agreement's suspension, PMDA has played a role in helping the two countries to move forward with the elimination of their Plutonium stockpiles. As we have seen with the previous cooperation examples, to successfully carry out such sensitive, costly and technologically sophisticated projects, countries need to maintain regular constructive consultations, remain transparent about its intentions and act cooperatively. Unfortunately, the political environment changed drastically from the one in the 1990s when the agreement was negotiated to the 2010s, especially after the Ukrainian crises unleashed. Such an environment was no longer conducive

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<sup>24</sup> Zolotov, A. (2016) 'For Russia, nuclear security is not the same as nuclear disarmament,' Russia Direct portal, available at <https://www.russia-direct.org/qa/russia-nuclear-security-not-same-nuclear-disarmament> (27 May, 2021).

<sup>25</sup> From Dr. Ford's address to the International Advisory Council of the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies in Washington DC, 'About the challenges and potential of nonproliferation cooperation with Russia' (2018) The text of Dr. Ford's remarks, New Paradigms Forum, available at <https://www.newparadigmsforum.com/p2273> (27 May, 2021).

for open cooperation, which led to a growing number of disagreements and misunderstandings, which in turn resulted in the suspension of the agreement.

## Lab-to-Lab Cooperation

Western fears, triggered by the USSR's dissolution, of losing control over the huge arsenal of nuclear weapons and stocks of fissile material, and the increasing possibility of nuclear accidents and brain drain did not come to pass. Siegfried Hecker, a former Director of the Los Alamos National Laboratory, in his famous two-volume book *Doomed to Cooperate*,<sup>26</sup> expresses the view that those fears did not come true to a large extent because of 'the extraordinary professionalism, dedication, and patriotism of the Russian nuclear weapons workers and leaders, combined with an extraordinary and timely assistance from the United States through innovative government programs and scientific cooperation'.<sup>27</sup> In his book, Dr. Hecker illustrates his opinion with numerous firsthand accounts from Russian and U.S. scientists that help us understand how vital was such interpersonal cooperation on the level of scientists in Russian and American nuclear laboratories.

Starting from 1992, the main nuclear activities related facilities involved in the lab-to-lab cooperation program were, from the U.S. side, Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL), and Sandia National Laboratory (SNL), and from the Russian side, VNIIEF (Sarov), VNIITF (Snezhinsk), and VNIIA (Moscow).

Due to the high sensitivity of work done by the institutions on both sides, government agencies obviously informally supervised the lab-to-lab cooperation at their domestic level. However, the program managed to maintain some level of freedom from the government bureaucracy. Both the U.S. and Russia viewed this program as beneficial for their own needs. The U.S. was interested in controlling the danger posed by the Russian military nuclear complex during

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<sup>26</sup> Hecker, S. S. (2016) 'Doomed to Cooperate: How American and Russian Scientists Joined Forces to Avert Some of the Greatest Post-Cold War Nuclear Dangers,' Bathub Row Press, Los Alamos Historical Society, June 2016.

<sup>27</sup> Hecker, S.S. (2017) 'Lab-to-Lab Cooperative Threat Reduction,' AIP Conference Proceedings 1898, 020010.

the transition period after the demise of the Soviet Union. Russia, in its turn, had an interest in sustaining a qualified scientific workforce at its nuclear complex during financially hard transitional times.

The program involved thousands of scientists from both sides researching three main areas – fundamental science, nuclear safety and security, and defense conversion. The U.S. government sponsored the cooperation, allocating funds through a range of various related programs such as the CTR, the International Science and Technology Center (ISTC), and the safety and security of fissile materials – materials protection, control and accounting program (MPC&A).

As Dr. Hecker notes in his book, back in days of a tangible spirit of rivalry, it was unthinkable to imagine that US-Russian lab-to-lab cooperation would reach such depth, effectiveness, and productivity as we know now. Several possible reasons determined the success of the story. First of all, that it was the governments' initiative. It was Gorbachev and Reagen themselves who authorized senior technical specialists from both countries to come to the negotiation table in Geneva in 1987 in order to help diplomats overcome the main stumbling block to ratifying the 1974 Threshold Test Ban Treaty (TTBT) which was significant disagreements over verification procedures. In order to solve the issue, the two sides came up with the idea of a Joint Verification Experiment (JVE) project which would allow experts from both countries to evaluate the accuracy of nuclear weapon yield measurement methods. The project was launched in 1988 by George Schultz and Eduard Shevardnadze.<sup>28</sup>

The experience of apolitical cooperation on technical issues through the JVE created a necessary impetus for future lab-to-lab contacts. Joint work on purely scientific matters in unfamiliar conditions created a very collaborative atmosphere and established interactions in a professional manner, which could be considered as a second factor for success.

Another important bonding factor that one should not underestimate was a common scientific and professional identity of the people involved and a natural curiosity of scientists from both sides, who previously used to be only 'invisible observers' as they were

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<sup>28</sup> Kassianova, A. (2016) 'US-Russia Nuclear Lab-to-Lab Cooperation: Looking Back on a Quarter Century of Constructive Relations,' PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo, No. 425. P.4.

operating in a highly secretive domain. Now they got a chance to do science together and 'compare their notes'.

After the JVE project ended, the Soviet side started to actively initiate new proposals for cooperation between laboratories in different fields of science. In February 1992 LANL and LLNL in the United States and VNIIEF and VNIITF in Russia performed a temporal exchange of its leading scientists, so the experts got a chance to visit each others' main research sites and directly cooperate with their colleagues. According to Dr. Hecker's book, Rady Ilkaev, future VNIIEF head recalls: 'It was remarkable that specialists from another country lying across the ocean from us understood our problems and our issues in a flash'.

On the US side Steven Younger, who for many years served as the LANL point-of-contact for collaborative programs with Russia, shared his feelings: 'Though we sat in Russian facilities rather than our familiar offices in Los Alamos, our American cohort often felt almost as if we were looking at ourselves in a mirror, staring across the conference table at our Russian counterparts'.<sup>29</sup>

## Recent attempts to restore cooperation

In 2013, Russia and the United States signed an innovative Agreement on Cooperation in Research and Development in the Nuclear and Energy Spheres (R&D Agreement).<sup>30</sup> It contained a wide set of scientific and technological interactions. Among them: civil nuclear power engineering; nonproliferation of nuclear weapons; fundamental atomic science and technology; controlled thermonuclear fusion; use of nuclear and radiation technologies for medical, industrial and other purposes; energy and the environment; education in the field of atomic science and technology. Each direction contained a detailed list of specific areas of cooperation. Forms of cooperation included: exchange of information, joint projects, transfer of materials, equipment and technologies, mutual visits to nuclear centers

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<sup>29</sup> Kassianova, A. (2016) 'US-Russia Nuclear Lab-to-Lab Cooperation: Looking Back on a Quarter Century of Constructive Relations,' PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo, No. 425. P.5.

<sup>30</sup> Reinovsky, R.E. (2014) VI Khariton Topical Scientific Readings. U.S./Russian Laboratory Cooperation in Science and Technology Under a New Agreement on Nuclear and Energy Related R&D. Sarov, Russia: Los Alamos National Laboratory. P. 1.

(Lab to Lab). The list of areas and the advanced format of cooperation were very impressive. The implementation of the agreement would allow the scientific community of the two countries, saving time and resources, to significantly increase joint research on a stable and predictable basis. However, it was not possible to start its long-awaited implementation. The agreement entered into force in January 2014. And in April 2014, Rosatom State Corporation received a letter from the Office of the U.S. Department of Energy at the U.S. Embassy in Russia informing of the suspension of cooperation in connection with the events in Ukraine.

The main take away from the lab-to-lab cooperation case is the importance of removing barriers to cooperation. Once again, it took the willingness at the top political level to find possible ways of collaboration in a win-win scenario for both countries. Once the barriers and restrictions for national laboratories and institutions were removed, cooperation on the inter-personal level started to flourish.

## **Prospects for Future Cooperation**

In order to get the most objective perspective on the prospects for the future of US-Russian collaboration in the field, it is essential to take into account the opinions of practitioners. These people are personally familiar with the field from the inside. The former Deputy Director-General of the IAEA and the Head of the Department of Nuclear Energy Mr. Alexander Bychkov shared his impressions on the current state of US-Russian cooperation on peaceful uses of nuclear energy and possible implications for the NPT regime if the relations continue to deteriorate.

Given the experience of my teachers and my almost 40 years of experience, I can say that our cooperation is wave-like. Today's situation is not new. But nuclear energy, as an industry, is very specific – the life of any reactor is noticeably longer than a particular political paradigm or system. By the way, the same applies to radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel. The political situation should not influence technologically acceptable standards and policies. I do not think that our American colleagues will decide to harm their

national atomic energy system and the systems of their allies. In current circumstances, the most dangerous scenario is the "politicization" of the situation. Today, a number of countries continue to rely on American technology, although Russian technology is becoming increasingly popular. And if one of the countries begins to restrict access to the peaceful use of atomic energy for purely political reasons, we will get a crisis of confidence in the NPT as a whole and in parallel in international safeguards, export controls, safety and sustainable supplies of nuclear fuel.

The diplomat remains positive about the current level of cooperation, saying that

the Soviet-American and Russian-American cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, which began back in the 1960s, continues in one way or another. Scientific contacts do not stop. There is cooperation on several international projects – ITER, the Generation 4 International Forum, and research on fundamental nuclear physics. Russian institutes and American laboratories interact quite systematically through international organizations. I can also mention a non-scientific platform – IFNEC – where we have a common understanding of the responsibility of our countries for the sustainable and safe development of nuclear energy in newcomer countries. Not to mention the IAEA, where we have no disagreements in the peaceful uses of atomic energy.

Mr. Bychkov underscored that to restore good relations between the countries, it is of crucial importance to establish cooperation on an equal basis.

Cooperation always builds trust. But it should not be just cooperation. It must be a partnership. Partnerships can be of different levels and a different nature: academic programs, joint research, up to joint projects for the construction of nuclear power plants in third countries. Of course, actions such as banning American specialists from participating in the International Atomic Energy Agency conferences in

Russia reminds of the old principles from the times of Iron Curtain. I do not think that recommendations to American companies to suspend the use of the Russian experimental base for the development of new reactor technologies made it possible for the American nuclear business to improve its position in the international market. I think it should be emphasized that the Russian nuclear industry represented by ROSATOM State Corporation is a self-sufficient system, but at the same time open to any kind of cooperation on the peaceful use of atomic energy within its international obligations. Scientists, engineers, and managers in nuclear energy, as people educated in the spirit of the safe and secure use of the most powerful energy source, must maintain their role as one of the leading 'bridges of stability' in relations between different countries. Russia's willingness to cooperate has always been indicative, and we remain committed to a non-discriminatory approach in such contacts.

Director of Rosatom's Department of International Cooperation (2008-2015) Dr. Mikhail Lysenko echoes his colleague in trying to stay positive about the prospects of US-Russian cooperation on peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Sharing his thoughts on the question if there is any framework for cooperation in this field between Russia and U.S. that remains valid until today, Dr. Lysenko emphasized that

This is the 2008 Agreement between the Governments of Russia and the United States on cooperation in the peaceful uses of atomic energy (commonly referred to as Agreement 123), which was designed for 30 years. The agreement allows cooperation in the trade and economic spheres, and in science and technology, which was later further detailed in a separate R&D Agreement. Now the Agreement 123 is actually in 'sleep' mode. But it is fundamentally important that, given a favorable political situation, it will allow reviving the potential of bilateral cooperation in almost any nuclear segment and at any scale as soon as possible. Of course, on an equal footing.

Speaking about possible steps that could be taken right now to give a new impetus to the bilateral cooperation, Dr. Lysenko suggested the following:

- 1) Pragmatically evaluate the accumulated positive examples of previous cooperation and find coinciding interests for solving problems in the areas of: nuclear power; nuclear ecology; nuclear safety; nuclear nonproliferation; suppression of nuclear terrorism; and joint addressing of these challenges in third countries.
- 2) Start a 'dialogue of stability' at the expert level with the support of the foreign ministries of both countries to determine where there are opportunities for interaction, and where there are none.
- 3) Begin with an informal dialogue of experts who would select several pilot projects for their parallel presentation to the Russian and U.S. Foreign Ministries. At first, it can be remote interactions, then in-person ones, and after it might lead to the creation of an interagency group on nuclear energy and nuclear safety.
- 4) Take advantage of the ready-made project proposals by NGOs and experts. Such projects could include, in particular, assistance to interested CIS countries, or other developing countries, in ensuring the control and safety of existing sources of ionizing radiation, search and disposal of orphan sources; assistance in the decommissioning of nuclear installations in third countries; joint assessment of risks and options for raising or final immobilization of objects with radioactive substances disposed at the bottom of the seas near Russia and the USA; exchange of best practices in environmental remediation of former nuclear facilities; continuation of the research reactor nuclear fuel return program.

To sum it all up, before us now, there is a window of opportunity, and there are options for how we can deal with it. The first option is to keep the window tightly closed. Will the United States or Russia suffer? The answer is unlikely. But with the window closed, we will miss the opportunity. The second option is to get the window wide-open. But let's be realistic. Most likely, political inertia will not allow us to do this. The third option is to choose the compromise, middle option. We could start with a pragmatic selection of projects by opening the



window as a first step. To do this, we have all the legal framework and years of accumulated experience. To achieve that, the most critical factor is the presence of a political will.

## Conclusions

As could be seen from the above analysis, the U.S. and Russia have a long and rich history of fruitful cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, this chapter only covers some of the examples. It had its ups and downs; it was never easy and required a tremendous amount of technical effort and political willingness from both sides, but it was possible.

Starting from the early 1990s, due to active cooperation, the U.S. and Russia were able to significantly reduce proliferation risks, which appeared as a result of the USSR collapse. Among some of the brightest examples of such collaboration were security upgrades at Russian nuclear facilities both military and civilian, blending-down and subsequent selling to the U.S. of 500 tons of highly enriched uranium which originated from the Soviet nuclear weapons, and repatriation of Soviet nuclear weapons and HEU-fueled reactors from the former Soviet republics.<sup>3132</sup>

In 1990 – 2000, Russia and the USA actively cooperated in the field of nuclear safety and security. Much has been done to improve the international nuclear fuel cycle system. One way or another, scientific and technical cooperation helped to strengthen stability, and a large number of Russian and American scientists and engineers were involved in it. And this is the essential element of such interaction – person to person. Of course, quite often, there were calls from both sides to stop such cooperation, and such active interaction was criticized. But the trend continued.

Today, the Russian-American cooperation cannot be built on the provision that one side helps the other solve nuclear security problems that can pose a threat to the whole world. At the moment, the value of continuing US-Russian cooperation in the nuclear field

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<sup>31</sup> Einhorn, R. (2016) Prospects for US-Russian non-proliferation cooperation, Brookings Institution.

<sup>32</sup> 'Prospects of US-Russian nonproliferation cooperation,' available at <https://www.brookings.edu/research/prospects-for-u-s-russian-nonproliferation-cooperation/> (27 May, 2021).

primarily consists of joint work on the elimination and disposal of nuclear materials and the elimination of WMD in third countries, as well as in developing measures to strengthen the security of nuclear facilities located there. These measures allow for interaction between professionals and would help to build trust between countries, and also contribute to the fact that accumulated experience can be jointly implemented in third countries where nuclear safety and security problems are still not entirely resolved.

The countries could work together on peaceful applications of nuclear energy developing the next generation of safe and reliable nuclear reactors, investigating novel solutions to common nuclear waste challenges, creating proliferation-resistant nuclear fuels, bolstering the capabilities of essential radiation detectors, improving the safety of commercial nuclear power plants, and preventing illicit nuclear trafficking in dangerous parts of the world.<sup>33</sup> Working together on the least politicized projects on peaceful uses of nuclear energy could help rebuild trust, which is essential for the overall harmonizing of the US-Russian relations.

There are many lessons that the two countries should learn from their experience to make cooperation possible again. First of all, mutual trust stems from mutual transparency. While comeback to the intrusive transparency measures is hardly desirable or possible, a greater insight into the rationales behind the stance of the partner is essential for restoring cooperation. Secondly, it is the significance of the human factor. Personal relations between staff in research institutes, laboratories, and industrial plants, diplomats and people on the highest political level are of crucial importance. These personal connections would help avoid harmful politicization. Thirdly, it would be shortsighted not to account for the role of the right circumstances. Both sides should have an interest in relations restoration; otherwise, all other measures would barely help. Finally, and probably most importantly, any cooperation should be developed on an equal basis. If one of the actors would feel mistreated, dependent or realize that only one party is benefitting from such 'cooperation', it would quickly erode the relations.

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<sup>33</sup> 'Pathways to Cooperation: A Menu of Potential US-Russian Cooperative Projects in the Nuclear Sphere' (2017) NTI, Center for Energy and Security Studies, available at [http://ceness-russia.org/data/doc/Pathways\\_to\\_Cooperation\\_FINAL.pdf](http://ceness-russia.org/data/doc/Pathways_to_Cooperation_FINAL.pdf) (27 May, 2021).

Peaceful uses of nuclear energy up to these days remain the least political sphere where both countries have mutual interest. Therefore, it has the biggest potential to play a significant role in the restoration of trustful cooperative relations between the United States and Russia.

PART V

**RUSSIAN-AMERICAN  
NONPROLIFERATION AND ARMS  
CONTROL DIALOGUE SINCE 1991:  
FROM PATRONAGE TO FAILED  
PARTNERSHIP... WHAT`S NEXT?**

# CHAPTER 15

## **INTERACTION ON NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION IN 1990S THROUGH A PRISM OF ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS**

*Evgenii Kholodnov*

Arms control, disarmament, and nonproliferation issues have always been a significant part of Soviet-American and Russian-American relations, and the Yeltsin-Clinton period is no exception. The goal of this chapter is to study the dialogue on arms control, disarmament and nonproliferation during the Clinton administration by analyzing the declassified transcripts of phone calls and personal meetings between Presidents Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin. This chapter discusses Russian-American cooperation on the nuclear weapons removal from the territory of Ukraine, Iran nuclear and missile programs, the HEU-LEU agreement and the Nunn-Lugar program, and on issues of the NPT and the CTBT.

### **Removal of Nuclear Weapons from Ukraine**

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Ukraine acquired the third largest and one of the most powerful nuclear arsenals in the world. 176 intercontinental ballistic missiles, 44 heavy bombers with more than 1000 long-range nuclear-capable cruise-missiles, 1240 nuclear warheads were located on the territory of the country.<sup>1</sup> The issues of the nuclear arsenal stationed on the territory of Ukraine were of major importance in the Russian-American dialogue. From January 23, 1993 till April 9, 1996, Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin discussed the 'Ukrainian issue' at least six times.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Okunev, D. (2019) 'Capitulation or the Second Chernobyl: How Ukraine was tricked. 25 years ago Ukraine renounced nuclear weapons,' *Gazeta.ru*, available at [https://www.gazeta.ru/science/2019/01/10\\_a\\_12123019.shtml](https://www.gazeta.ru/science/2019/01/10_a_12123019.shtml) (27 May, 2021).

<sup>2</sup> Memorandums of phone conversations and personal meetings between Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin. Clinton Library Photocopies. The White House, Washington.

During one of the first phone calls between the presidents, Bill Clinton expressed his determination to cooperate with Russia on the 'Ukrainian issue' more closely. '[Bill Clinton] *I would also like to work closely with you to resolve differences on Ukraine's ratification of START I and the NPT so that we can make progress on START II*'.<sup>3</sup> Neither Russia, nor the United States favored the emergence of several new nuclear powers.

Negotiating the removal of Soviet nuclear weapons from Ukraine required more efforts than in case of the other states. On December 21, 1991, Russia and Ukraine signed the agreement on 'On the procedure for the transfer of nuclear weapons from the territory of Ukraine to the central pre-factory bases of the Russian Federation for the purpose of their dismantling and destruction'.<sup>4</sup> The ratification of the START-I Treaty was a matter of further negotiations between the United States, Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan, which finally led to signing of the Lisbon Protocol on May 23, 1992. Under the protocol, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan agreed to join and ratify the START-I treaty, and also to join the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon states.

Difficulties with the Ukrainian position emerged at this stage. In 1992, Ukraine changed its position on the possession of nuclear weapons significantly. According to memoirs of the head of the Russian delegation Yuri Dubinin,

In April 1992 Ukraine included strategic nuclear forces stationed on its territory into the Ukrainian Armed Forces... On December 11, 1992, MFA of Ukraine sent the memorandum on nuclear policy issues to all the embassies accredited in Kyiv. Ukraine raised the issue of ownership of all components of nuclear warheads stationed on its territory.<sup>5</sup>

These actions immediately endangered Ukraine's accession to NPT and START-I entry into force. Kyiv's stance also impeded further

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<sup>3</sup> Telecon with President Boris Yeltsin of Russia (1993) Memorandum of Telephone Conversation, Clinton Library Photocopy, The White House, Washington.

<sup>4</sup> 'The agreement on the procedure for the transfer of nuclear weapons from the territory of Ukraine to the central pre-factory bases of the Russian Federation for the purpose of their dismantling and destruction'. Text of the agreement, available at <http://docs.cntd.ru/document/1902979> (27 May, 2021).

<sup>5</sup> Dubinin, Y. (2004) 'Ukraine nuclear drift,' Russia in Global Affairs, №2, available at <https://globalaffairs.ru/articles/yadernyj-drejf-ukrainy/> (27 May, 2021).

negotiations on nuclear arms control and disarmament namely on START-II treaty. Moreover, it was believed, that 'a Ukrainian nuclear deterrent will cause proliferation, especially in Europe'.<sup>6</sup>

In these unfortunate circumstances, Russia and the United States put pressure on Kyiv, which is evident from negotiations between Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin: '*Bill Clinton*: *We keep working on Ukraine to ratify START*'.<sup>7</sup> Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin called upon each other to leverage Ukraine into performing in due form its obligations.

In order to force Ukraine to abandon nuclear weapons, states had to give something in exchange. The Ukrainian government wanted acceptable answers to four key questions:

1. What guarantees or assurances would there be for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity after it gave up strategic nuclear arms?
2. Strategic nuclear warheads had commercial value in the form of the highly enriched uranium (HEU) they contained. How would Ukraine ensure that it received the value of the HEU from the nuclear warheads on its territory?
3. Taking into account economic issues in Ukraine, who would cover the costs of ICBM elimination under START I?
4. How, where and under what conditions would the strategic nuclear warheads, ICBMs and bombers be eliminated?<sup>8</sup>

The Russian side answered the first question pretty clearly. Boris Yeltsin promised Russian security assurances to Ukraine if it acceded to NPT and ratified the START-I Treaty. The United States pledged the same assurances. The Ukrainian third concern was also addressed: 'The U.S. government promised Ukraine \$175 million in dismantlement assistance. Instead, the Ukrainian government began implementing administrative management of the nuclear forces and

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<sup>6</sup> Measheimer, J.J. (1993) 'The Case for a Ukrainian Nuclear Deterrent,' *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No.3, pp.50-66, available at [https://proxy.library.spbu.ru:2163/stable/pdf/20045622.pdf?ab\\_segments=0%252Fbasic\\_SYC-5187%252Ftest](https://proxy.library.spbu.ru:2163/stable/pdf/20045622.pdf?ab_segments=0%252Fbasic_SYC-5187%252Ftest) (27 May, 2021).

<sup>7</sup> Meeting with Russian President Boris Yeltsin on Security Issues (1993) Memorandum Conversation, Clinton Library Photocopy, The White House, Washington.

<sup>8</sup> Pifer, S. (2011) 'The Trilateral Process: The United States, Ukraine, Russia and Nuclear Weapons,' Brookings Institution, Washington DC, available at <https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-trilateral-process-the-united-states-ukraine-russia-and-nuclear-weapons/> (27 May, 2021).

claimed ownership of the warheads'.<sup>9</sup> At the beginning of 1993, Russia and Ukraine established working groups to elaborate solutions to the remaining stumbling blocks. As it follows from the memoirs of the Russian HOD Yuri Dubinin, the process was extremely difficult.<sup>10</sup> The same can be inferred from the phone call between presidents of Russia and the United States: *'[Boris Yeltsin] As for Ukraine, the process is complicated... But you understand that it is always difficult to deal with Ukraine. Today they agree, tomorrow they backtrack'*.<sup>11</sup>

Until May 1993, there was no sign of breakthrough due to Ukraine's reluctance to concede. 'In May 1993, the U.S. said that if Ukraine were to ratify START, the U.S. would provide more financial assistance. This proposition laid the grounds subsequent discussions between Ukraine, Russia, and the U.S. over the future of Ukrainian denuclearization'.<sup>12</sup> On July 10, 1993, during the meeting between Russian and American presidents, Boris Yeltsin stated: *'As for Ukraine, the process is complicated. We have agreed that warheads with weapons-grade uranium will be dismantled and returned to Russia. We will then send back enriched uranium to Ukraine for their nuclear power stations'*.<sup>13</sup>

By September 1993, the issue seemed to be settled with the Masandra Accords signed.

[Boris Yeltsin] This was one of the most productive meetings we have had with Ukraine, with Kravchuk. We finally reached an agreement on strategic nuclear weapons. The agreement calls for the total removal in 24 months of nuclear warheads to Russia for their elimination. As a trade-off, we will give Ukraine low enriched uranium for use at nuclear power plants. Of course, they are aware of the U.S. willing-

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<sup>9</sup> Reif, K. (2020) 'Ukraine, Nuclear Weapons, and Security Assurances at a Glance,' Arms Control Association, available at <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Ukraine-Nuclear-Weapons> (27 May, 2021).

<sup>10</sup> Dubinin, Y. (2004) 'Ukraine nuclear drift,' Russia in Global Affairs, №2, available at <https://globalaffairs.ru/articles/yadernyj-drejf-ukrainy/> (27 May, 2021).

<sup>11</sup> Memcom with President Boris Yeltsin of Russia (1993) Memorandum Conversation, Clinton Library Photocopy, The White House, Washington.

<sup>12</sup> Reif, K. (2020) 'Ukraine, Nuclear Weapons, and Security Assurances at a Glance,' Arms Control Association, available at <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Ukraine-Nuclear-Weapons> (27 May, 2021).

<sup>13</sup> Memcom with President Boris Yeltsin of Russia (1993) Memorandum Conversation, Clinton Library Photocopy, The White House, Washington.



ness to provide \$175 million in compensation. But they are not satisfied with that figure. And they would like to obtain more from you. I told them that they would need to resolve that with the U.S. I said that now that Ukraine has relations with the U.S. it is up to the two sides to resolve this matter.<sup>14</sup>

In some sense, the strategy of Good Cop/Bad Cop that both Russia and America applied provided positive results. On the one hand, the joint pressure exercised by Russia and the United States forced Ukraine to change its position on nuclear weapons; on the other hand, American economic assistance and agreements on the nuclear fuel transfer for Ukrainian power plants helped to make Kiev abandon its claims to Soviet nuclear weapons.

On January 14, 1994 presidents of Russia, the United States, and Ukraine signed the Trilateral Accords. According to the agreement, Ukraine undertook to transfer all nuclear weapons to Russia; Russia in return undertook to provide nuclear fuel for Ukrainian nuclear power plants.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, the process of the START-I ratification and the process of Ukrainian membership to the NPT were drawn out to a great length. Ukraine demanded more assurances of its territorial integrity and sovereignty and wanted more economic assistance.

When the Verkhovna Rada refused to join the NPT, Washington promised to provide 175 million dollars of economic assistance. Followed by the second refusal of Rada to sign the treaty, the United States promised to provide additional assistance. In other words, the more unaccommodating Ukraine was, the more money it got from Washington.<sup>16</sup>

From the negotiations held between Russia and the United States on September 27, 1994, it is evident that both states decided

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<sup>14</sup> Telcon with President Boris Yeltsin of the Russian Federation (1993) Memorandum of Telephone Conversation, Clinton Library Photocopy, The White House, Washington.

<sup>15</sup> The U.S.-Russia-Ukraine Trilateral Statement and Annex (1994) Atomic Archive, available at <https://www.atomicarchive.com/resources/documents/deterrence/trilateral.html> (27 May, 2021).

<sup>16</sup> 'The U.S.-Russia-Ukraine Nuclear Triangle' (1994) PIR Center, Yaderny Control, № 0, pp. 17-18, available at <https://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/9/13464059140.pdf> (27 May, 2021).

to 'finish off' Ukraine by applying the tactics of more severe pressure and threats.

[Defense Minister Grachev] Here is another difficulty: We are cutting back strategic nuclear weapons in accordance with START I, but the Treaty is not ratified. Now START II is pressing us, with a date of 2003 to complete reductions. If you do not press Ukraine, then we will not be able to proceed with START II. Boris Yeltsin] ...we have to press Ukraine with all our might. [Bill Clinton] President Kuchma is coming here. You said that he is OK. So we need to press them to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty by the time of the CSCE Summit in Budapest, and we have to ensure they get some credit. [Boris Yeltsin] We should bring all the pressure we have to bear. We signed the Trilateral accord, we three, so then what? I've got to visit Ukraine in November. I'm going to press Kuchma to the wall. NPT or they get no gas or oil! [Bill Clinton] will tell him that we need to get NPT out of the way to bring START I into force and to ratify START II. Then we can begin to explore START III ideas.<sup>17</sup>

On November 16, 1994, the Supreme Council of Ukraine adopted the law on START-I ratification; on December 5, 1994 at the OSCE conference in Budapest Ukraine, Russia, Great Britain and the United States signed the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances.<sup>18</sup>

The future of START-I, START-II treaties, the fate of NPT, and European security agenda transformation depended on the removal of Soviet nuclear weapons from the territory of Ukraine. Nevertheless, similarities of political views between Russia and the United States, their common understanding of the situation and coordinated actions prevented the expansion of the 'Nuclear Club'. Moreover, the actions and tactics applied towards Ukraine were symmetrical from both states, which definitely helped to resolve the issue.

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<sup>17</sup> Expanded Session on Security Issues with President Yeltsin of the Russian Federation (1994) Memorandum of Conversation, Clinton Library Photocopy, The White House, Washington.

<sup>18</sup> Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances (2016) Text of memorandum, available at <http://kiev1.org/budapesht-m.html> (27 May, 2021).

## Contradictions on Iran Nuclear and Missile Programs

Iran nuclear program caused more friction in U.S.-Russian bilateral negotiations than the 'Ukrainian issue'. The United States perceived the development of the Iranian nuclear program as a threat to U.S., Russian, Middle Eastern and European security agenda. During the negotiations, Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin discussed Iran more than twenty times.<sup>19</sup>

Since 1958, Iran has been the member-state to the IAEA; in 1968 Iran joined the NPT regime as a non-nuclear-weapons state and ratified the treaty in 1970. The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) was established in 1974 and was tasked to elaborate the plan for the atomic energy development suggesting the construction of 23 nuclear reactors. In 1989, Iran and the USSR agreed on the program on trade, economic, scientific, and technological cooperation, which included cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Between 1989 and 1991, the USSR (the Russian Federation) signed several treaties on small arms sales to Iran. Under the 1989 agreement, Iran received 24 MIG-19 fighter jets, 12 Su-24MK, 2 surface-to-air missile systems S-200VE with total amount of \$1,3 billion;<sup>20</sup> under the 1990 agreement Iran was to receive 3 Project-877EKM diesel-electric submarines;<sup>21</sup> and the agreement of 1991 supposed the manufacturing in Iran of 1000 T-72s tanks, 1500 infantry fighting vehicles BMP-2 and ammunition worth \$2,2 billion.<sup>22</sup> Small arms sales to Iran were among major concerns of the United States. The U.S. believed Iran to sponsor terrorism and demanded to stop Russian arms sales. On the contrary, Russia insisted on complying with these agreements as the successor state to the USSR. During the phone call between Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin on July 10, 1993, the Russian

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<sup>19</sup> Memorandums of phone conversations and personal meetings between Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin, Clinton Library Photocopies, The White House, Washington.

<sup>20</sup> Kozyulin, V. (2001) 'Russia-Iran: What is behind the start of the new military and technological cooperation?,' PIR Center, Security Issues, Vol. 5, № 5(95), available at <http://pircenter.org/articles/1428-rossiya-iran-cto-stoit-za-novym-startom-voennotekhnicheskogo-sotrudnichestva> (27 May, 2021).

<sup>21</sup> 'Military and technological cooperation between Russia and Iran' (2015) Dossier, TASS, available at <https://tass.ru/info/1707163> (27 May, 2021).

<sup>22</sup> Kozyulin, V. (2001) 'Russia-Iran: What is behind the start of the new military and technological cooperation?,' PIR Center, Security Issues, Vol. 5, № 5(95), available at <http://pircenter.org/articles/1428-rossiya-iran-cto-stoit-za-novym-startom-voennotekhnicheskogo-sotrudnichestva> (27 May, 2021).

leader made an unambiguous statement, that Russia would fulfill previous agreements with Iran and wouldn't sign any new contracts to avoid deterioration in relations with the United States.

As you recall I promised that within 2–3 days I would call you and inform you about the contracts signed by the Soviet Union with Iran. I looked at them personally. They include an agreement dated November 5, 1989, and another May 17, 1990, and also an agreement signed on November 13, 1991. These were all signed by the Former Minister of Foreign Economic Relations – the total is \$4 billion. I wish to confirm to you once again that we will comply with the obligations undertaken by the former Soviet Union (FSU) with respect to Iran, but we intend to conclude no further contracts with Iran.<sup>23</sup>

On November 5, 1993 Boris Yeltsin reiterated his promise to the United States not to seal any new deals on small arms sales to Iran. *'I said no new contracts will be signed. I said no new contracts will be signed, but we will deliver on old contracts signed by the FSU. Russia has no intention to sign any new contracts. I agree with your idea. Let Gore and Chernomyrdin discuss the composition of the contracts signed by the FSU.'*<sup>24</sup> Boris Yeltsin seems to have lost his temper during the phone call, which proves the divergence of views on 'Iranian Issue' between Russia and U.S..

On September 27, 1994 presidents had a similar conversation. The United States continued to put pressure on Russia to stop small arms sales to Iran and sign no new contracts on arms export.

[Bill Clinton] The only issue is your cooperation in ending the new sales to Iran. We have discussed this twice before – your meeting contracts from the past. We want you in the new regime. But we need an end to the new sales, and a relatively rapid phaseout of current contracts. [Boris Yeltsin] I can give you my assurance that no new supplies will be made and no new deals. I will not make any new deals. What we took over

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<sup>23</sup> Memcom with President Boris Yeltsin of Russian Federation (1993) Memorandum of Conversation, Clinton Library Photocopy, The White House, Washington

<sup>24</sup> Telephone Conversation with Russian President Yeltsin (1993) Memorandum of Telephone Conversation, Clinton Library Photocopy, The White House, Washington.

were old contracts and we must abide by them or there will be \$500 million in penalties. I assure you there will be no new deals with Iran. [Bill Clinton] As part of this, are you willing to tell us what the contracts are, what weapons are involved? [Boris Yeltsin] Yes, we are prepared to do so.<sup>25</sup>

During negotiations, Boris Yeltsin stated several times, that he was ready to unveil the essence of arms sales to Iran and to grant U.S. experts access to Russian archives and documents.

Yeltsin persisted in promising that Russia would not sign any new contracts on arms sales to Iran. At the same time, Russian diplomats have noticed Clinton's attempts to manipulate Yeltsin's opinion: The United States kept discussing the Iranian threat issue to include Russian contribution to the establishment of the post-COCOM regime export control regime with the termination of its military cooperation with Iran in a package deal. There was no reason to sever mutually beneficial military and technological cooperation with Iran.<sup>26</sup>

In 1992, the Russian Federation and Iran signed an agreement on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and nuclear power plant construction.<sup>27</sup> The agreement envisaged: nuclear reactors' construction and maintenance and education of Iranian personnel. Agreements on exports of a nuclear reactor for submarine and nuclear research reactors were signed. The USA perceived these agreements as the Iranian attempt to acquire nuclear technologies from Russia to make progress on nuclear and missile programs. Russia denied that the exported nuclear technologies had military applications and questioned the Iranian capabilities to develop nuclear weapons`.

[Bill Clinton] We are very concerned about Iran and the things we see them doing. We know they have had some discussions with you about the sale of reactors. We hope you don't do that. We discussed this in Vancouver. [Boris Yeltsin]

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<sup>25</sup> Expanded Session on Security Issues with President Yeltsin of the Russian Federation (1994) Memorandum of Conversation, Clinton Library Photocopy, The White House, Washington.

<sup>26</sup> Yademny Control (1995) № 1, p. 9, available at <https://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/9/13464073490.pdf> (27 May, 2021).

<sup>27</sup> Khlopkov, A. (2001) 'Iran Nuclear Problem in Russian-American Relations,' PIR Center, Occasional Papers, №18, available at <https://pircenter.org/media/content/files/9/13464218020.pdf> (27 May, 2021).

No, we discussed the sale of nuclear submarines to Iran. We have already discussed the fact that we sent them the hull of a sub without the nuclear reactor. And this reactor for the sub will not use heavy water but material under IAEA safeguards. It can't be used as a weapon, only as an engine. You understand that this reactor can be verified not only by the IAEA but by experts in your own country. Before Vancouver, we had an agreement to sell two submarines. After Vancouver, we canceled the second sale. If you want to send a representative to verify that reactor, you can do it.<sup>28</sup>

Russian skepticism regarding the Iranian capabilities to develop nuclear weapons were reflected in open reports of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR). According to the report, there was no convincing evidence of a coordinated and integral nuclear program in Iran so far. Given the state of Iranian industrial potential at that time, Iran was estimated to be incapable to establish production of weapons-grade nuclear materials without foreign assistance. The report concluded that the accusations against Iran are often based on unverified information and that the level of Iranian technological advances in the sphere of nuclear energy did not exceed the level of another 20–25 states in the world.<sup>29</sup> Same arguments were presented by President Yeltsin. Bill Clinton, however, cited the contrary estimated made by the U.S. intelligence community. *'[Bill Clinton] There's a point here you should understand. We have intelligence that we believe proves Iran is trying to develop nuclear weapons. I will share a copy with you. Iran does not need nuclear facilities for energy because it has enough oil. It wants reactors for other purposes'. '[Boris Yeltsin] They are not capable of developing a nuclear-weapons program'.<sup>30</sup>*

The transcript of the one-on-one meeting between presidents shows that Russia already started to meet the United States halfway on the 'Iranian Issue' hoping to get economic benefits from America. *'[Boris Yeltsin] We'll provide only what we should. All other parts of*

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<sup>28</sup> Memcom with President Boris Yeltsin of Russian Federation (1993) Memorandum of Conversation, Clinton Library Photocopy, The White House, Washington.

<sup>29</sup> Sarukhanyan, S. Russian-Iranian cooperation in the sphere of nuclear energy, available at [http://www.noravank.am/upload/pdf/135\\_ru.pdf](http://www.noravank.am/upload/pdf/135_ru.pdf) (27 May, 2021).

<sup>30</sup> Summary Report on One-On-One Meeting Between Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin (1995) Clinton Library Photocopy, The White House, Washington.

*the contract we'll cut out. We'll take the loss and maybe you will be able to make part of it up'.<sup>31</sup>*

On January 5, 1995, the Protocol of negotiations between V.N. Mikhailov, Minister of Atomic Energy of the Russian Federation, and R. Amrollakhi, Vice President of the Islamic Republic of Iran and President of the Organization of Atomic Energy of Iran was signed in Tehran. The Protocol was sharply criticized in the West. Under the protocol, Russia agreed to construct several small nuclear power reactors in Iran, to export nuclear fuel to Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant, to seal a number of deals on exports of light-water reactors, to train Iranian specialists, and to build uranium mine and centrifuge facility.<sup>32</sup> The West considered the Protocol to be the Russian attempt to contribute to the development of the Iranian nuclear program. Publications from that period show, that '... signed agreements with Iran on nuclear power plant construction were in accordance with the nonproliferation regime due to two reasons: firstly, Russia was to construct reactors not capable of producing weapons-grade plutonium; secondly, the signed agreements were subject to the IAEA control'.<sup>33</sup> Signing the Protocol was followed by more severe American and Israeli pressure on Russia.

American attempts to exert pressure on Moscow bore fruit. In 1995, the Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission came to agreement on the cessation of Russia-Iran military and technological cooperation by the end of 1999. Under the agreement, Russia was to finish the construction of Bushehr nuclear power plant and to fulfill small arms sales agreements signed with Iran by December 31, 1991.<sup>34</sup> Further on Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission reached a secret agreement on Russia to restrict to transfer of dual-use technologies to Iran.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Summary Report on One-On-One Meeting Between Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin (1995) Clinton Library Photocopy, The White House, Washington.

<sup>32</sup> Sarukhanyan, S. (2007) 'Nuclear Factor in Russia-Iranian Relations,' Middle East Institute, Moscow, p. 248, available at [http://book.iimes.su/wp-content/uploads/2007/r2007irn\\_p.pdf](http://book.iimes.su/wp-content/uploads/2007/r2007irn_p.pdf) (27 May, 2021).

<sup>33</sup> Yablokov, A. (1995) 'Some questions about the nuclear deal with Iran,' *Yaderny Control*, № 5, p. 21, available at <https://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/9/13464096210.pdf> (27 May, 2021).

<sup>34</sup> Ter-Oganov, N. (2008) 'Dynamics of the Development of Russian-Iranian cooperation in the field of nuclear energy: 1992-2006,' *Central Asia and Caucasus*, № 2(56), available at <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/dinamika-razvitiya-rossiysko-iranskogo-sotrudnichestva-v-oblasti-yadernoy-energii-1992-2006-gody/viewer> (27 May, 2021).

<sup>35</sup> Sarukhanyan, S. (2007) 'Nuclear Factor in Russia-Iranian Relations,' Middle East Institute, Moscow, p. 248, available at [http://book.iimes.su/wp-content/uploads/2007/r2007irn\\_p.pdf](http://book.iimes.su/wp-content/uploads/2007/r2007irn_p.pdf) (27 May, 2021).

The Clinton administration supposedly made Russian top-level officials agree on such limitations in exchange for other benefits, including credits from the IMF and other international financial institutions. According to some other sources, Boris Yeltsin accepted the limitations in return for American support during the presidential elections in Russia, which Yeltsin's team was about to lose.<sup>36</sup> That is why Boris Yeltsin raised the issue of American cooperation in receiving the IMF credits and privileges during the bilateral negotiations.<sup>37</sup> The Russian government was extremely dissatisfied with these agreements. According to some estimates, Russia lost from \$2 billion to \$4 billion on the reduction of military and technological cooperation with Iran.

American pressure on Russia decreased for some time.

[Boris Yeltsin] We have turned them [the Iranians] down on anything in the contract that has to do with military issues. There are four points I want to make here: First, no centrifuge – Nyet! Second, the two silos – Nyet! Third, we'll refuse delivery of military weapons-grade materials. We're giving them equipment for peaceful uses, for electric power stations – not one iota more – even though we will lose financially because we'll have to cut back on the contract [to eliminate the gas-centrifuge]. [Bill Clinton] I realize this is a sensitive economic and political issue for you and for me. Senator Dole and Speaker Gingrich have called for an aid cutoff if Iran is given this reactor. I don't agree with what they're saying, and I don't think that we should get, into that kind of use of our aid program to punish Russia.<sup>38</sup>

Despite Bill Clinton's previous assurances, the United States started threatening Russia with limiting economic aid program if Russia did not abide by the agreement's provisions. Moreover, there was another factor influencing such decision: 'American attempts

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<sup>36</sup> Kozyulin, V. (2001) 'Russia-Iran: What is behind the start of the new military and technological cooperation?,' PIR Center, Security Issues, Vol. 5, № 5(95), available at <http://pircenter.org/articles/1428-rossiya-iran-chto-stoit-za-novym-startom-voennotekhnicheskogo-sotrudnichestva> (27 May, 2021).

<sup>37</sup> Memorandums of phone conversations and personal meetings between Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin, Clinton Library Photocopies, The White House, Washington.

<sup>38</sup> Summary Report on One-On-One Meeting Between Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin (1995) Clinton Library Photocopy, The White House, Washington.



to exert pressure on Russia could be explained by political reasons. One of these reasons was the powerful Israeli lobby's pressure on Clinton's Administration. Many officials found Iran becoming major enemy of Israel'.<sup>39</sup>

Since 1997, Russia was again exposed to harsh criticism regarding an alleged leak of missile technologies from Russia. Therein the United States did not have sufficient evidence to attribute the leak to the Russian government, direct contacts between Russian and Iranian enterprises and research institutions were the biggest U.S. concern and the most serious 'proof' it could suggest. That issue was addressed during negotiations between presidents on June 19, 1997.

[Boris Yeltsin] There is no weakening of my agreement in Helsinki on no new agreements with Iran. There will be none. We implement what we agreed. You know we have contracts going back to 1985, 1987, and 1989. Deliveries are being made under the terms of those contracts, but nothing in the way of complete missiles, just parts of missiles. Because of our clumsy democracy, we allow enterprises to have direct contacts with Iran, and they make agreements. They are not supplying whole missiles; they cannot do that. But it is possible certain enterprises can provide parts of missiles — war-heads or tail sections, for example — but not full missiles.<sup>40</sup>

The leak of technologies was a serious problem in the U.S.-Russia relations. Bill Clinton described on several occasions these events as a serious step back for bilateral relations, threatening to derail previous progress between states. President Clinton called upon Boris Yeltsin to restrict direct contacts between Russian entities and institutions.

[Bill Clinton] I hope you can use your executive order to issue official instructions to end all cooperation between Russian entities and the Iranian missile program. ...I hope that based

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<sup>39</sup> Fisher, D. (1995) 'Why do I support Russian-Iranian contract. Answer to professor Yablokov,' *Yaderny Control*, № 6, p. 21, available at <https://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/9/13464103580.pdf> (27 May, 2021).

<sup>40</sup> Meeting with Russian President Yeltsin: European Security and Madrid, Arms Control, Economics, Iraq, Russian-Iran Missile Cooperation, Japanese-Russian Relations. Memorandum of Conversation (1997) Clinton Library Photocopy, The White House, Washington.

on previous government decrees you can issue instructions to end nuclear cooperation with Iran other than Bushehr.<sup>41</sup>

The bilateral exchanges contributed to the development of export control legislation, but the issue remained unresolved for some time more.

[Bill Clinton] We have continued to work with Kokoshin on this problem of stopping Russian firms cooperating with the Iranian missile program. We've made some progress, but Congress is still threatening to override my veto of the sanctions bill. We have talked about this in the past, the Congress passed a bill to impose sanctions on Russian firms that cooperate with the Iranian missile program. I vetoed the bill. But if they bring it up to a vote, they have the votes to override my veto. [Boris Yeltsin] Okay, I promise to look attentively at each and every point where we can enforce compliance and reduce or restrict cooperation between Russian and Iranian companies.<sup>42</sup>

On July 28, 1998, a week after the test of Iranian missile Shahab-3 with the range of 1200 km, Bill Clinton added nuclear and missile technologies export to the list of sanctions' triggers.<sup>43</sup> Thus, in July 1998 some Russian enterprises and research institutions were sanctioned for exporting nuclear and missile technologies to Iran.

In comparison with the issue of nuclear weapons removal from the territory of Ukraine, the collision of interests on 'Iranian issue' was more vibrant. The United States insisted on the complete termination of military and technological cooperation between Russia and Iran. Russia was faced with a very difficult choice: to receive economic benefits from cooperation with Iran on previous agreements on arms sales and nuclear program or to suspend its cooperation with Iran in order to preserve the progress in U.S.-Russian rela-

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<sup>41</sup> Telephone Conversation with Russian President Boris Yeltsin (1998) Memorandum of Telephone Conversation, Clinton Library Photocopy, The White House, Washington.

<sup>42</sup> Telephone Conversation with Russian President Boris Yeltsin (1998) Memorandum of Telephone Conversation, Clinton Library Photocopy, The White House, Washington.

<sup>43</sup> Khlopkov, A. (2001) 'Iran Nuclear Problem in Russian-American Relations,' PIR Center, Study Papers, №18, available at <https://pircenter.org/media/content/files/9/13464218020.pdf> (27 May, 2021).

tions and to receive economic and political benefits from America. Also comparing 'Iranian and Ukrainian issues,' it is evident that the United States applied other tactics to Russia than to Ukraine. Russia was under American pressure, threats and sanctions and was about to lose economic aid. Moreover, American pressure on Russia over the 'Iranian issue' is believed to have made Russia adopt the Federal Law 'On Export Control' on July 18, 1999.

## The Cooperative Threat Reduction Program

The Cooperative Threat Reduction Program (also known as the Nunn-Lugar Program) was initiated by senators Sam Nunn and Richard Lugar and adopted by the U.S. Congress in November 1991. The official name of the program was 'the Soviet Nuclear Threat Reduction Act of 1991'. The program was aimed at assisting the former Soviet republics in the destruction of nuclear weapons stockpiles and in the elimination of biological and chemical weapons.<sup>44</sup>

The senators were concerned that Russia would not be able to secure nuclear materials and nuclear weapons that were inherited from the Soviet era. What made the situation even worth was a deep economic crisis and significant lack of financial resources, which made repatriation of nuclear warheads from territories of Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus challenging. So, it was in the interest of the U.S. national security to help Russia in solving its problems related to nuclear weapons and materials.<sup>45</sup> Consequently, Senators Nunn and Lugar, in cooperation with the House Armed Services Committee chair Les Aspin, gained congressional support for using the Department of Defense (DoD) funding (around \$400 million annually) to assist the Soviet Union with the safe transportation, storage, and destruction of its weapons of mass destruction (WMD).<sup>46</sup>

The program became known as the Nunn-Lugar program. The three primary purposes of the agreement were: 1) assistance in

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<sup>44</sup> Maslin, E. (2000) 'The Cooperative Threat Reduction Program and Russian national security interests,' PIR Center, Study Papers, №13, available at <http://pir-center.org/media/content/files/9/13464234540.pdf> (27 May, 2021).

<sup>45</sup> Orlov, V. (2005) 'Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction,' Handbook, pp. 11-13

<sup>46</sup> Wolfsthal, J.; Chuen, C.; Daughtry, E.E. (2001) 'Nuclear Status Report: Nuclear Weapons, Fissile Materials and Export Controls in the Former Soviet Union,' Washington, DC, P. 47

the elimination of WMD in Russia and former Soviet republics, ensuring safe and secure transportation; 2) storage and dismantling of such weapons, and; 3) safeguarding these weapons from proliferation.<sup>47</sup>

When President Clinton came to the office, the Nunn-Lugar program became a key tool to address U.S. national security concerns, primarily ensuring a non-nuclear status of Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan, preventing weapons proliferation, and controlling Russia's adherence to its disarmament obligations under the Strategic Arms Reductions Treaty (START). Under Clinton's administration, the name of the program was changed to a more politically suitable phrase – Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR).

During negotiations between Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin, the issue of Nunn-Lugar program was addressed only once during the expanded session on security issues on September 27, 1994.<sup>48</sup> The addressed issue was about the relocation of money under the Nunn-Lugar program on START-I and START-II treaties. During the session, the U.S. Defense Secretary William J. Perry stated that for the sake of better control over nuclear weapons, Russia and the United States should immediately start sharing data and discussing methods of more secure storage of warheads and nuclear materials, which are under the control of Defense Ministries, and use Nunn-Lugar money for these purposes. In addition, he mentioned that as soon as START-I and START-II treaties would be agreed on, both sides should ramp up weapons reduction, boost it with a series of informal agreements, and use Nunn-Lugar money for that.<sup>49</sup>

The Cooperative Threat Reduction program raised the issue of specific equipment necessary for the improvement of Nuclear Weapons security. Former 12<sup>th</sup> Chief Directorate of the Ministry of Defense Evgenii Maslin stated, that

This issue required a lot: dense packs, supercontainers, new computer systems. It required establishing specific complexes for preventing possible accidents. All these we acquired from America: 100 railway freight wagons and 15 railway

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<sup>47</sup> Orlov, V.; Timerbaev, R.; Khlopkov, A. (2002) 'Nuclear Nonproliferation in U.S.-Russian Relations: Challenges and Opportunities,' PIR Library Series, P. 155

<sup>48</sup> Memorandums of phone conversations and personal meetings between Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin, Clinton Library Photocopies, The White House, Washington.

<sup>49</sup> Expanded Session on Security Issues with President Yeltsin of the Russian Federation (1994) Memorandum of Conversation, Clinton Library Photocopy, The White House, Washington.

security wagons, 4250 dense packs, 150 supercontainers. Under the CTR program, the multilevel automatic system for accounting and control of nuclear warheads called Analytical System and Software for Evaluating Safeguards and Security (ASSESS) was created. The Security Assessment and Training Center (SATC) at Sergiev Posad was established. We received such exotic equipment as the system for checking the reliability of personnel on polygraphs, which proved to be extremely useful.<sup>50</sup>

'Since 1992 until 2012 the United States allocated \$8,79 billion in total for the CTR program. Works were accompanied by annual inspections'.<sup>51</sup> 'It helped to deactivate and utilize 7610 nuclear warheads, 902 intercontinental ballistic missiles, 684 intercontinental submarine-launched ballistic missiles, 33 nuclear submarines, to dismantle 498 ballistic missile silo launchers, 191 mobile ICBMs launches, and 492 mobile SLBM launchers, 155 strategic bombers, 906 air-to-surface missiles equipped with nuclear warheads, and 3200 tons of Soviet and Albanian chemical weapons'.<sup>52</sup>

Despite doubts of Russian top-officials about the Nunn-Lugar program, it proved to be one of the best examples of U.S.-Russian cooperation on disarmament and nonproliferation issues. The program became the key element contributing to the removal of nuclear weapons from the territories of Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine; ensuring the safety of weapons in Russia, the destruction of nuclear infrastructure in Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan (\$35 million).<sup>53</sup> Among other successes of the CTR program were the relocation of 1000 nuclear warheads from Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine to Russia; withdrawal of more than 2,500 nuclear warheads from missile bases and bombers to safe storage sites; disbandment

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<sup>50</sup> Maslin, E. 'The Cooperative Threat Reduction Program and Russian national security interests,' PIR Center, Study Papers, №13, available at <http://pircenter.org/media/content/files/9/13464234540.pdf> (27 May, 2021).

<sup>51</sup> Kozichev, E. (2012) 'How the Nunn-Lugar Program Worked: History of the Issue,' *Kommersant*, №190, p. 7, available at <https://pircenter.org/media/content/files/9/13464218020.pdf> (27 May, 2021).

<sup>52</sup> Evseev, V. (2012) 'Future of the Nunn-Lugar Program,' Russian Academy of Rocket and Artillery Sciences, available at [http://guraran.ru/news/newsread/news\\_id-9820](http://guraran.ru/news/newsread/news_id-9820) (27 May, 2021).

<sup>53</sup> Maslin, E. (2000) 'The Cooperative Threat Reduction Program and Russian national security interests,' PIR Center, Study Papers, №13, available at <http://pircenter.org/media/content/files/9/13464234540.pdf> (27 May, 2021).

of four units of SS-19 ICBMs in Ukraine; removal of launchers from 750 missiles and destruction of approximately 640 strategic launching vehicles and bombers throughout the CIS'.<sup>54</sup>

One of the reasons for the successful implementation of the program consisted in regular personal contacts of people in charge and the willingness at the very top political level to make this program work for the benefit of everyone. This could be judged from the recently published transcripts of President Clinton's conversations with President Boris Yeltsin. For example, during the meeting on 27 September, 1994, in the White House, the Secretary of Defense William Perry said the following:

I already had a very good one-on-one discussion with Minister of Defense Grachev. I start off with the belief that while we remained concerned about nuclear security, we are concerned about ours and yours. The newspapers have overdramatized the problem, but we should take further steps to reduce the risk of losing control of nuclear materials or warheads. Both the United States and Russia have strong controls but both can make improvements in our Defense and Energy ministries. The issue is not only nuclear warheads but materials as well. One action underway in the United States which Russia should follow is to reduce the number of storage sites. Another is documentation control. I believe we should begin with a confidential exchange of stockpile data and discussions of methods or ways to improve security of warheads and materials already under Defense, and use Nunn-Lugar monies. In summary, I believe you have good methods of control, but both of us can improve and we should cooperate. The first steps is an exchange of information on stockpiles. The second is discussion of ways to improve control of nuclear warheads and materials. We should do this arm-in-arm, because a failure could affect both indeed, the whole world.<sup>55, 56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Shields, J. (1996) 'The Nunn-Lugar Program: relations between the U.S. and aid recipient countries,' *Yaderny Control*, № 16, available at <https://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/9/13464114670.pdf> (27 May, 2021).

<sup>55</sup> Clinton Digital Library (1994) *Declassified Documents Concerning Russian President Boris Yeltsin*, Vol. I, p. 251

<sup>56</sup> 'Declassified documents concerning Russian President Boris Yeltsin' (1993) Part I, P. 251, available at <https://clinton.presidentiallibraries.us/items/show/57568> (27 May, 2021).

The Secretary stressed that it is cooperation and mutual trust that are key to solving the issue of nuclear weapons and materials control. Archival documents also show a sincere commitment of both countries to their disarmament and nonproliferation obligations under the NPT, which helped them overcome the spirit of the Cold War rivalry and start working as partners for achieving a common goal.

In nearly 20 years of the program's operation, according to the U.S. estimates, Russia received around 8 billion U.S. dollars.<sup>57</sup> Nevertheless, the provision of American financial assistance cannot be called in the full sense gratuitous. For example, in the 1992 Agreement, at the request of the U.S., a clause was included according to which the Pentagon has the right to inspect facilities where the equipment it paid for was installed.

This requirement was primarily due to the provisions of the U.S. domestic legislation, which provides for the control over the expenditure of financial resources allocated from the U.S. budget. The financial control system agreed with Russia, among other things, provided for regular visits by U.S. representatives to Russian nuclear facilities, which were strictly classified during the Soviet era. Representatives of the Russian Ministry of Defense sometimes point out that the United States would never have received such an amount of sensitive information about the Russian Northern Fleet and its nuclear weapons storage system, had it not been for the CTR.<sup>58</sup>

Nevertheless, as it was noted by Evgeniy Buzhinskiy, Lieutenant General (retired), Chairman of PIR Center Executive Board, Russian military diplomat and expert,

the amount of sensitive information received by the American inspectors who controlled the spending of funds allocated by the United States is not that significant. The fact is that during inspection trips they only got access to the perimeter of Russian secret facilities and did not have the ability to access information, which, if leaked, could directly threaten Russia's security.

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<sup>57</sup> Chernenko, E. (2012) 'Program free: Russia intends to continue to dispose of its nuclear arsenals on its own,' *Kommersant*, p. 7.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

In any case, Buzhinskiy believes that Russia should have stopped participating in the CTR at least for the reasons of prestige. Compared with the 1990s, when this program started, Russia's role in the world has grown significantly, and it can no longer afford to remain a recipient of American aid and extend agreements containing discriminatory clauses. 'Today, Russia, as one of the leaders of the world community, has the right to demand from the U.S. the signing of a new agreement on cooperation in the nuclear industry, which would be equal and take into account the realities of today, and not the situation in the 1990 – 2000s. Therefore, the Russian leadership in October 2012 decided to abandon the extension of the CTR after its expiration in June 2013'.<sup>59</sup> The same idea was shared among some Western experts and even U.S. officials.<sup>60</sup>

Vladimir Rybachenkov, former arms control adviser at the Russian Embassy in the U.S. and nuclear weapons expert, also gave a positive assessment to the Nunn-Lugar program stating that the Nunn-Lugar program played an important role in ensuring global security, contributing to the destruction of chemical weapons in Russia, waste disposal, and increasing nuclear security of nuclear materials. With its help, nuclear warheads were removed from Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan. 'It is clear that if there had been no American help, this process could have dragged on for a long time and would have been associated with significant risk'.

Mr. Rybachenkov named several important projects that were completed under the umbrella of the Nunn-Lugar program:

A major project is the construction of a repository of fissile materials near Chelyabinsk. Now this storage facility is already filling up, a certain amount of plutonium is already accumulated there, and without it [the storage facility] adequate conditions for the protection of plutonium would not have been provided. Now this storage facility, which meets the highest standards of international nuclear security, exists, and \$ 400 to 500 million was spent on this project. Another example is the creation of charging capacities for reactors in Tomsk and Krasnoyarsk.

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<sup>59</sup> Buzhinskiy, E. (2014) 'Lessons from Nunn-Lugar and the Global Partnership,' Security Index, #108.

<sup>60</sup> Horner, D.; Collina, T.Z. (2013) 'Nunn-Lugar Program Scaled Back,' Arms Control Today, pp. 33-34.



These examples show that the program played a substantial role. But, as the expert notes, the Americans had their interest in providing assistance under the Nunn-Lugar program. 'Through this program, they solved their security issues and ensured the necessary pace of implementation of the START-1 agreement,' – Rybachenkov believes.<sup>61</sup>

Former U.S. Ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency Laura Holgate described the U.S.-Russian cooperation under the Nunn-Lugar program in the following way: '[It was] good work that we were doing there, that had matured significantly from being a desperation-based relationship to one of the peers and respected colleagues, who were sharing information, ideas, techniques, technologies and best practice on a peer to peer basis'.

Ms. Holgate gave a positive assessment to the potential to continue U.S.-Russian cooperation, stating that

We are still finding ways to work together in third countries to address the challenge of nuclear material security – in Central Asia, Eastern Europe, some other countries where Russia had provided material or where Russia has technology and equipment that is suited to managing those concerns. There is more to do in that respect that I hope we can continue to work appropriately on it. But if you take the capital letters off Cooperative Threat Reduction and treat them as three words and a concept, I think it is far from history, it's our future, and it is embedded in a lot of things that we do.<sup>62</sup>

As could be seen from the case of the Nunn-Lugar assistance program, its success was primarily imbedded in the regular interactions of people involved in the program at all political levels. Transparency, ability to discuss issues openly and timely and a common strive to compromise to achieve shared interest for the mutual benefit that is what made the CTR program possible and helped to overcome the Cold War spirit of rivalry and mistrust.

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<sup>61</sup> 'Russia and the USA in the Labyrinths of WMD Nonproliferation and Physical Nuclear Security' (2014) Security Index, Vol. 20, p. 90.

<sup>62</sup> Zolotov, A. (2016) 'U.S. and Russia share many of the same nuclear non-proliferation goals. Russia Direct portal. <https://www.russia-direct.org/qa/us-and-russia-share-many-same-nuclear-non-proliferation-goals> (27 May, 2021).

Nevertheless, in modern Russia the program is highly criticized. In 2012 Russian officials stated that the program contributed to leaks of secret information,<sup>63</sup> and in 2017 Vladimir Putin declared that 'The Nunn-Lugar program was de facto unilateral: "the United States were granted access to all Russian top-secret nuclear facilities, but they allowed our specialists to visit their facilities a little and reluctantly"''.<sup>64</sup> Moreover, the issue of leakage of confidential but not secret information was evident even in 1995: 'During our meetings with Americans in IPPE (Institute of Physics and Power Engineering of Russia) we shared detailed confidential information with them... And suddenly these Americans started to spread acquired information on some conferences'.<sup>65</sup>

## Yeltsin-Clinton Dialogue on NPT Extension

The issue of NPT was not a frequent item on the presidential agenda and they only discussed it in terms of new members joining the treaty. The collapse of the USSR and the emergence of new 'nuclear powers,' though temporary, as well as Iran, Iraq, and North Korea nuclear programs were among the major threats to the NPT that the two leaders discussed.

It was during Yeltsin and Clinton presidencies that the NPT Review Conference on the treaty extension of 1995 took place. This issue was rather problematic, as not all the member-states, especially non-nuclear-weapon ones, were satisfied with the treaty implementation. They expressed their concerns the following way:

Before defining the period of extension, nuclear powers should fulfill their part of the deal, namely take some measures to limit and reduce their nuclear arsenals and provide

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<sup>63</sup> Chernenko, E., Safronov, I., Russia intends to continue to dispose nuclear weapons by its own. *Kommersant*, №190, 2012. p. 7, available at <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2041015> (27 May, 2021).

<sup>64</sup> Felgenhauer, P. (2017) 'Humiliated and Disarmed: How Russia and America Really Eliminated Post-Cold War Surplus Arsenals,' *Novayagazeta*, №118, available at <https://novayagazeta.ru/articles/2017/10/21/74283-unizhennye-i-razoruzhennye> (27 May, 2021).

<sup>65</sup> Murogov, V. (1995) 'Nuclear energy for Russia is the only way to stop being a raw material appendage,' *Yaderny Control*, № 8, p. 9, available at <https://www.pir-center.org/media/content/files/9/1346411220.pdf> (27 May, 2021).

security safeguards to non-nuclear powers... Moreover, they have been insisting on considerable reductions of nuclear arsenals not only by Russia and the U.S., but by all nuclear powers.<sup>66</sup>

The issue of Soviet nuclear weapons removal from the Ukrainian territory and Ukraine's participation were touched upon. The problem of Ukraine's accession to the treaty stalled other non-proliferation processes, including arms reduction between Russia and the USA under the START-1. As it was mentioned before, the two parties had similar viewpoints in this regard: *'[Bill Clinton] I would also like to work closely with you to resolve differences on Ukraine's ratification of START I and the NPT so that we can make progress on START II'*.<sup>67</sup>

Clinton and Yeltsin had a common stance on the NPT extension. Within the framework of the DPRK issue discussion, both leaders favored the indefinite extension of the NPT. *'[Bill Clinton] Things are tense with North Korea. We question whether they will let inspectors in and join the NPT'. '[Boris Yeltsin] The NPT treaty ends in 1995. We favor an indefinite duration'. '[Bill Clinton] We do too'*.<sup>68</sup> By the time when the 1995 NPT Review Conference was convened, many related problems had been resolved. Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Belarus and South Africa forswore the status of nuclear states, Iraq was prevented from acquiring nuclear weapons and the DPRK nuclear program was curbed. 'The indefinite extension of the NPT in May, 1995 was a good example of Russia-U.S. joint efforts to bolster the international nonproliferation regime'.<sup>69</sup>

On balance, both the U.S. and Russia advocated the longest possible prolongation period (preferably indefinite), which they perceived as a pillar of the nuclear nonproliferation regime. The convergence of views allowed for impeding nuclear proliferation by joint

<sup>66</sup> Timerbaev, R. (1995) 'The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty: for Russia and the world it must be preserved for a long time,' *Yaderny Kontrol*, № 1, p. 4, available at <https://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/9/13464073490.pdf> (27 May, 2021).

<sup>67</sup> Memcom with President Boris Yeltsin of Russia (1993) Memorandum Conversation, Clinton Library Photocopy, The White House, Washington.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> Orlov, V.; Timerbaev, R.; Khlopkov, A. (2001) *Issues of nuclear nonproliferation in Russian-American Relations: history, possibilities and further cooperation perspectives*, PIR Center, Moscow, p. 178, available at <https://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/9/13464044500.pdf> (27 May, 2021).

efforts: some states were persuaded to keep the non-nuclear status and join the 'non-nuclear club,' while others were made to forgo their nuclear aspirations.

## Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty

The Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) was adopted by the General Assembly on September 10, 1996 and opened for signature on September 24, 1996. This treaty as well as the NPT and the PTBT (Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty) was an integral part of the nonproliferation regime. The prohibition of nuclear tests itself was an effective erasure to strengthen the regime. In fact, the CTBT complemented the NPT and further developed the provisions of the PTBT. The CTBT issue was of particular relevance ahead of the 1995 NPT Review Conference. Under the CTBT, each State Party undertook not to carry out any nuclear weapon test explosion or any other nuclear explosion, and to prohibit and prevent any such nuclear explosion at any place under its jurisdiction or control. Each State Party furthermore undertook to refrain from causing, encouraging, or in any way participating in the carrying out of any nuclear weapon test explosion or any other nuclear explosion.<sup>70</sup>

Archive materials show that Clinton and Yeltsin had a common understanding of how to tackle the CTBT issue. Negotiations on the CTBT were dynamic and efficient, to some extent due to presidents' support of the treaty. For instance, on April 4, 1993 the presidents appreciated the convergence of views on the issue. *'[Bill Clinton] Why don't we agree that we'll set in motion comprehensive test ban negotiations at the earliest possible time?'. 'Boris Yeltsin] Yes, France has already agreed. Only the UK and China are left. We don't want nuclear potential to spread'.*<sup>71</sup> The accession of all nuclear states was also discussed. If only talks between the presidents were taken into account, the CTBT prospects seemed rather optimistic. *'[Bill Clinton] I am pleased that we apparently have your support on nuclear testing and a move toward a Comprehensive Test Ban treaty.*

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<sup>70</sup> The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), Text of the treaty, available at <http://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/9/13464044500.pdf> (27 May, 2021).

<sup>71</sup> Meeting with Russian President Boris Yeltsin on Security Issues (1993) Memorandum of Conversation, Clinton Library Photocopy, The White House, Washington.

*I thank you for your leadership on this*'.<sup>72</sup> Mutual understanding was enhanced during the talks between the presidents ahead of the 1996 Moscow Nuclear Safety and Security Summit.

[Bill Clinton] Let me say also that I am looking forward to the nuclear summit and to coming to Moscow. I hope it will be possible for you to ratify START II. It would be a momentous event if we could exchange instruments on START II; it would add meaning to the nuclear summit. It would also be useful for progress on CTBT and other agenda items. [Boris Yeltsin] As for CTBT, I am prepared to sign any document at any time and at any place.<sup>73</sup> [Boris Yeltsin] we firmly believe that we have to ban nuclear testing forever, that is, any testing of nuclear weapons. [Bill Clinton] I completely agree. That will be a centerpiece of a successful summit – and it significantly increases the chances of us getting a CTBT later this year.<sup>74</sup>

It is evident from the dialogue that expectations of both sides were very positive. Similarities in U.S.-Russia positions were believed to let the CTBT happen. 'The United States' position was crucial for the CTBT entry into force. Bill Clinton's administration supported the treaty and signed it'.<sup>75</sup>

Russia was actively engaged in drawing nuclear states into the treaty. As it is evident from the negotiations, it was Russia that had persuaded China to sign the CTBT. '*[Boris Yeltsin] I'd like to share my impressions of China. the second question was Chinese participation in the CTBT. We discussed the subject with him [Jiang Zemin] and he said Beijing would take part in the CTBT*'.<sup>76</sup> The presidents

<sup>72</sup> Memcom with President Boris Yeltsin of Russia (1993) Memorandum Conversation, Clinton Library Photocopy, The White House, Washington.

<sup>73</sup> The President's Discussion with President Yeltsin on the Russian Election, Bilateral Relations, START II Ratification and NATO (1996) Memorandum of Telephone Conversation, Clinton Library Photocopy, The White House, Washington.

<sup>74</sup> President's Discussion with Yeltsin on Chernobyl, CTBT, ABM/TDM, CFE, G-7 vs G-8 (1996) Memorandum of Telephone Conversation, Clinton Library Photocopy, The White House, Washington.

<sup>75</sup> Antonov. A. (2012) Arms Control: history, current status, perspectives, Political Encyclopedia Publishers (ROSSPEN), PIR Center, Moscow, p. 245.

<sup>76</sup> Telephone Conversation with Russian President Yeltsin on CTBT, Chechnya, Economics, CFE and Russian Elections (1996) Memorandum of Telephone Conversation, Clinton Library Photocopy, The White House, Washington.

also discussed the Indo-Pakistani issue, with India and Pakistan joining the treaty viewed as a means of easing tensions between the two countries.

Russia signed the CTBT on September 26, 1996. One of the major preconditions of Russia's accession to the treaty was its right to withdraw from the treaty in case the supreme interests are in jeopardy. It took Russia 4 years to ratify the CTBT. Despite Clinton's support for the CTBT, the USA never ratified it. 'Advocates of ratification argued that the CTBT would strengthen the nuclear nonproliferation regime. The opponents claimed that the nuclear explosions monitoring system would imply a threat of external surveillance of the U.S. nuclear facilities. The Republican majority in Congress proved sensitive to sceptics' arguments. The U.S. Senate refused to ratify the treaty on October 13, 1999'.<sup>77</sup> Other sources suggest that 'the formal reason for the CTBT being rejected by the Senate was the flawed verification measures, which couldn't guarantee no tests carried out by other states'.<sup>78</sup> Even after the treaty wasn't approved by the Senate, Clinton still cherished hopes of the U.S. accession to the CTBT. *'[Bill Clinton] Maybe I can get the Congress to agree still. They kept the Treaty even after they rejected it. So perhaps, there is still a chance'*.<sup>79</sup> Oddly enough, the active bilateral cooperation on the CTBT entry into force didn't break the stalemate: as of now three nuclear powers have ratified it (Russia, Great Britain and France). The U.S., China, Israel, and Iran are among those who signed but didn't ratify the treaty, while India, the DPRK, Pakistan and Egypt refused to sign the CTBT.

## Conclusions

The U.S.-Russian dialogue on arms control, disarmament, and nuclear nonproliferation under Clinton-Yeltsin administrations was continuous and significant. It goes without saying that the U.S. and Russia had different positions and priorities on the issues, there was

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<sup>77</sup> Fenenko, A. (2009) Nuclear tests in the strategic stability system, International Affairs, №12, available at <https://interaffairs.ru/jauthor/material/161> (27 May, 2021).

<sup>78</sup> Antonov, A. (2012) Arms Control: history, current status, perspectives, Political Encyclopedia Publishers (ROSSPEN), PIR Center, Moscow, p. 245.

<sup>79</sup> Meeting with Russian President Yeltsin on November 19, 1999. Memorandum of Conversation. Clinton Library Photocopy. The White House, Washington.

also a common ground. The dialogue between presidents Boris Yeltsin and Bill Clinton is very striking for the following reasons:

First of all, the friendliness in presidents' relations. Both presidents often highlighted that they were 'friends' and that they should maintain friendly relationship and resolve issues jointly. Boris Yeltsin's phrases like 'I missed you,' 'I haven't heard from you for a long time' or 'I haven't seen you for ages' were a typical starter of the conversation. The close, confiding relationship between the two presidents allowed to soften the disagreements on the working level. At the same time such openness may be interpreted as excessive or even threatening the Russian national security interests. A former Russian government official described his flexibility the following way: 'We negotiated and worked on one thing, were preparing for singing, but [Yeltsin] ended up signing a completely different stuff'.

Secondly, these memorandums reveal that Boris Yeltsin had to maneuver between the political interests of the Russian Federation and proposed American economic aid. Many talks started or finished with negotiations on economic aid to Russia, or with American assistance in receiving benefits and credits from the IMF.

Thirdly, negotiations and additional resources reveal, that there was little understanding between different Russian enterprises, facilities and departments on related issues. The lack of understanding was creating obstacles to implement agreements made between states, affecting further political considerations decisions.<sup>80, 81</sup>

Nevertheless, despite Bill Clinton's influence on Yeltsin's decision-making and the divergence of political interest on 'Iranian issue,' the U.S.-Russian cooperation in that period brought indisputable benefits for Russia, especially the HEU-LEU agreement, which helped the Russian Atomic Energy sphere to survive 'the hungry years'.<sup>82</sup> In general, the U.S.-Russian cooperation on for-

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<sup>80</sup> Adamov, E. (2009) 'Not thankfully, but in spite of...,' Moscow, Aktiv, p. 380, available at [http://elib.biblioatom.ru/text/adamov\\_ne-blagodarya-a-vopreki\\_2009/go,0/](http://elib.biblioatom.ru/text/adamov_ne-blagodarya-a-vopreki_2009/go,0/) (27 May, 2021).

<sup>81</sup> Memorandums of phone conversations and personal meetings between Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin. Clinton Library Photocopies. The White House, Washington.

<sup>82</sup> Adamov, E. (2009) 'Not thankfully, but in spite of....,' Moscow, Aktiv, p. 380, available at [http://elib.biblioatom.ru/text/adamov\\_ne-blagodarya-a-vopreki\\_2009/go,0/](http://elib.biblioatom.ru/text/adamov_ne-blagodarya-a-vopreki_2009/go,0/) (27 May, 2021).

eign policy and economics served Russia's interests, but due to the weakened economy of Russia after the collapse of the USSR, Russia de facto didn't enjoy the position of strength, especially in 'Iranian issue'. The U.S. side savvily used the economic crisis in Russia to advance its geopolitical agenda, press Russia for concessions. It is also worth mentioning, that unlike the modern United States taking more 'take it or leave it' stance, the U.S. under Clinton Administration was more inclined to discuss issues and to elaborate joint solutions.



## CHAPTER 16

# DIALOGUE ON NUCLEAR ISSUES: ROAD TO FAILED PARTNERSHIP

*Anastasia Ponamareva,  
Sergey Ponamarev*

The world-renown classic of the American literature Gore Vidal once sarcastically noted: 'The American democracy is a two-winged eagle, and its both wings are right'. Is the same true about U.S. nuclear nonproliferation and arms control policy? Would an expert gain much from observing the sequence of Republican and Democratic Administrations to forecast U.S. actions in the nonproliferation and disarmament fields? Does any administration follow a certain inherited 'operational code'?<sup>1</sup>

The chapter explores the consistency of the U.S. policy in the field of nuclear disarmament, nonproliferation, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy under different administrations. The authors believe there exists an 'operational code' in U.S. nuclear decision-making, embodied by career bureaucrats in the agencies in charge of U.S. nuclear policy. *De facto*, notwithstanding political appointments of the high-level leadership, senior-level officials with significant expertise retain their offices and continue to influence policymaking. U.S. nuclear policy is tightly intertwined with the idea of U.S. global dominance and aspiration for complete invulnerability, lying at the core of Washington's strategy for national security. The operational code implies using the tactics of engaging Moscow in the strategic dialogue on nuclear arms control supported by a 'success' on the track of peaceful use of nuclear energy and nonproliferation.

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<sup>1</sup> Leites N. *The Operational Code of the Politburo*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Rand Corp. Research Study, 1951.

## United States in Pursuit of Absolute Security

In discussions on the current challenges to nuclear arms control and nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) experts usually characterize these regimes as suitable to the long-gone system of bipolar world order. Accordingly, it is worth analyzing basic narratives on the current world order and prospects for its further evolution, as they lay down a framework for Russia-U.S. polemics on the essence of nuclear deterrence and international security.

In the period of bipolarity, the nuclear parity of the two superpowers, or as Winston Churchill called it 'the balance of fear' served as the stabilizing factor in the international relations even taking into account the never-ending arms race and numerous peripheral conflicts. The collapse of the USSR gave rise to a new geopolitical reality. According to American neoconservatives, the world upon the end of the Cold War was defined as 'unipolar'. The most vivid and figurative approach was formulated in the articles by Charles Krauthammer, a well-known American political observer and Pulitzer prize winner who coined the term 'unipolar moment'. In the same-name article published in 1991<sup>2</sup> he stated that the world had entered the period of superiority of the United States as the sole superpower. According to the author, 'military, diplomatic, political and economic assets' constitute the foundation of the American superiority based on which the United States gained the power to play the decisive vote 'at any point of the globe, wherever it wishes to interfere'.<sup>3</sup>

According to Krauthammer, three basic aspects of the world order that took shape in the 1990-s were its unipolar nature, revival of the American isolationism and WMD proliferation. The author considered the latter as a more serious threat even compared to the revival of the aggressive nationalist power, so-called 'Weimarer' Russia, in the post-Communist space. The reason for that was the possibility of WMD falling into possession of the so-called 'weapon states,' particularly Iraq, DPRK and Libya, as well as of the countries potentially close to being a 'weapon state' — Argentina, Pakistan, Iran and South African Republic. The researcher proposed the following recipes to counter the above-mentioned threat.

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<sup>2</sup> Krauthammer, Charles (1991) 'The unipolar moment,' *Foreign affairs*, N.Y., Vol. 70, N 1., P. 23 – 33.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* P. 24.

First, to develop a regime similar to the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls (COCOM). Then place the countries that gained access to WMD in circumvention of the regime under external control with subsequent disarmament of these countries. The final step should be to develop a missile and air defense system to protect the Western countries against the 'weapon states'.<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless, in the early 1990-s Krauthammer who called the period of the United States' dominance a 'moment', stated that it would be replaced by multipolarity with new regional centers emerging in the world arena.<sup>5</sup> Assumingly, the transition to multipolarity was to occur a decade later.<sup>6</sup> However, Krauthammer and the majority of American neoconservatives believed that chaos, not a stable multipolar world, was the alternative to the unipolar world order headed by the United States. In this context they viewed the Messianic role of the United States as the sole country setting the rules for the future world order and ensuring a smooth transition to it by other states.

Charles Krauthammer was confident that the challenge to unipolarity originates not in an external medium but from the United States itself. The 9/11 attack was the litmus test demonstrating the asymmetry of power between the United States and others, particularly Russia and China. First, the attacks provoked Washington to demonstrate a qualitative leap in the development of the American military might. Second, the terrorist attacks gave birth to a new form of U.S. power — the ability to recuperate, which transformed the substance of the American sense of invincibility: the perception of its own impermeability to external strikes was replaced by the confidence in its ability to maintain resilience against such strikes. Third, 9/11 resulted in the consolidation of great powers around the United States: Moscow and Beijing also supported Washington.<sup>7</sup> The alignment of neutral states became an additional evidence of the historically unprecedented nature of the American unipolarity. Yet the Americans wasted the trust of the international community that they enjoyed following the tragic events. Implementation of the 'with-us-or-against-us' ultimatum; pre-emptive attack and regime

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<sup>4</sup> Krauthammer, Charles (1991) 'The unipolar moment,' Foreign affairs, N.Y., Vol. 70, N 1. P. 32.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. P. 23–24.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. P. 26.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. P. 7–8.

change that became a marker of the 'unprecedented' U.S. freedom to act and establish a new American unilateralism had simultaneously provoked the crisis of unipolarity.<sup>8</sup>

The assault of President George Bush-Jr. against multilateralism caused discontent among other members of the world community. Similar processes triggered the formation of the multi-order, per Trine Flockhart, system.<sup>9</sup> But unlike the multipolar system that existed from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century till the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when all the states-poles shared the European identity, today the international community lacks common identity. No similarity is observed between these orders.

In this context we could agree with Flockhart's conclusion on the need to create new 'primary and secondary institutions' for management of complicated and intermingled interstate relations.<sup>10</sup> Such work implies rejecting universalization of liberal values and the 'establishment of new forms of relations along the fracture lines on a more equal basis'.<sup>11</sup> The readiness to work in a *partner* mode becomes a prerequisite for a successful response to multiple modern challenges, including such sensitive areas as nonproliferation and arms control. Yet the partners should recognize common interests which would outweigh the contradictions existing between them. Unless this condition is met, the international regimes and organizations become the instruments for implementing foreign policy by the most powerful actor and a forum for propaganda battles.

It is also worth noting that in the period of 'unipolarity' the United States stagnated in its international and legal nihilism, as well as lost its readiness and skills to listen to its partners and reach agreement with them. Although the situation in the world arena is changing and new power centers are being formed, the balance of the key powers' military potentials is to a lesser extent subject to transformation, which contributes to preserving the inertial nature of thinking by the military and political elite. Therefore, one could hardly expect a more measured and nuance-oriented approach from those who still consider themselves as the most powerful player in the Thucydides

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid. P. 8.

<sup>9</sup> Flockhart, Trine (2016) 'The coming multi-order world,' Contemporary security policy, Maastricht, Vol. 37, N. 1, P. 3 – 30.

<sup>10</sup> Flockhart, Trine (2016) 'The coming multi-order world,' Contemporary security policy, Maastricht, Vol. 37, N. 1, P. 3 – 30.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. P. 23 – 25.

scenario 'the strong one does what it can, and the weak one tolerates what it should tolerate'. Washington establishment's long-term orientation and goals – the attainment of superiority, the so-called 'threat-free status' and 'absolute security' in the framework of mutual deterrence of Russia – remain *a priori* unchanged.

As Alexey Miller and Fyodor Lukyanov justifiably noted:

The world events clearly demonstrate: the 'classic' problems that were not resolved at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – the power disbalance, absence of the undisputed international hierarchy, erosion of the commonly accepted rules, the world order that failed to form – constantly remind us of their existence, not allowing to consolidate the efforts to address new challenges. Without addressing them, the leading players would once and again return to the same models of behavior.<sup>12</sup>

## The Law of Force or the Force of Law?

The nonproliferation regime is an indispensable component of the global security system. The initial aim of the nonproliferation regime was to provide for efficient coexistence of the two poles of the world policy in the conditions of nuclear deterrence. Restructuring of the international relations system and subsequently of the global security system upon the end of the Cold War, the emergence of at first the sole superpower – the United States – and in the years to follow the crisis of unipolarity and active development of the so-called 'power centers' in the world regions resulted in the loosening of the mechanisms ensuring the international security.

The nonproliferation regime is facing a serious crisis caused primarily by the U.S. desire to maintain its exclusivity and unipolar world order which results in the aggravation of a whole set of geopolitical challenges and threats, which the existing international regimes fail to cope with. Washington's adaptation of the institutions and agreements to its own national interests leads to the weakening of their productivity, and hence loss of the authority among its members. The international community is pushed to the triumph of 'the

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<sup>12</sup> Miller, Alexey; Lukyanov, Fyodor (2016) 'Remoteness instead of confrontation: post-Europe Russia in search for self-sufficiency,' SVOP, Moscow, P. 15, available at [http://svop.ru/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/miller\\_lukyanov\\_rus.pdf](http://svop.ru/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/miller_lukyanov_rus.pdf) (17 May, 2021).

law of force against the force of law'. Under such conditions, it seems obvious that Russia and the United States, two of the three depositaries of the NPT, bear special responsibility for the implementation of the Treaty, and – what is especially pressing in the modern conditions – for its preservation.

The readiness of Moscow and Washington to begin negotiations on arms control is *inter alia* determined by their common and undisputable interest in nonproliferation and their obligations under Article VI of the NPT. Yet one might have an impression that the U.S. military and political elite feels no such responsibility: a strive to adapt all the existing security mechanisms to their own interests for the sake of attaining the U.S. absolute exclusivity 'blocks the vision' of Washington's establishment.

Regrettably, the authors are unanimous with Andrey Kortunov in witnessing a mirror-like embodiment of the well-known formula that 'politics is war continued by other means'. Today's crisis of arms control is partially predetermined by the victory of the paradigm of war over the paradigm of diplomacy. 'A traditional goal of foreign policy is addressing the international issues. Maybe not ideally, maybe temporarily and maybe not absolutely just, – points Kortunov. – The goal of a war is to inflict the maximum damage to the adversary. We also witness that the military consciousness starts replacing the political one'.<sup>13</sup> It is manifested by the establishment of the black-and-white picture of the world and intolerance to dissidence.

## Same Game, Different Players – Same Song, Different Chorus

The most striking example of U.S. nuclear policy continuity is the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), the United States' fundamental doctrinal document in the sphere of nuclear policy, including the construction of the national forces of strategic containment. The 2010 NPR defined the goals and objectives for the development of SNF within the New START framework. In its turn, the 2018 NPR was supposed to be a reflection of a seemingly different situation in the strategic dialogue between Russia and the United States –

<sup>13</sup> Kortunov, Andrey (2018) 'Politics as continuation of war using other means?' RIAC, M., available at <https://russiancouncil.ru/analytics-and-comments/analytics/politika-kak-prodolzhenie-voyny-inymi-sredstvami/> (17 May, 2021).

implementation by both parties of the New START in absence of a constructive dialogue on its replacement as well as Washington's 'verdict' on the collapse of INF Treaty.

If one follows the logical pattern of the distinctive approach of each Republican and/or Democratic Administration to the bilateral relations with Russia, such different external conditions of planning the nuclear defense construction, as well as the fact that Donald Trump replaced Barack Obama in White House, should have radically changed the fundamental principles of the Nuclear Posture Review. But in reality, the foreword of the 2018 NPR signed by the then Secretary of Defense James Mattis notes:

This review confirms the findings of previous NPRs that the nuclear triad ... is the most cost-effective and strategically sound means of ensuring strategic deterrence. The triad provides the President flexibility while guarding against technological surprise or sudden changes in the geopolitical environment. To remain effective, however, we must recapitalize our Cold War legacy nuclear forces. By the time we complete the necessary modernization of these forces, they will have served decades beyond their initial life expectancy. This review affirms the modernization programs initiated during the previous Administration to replace our nuclear ballistic missile submarines, strategic bombers, nuclear air-launched cruise missiles, ICBMs, and associated command and control.<sup>14</sup>

This is not a reference to the 'nuclear-free world' slogans by the Barack Obama Administration, but to the text and specific provisions of the 2010 NPR. For example, in the similar foreword dated April 6, 2010, Robert Gates, the predecessor of General Mattis, highlights:

As long as nuclear weapons exist, the United States must sustain a safe, secure and effective nuclear arsenal — to maintain strategic stability with other major nuclear powers, deter potential adversaries, and reassure our allies and partners of our security commitments to them. The NPR calls for mak-

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<sup>14</sup> Nuclear Posture Review-2018. P. II.

ing much-needed investments to rebuild America's aging nuclear infrastructure..., represent a credible modernization plan necessary to sustain the nuclear infrastructure and support our nation's deterrent.<sup>15</sup>

Therefore, the direct continuity of the 2018 Trump's NPR with the Obama administration's 2010 NPR testifies that, despite the changes in tactics and methods of implementing the strategic course of nuclear policy due to the external conditions,

It could be assumed that in reality U.S. government officials (Department of Defense, Department of Energy, State Department, special services) who prepare the doctrinal concepts and formulate Washington's policy in the nuclear sphere are not dependent on the fluctuations of the tactical course related to the emergence of new leaders, but rather use them to level the impact of the restrictions incorporated in agreements of any kind. Under the pretext of changing administrations and 'transformations in the external political conditions', the United States either does not bring to the logical completion its own initiatives involving new players (as was the case with CTBT) or disavows its previously made commitments. There are quite a few examples to that. The most blatant was the U.S. withdrawal from the 1972 ABM Treaty which was the cornerstone of strategic security, and INF Treaty.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Nuclear Posture Review-2010 P.I. The relevant sections of the document devoted to ensuring strategic deterrence, strengthening regional deterrence and support of nuclear arsenal directly referred to mandatory preservation of the triad structure of U.S. SNF, implementing a long-term program for creating a new nuclear powered submarine to replace the Ohio class submarines, LEP programs for W-76 nuclear warheads and B-61 bombs (and initiating a similar one for W-78 warhead), maintaining the capabilities of advanced deployment of F-35 fighters and B-2 and B-52H bombers equipped with B-61 bombs, allocating the funds to construct the Uranium Processing Facility at the Y-12 Plant in Oak Ridge and the Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Replacement Project at Los Alamos Laboratory.

<sup>16</sup> The agreements between Moscow and Washington in the field of arms control and reduction of strategic potentials established the long-term qualitative and quantitative limitations on maintaining and modernizing strategic nuclear forces (SNF), systems for their management and concepts of combat application. The decisive role is played by the fashion in which the transparency and verification procedures are organized, and the offensive and defensive systems are interlinked (a propos – the preamble of new START fixes this interrelationship, traditionally ignored by the U.S. partners).



### **U.S. Nuclear Posture Reviews on Russia**

“Adjusting U.S. immediate nuclear force requirements in recognition of the changed relationship with Russia is a critical step away from the Cold War policy of mutual vulnerability and toward more cooperative relations.” (Nuclear Posture Review 2002).

“In the event that U.S. relations with Russia significantly worsen in the future, the U.S. may need to revise its nuclear force levels and posture.” (Nuclear Posture Review 2002).

“While policy differences continue to arise between the two countries and Russia continues to modernize its still-formidable nuclear forces, Russia and the United States are no longer adversaries, and prospects for military confrontation have declined dramatically. The two have increased their cooperation in areas of shared interest, including preventing nuclear terrorism and nuclear proliferation.” (Nuclear Posture Review 2010).

“Russia is not an enemy, and is increasingly a partner in confronting proliferation and other emerging threats.” (Nuclear Posture Review 2010).

“The United States and Russia have in the past maintained strategic dialogues to manage nuclear competition and nuclear risks. Given Russian actions, including its occupation of Crimea, this constructive engagement has declined substantially.” (Nuclear Posture Review 2018).

“In this regard, Russia continues to violate a series of arms control treaties and commitments. In the nuclear context, the most significant Russian violation involves a system banned by the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty. In a broader context, Russia is either rejecting or avoiding its obligations and commitments under numerous agreements, and has rebuffed U.S. efforts to follow the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) with another round of negotiated reductions and to pursue reductions in non-strategic nuclear forces.” (Nuclear Posture Review 2018).

### **Gain an *Inch* and Ask for a *Yard***

If one chronologically compares the periods of active Russia-U.S. negotiation processes in the sphere of strategic stability and arms control on the one hand, and the dates of launching joint initiatives and concluding agreements on nonproliferation and peaceful

use of nuclear energy on the other hand, a certain regularity could be observed. Firstly, the United States uses the tactics of creating a positive atmosphere in bilateral relations, engaging Russia under the slogan of combatting nuclear proliferation and WMD-terrorism, or boosting international cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Secondly, they are trying to use the positive climate in the bilateral relations to start discussing initiatives on limitation and reduction of nuclear weapons with the ultimate goal being to get access to Russian nuclear weapons complex objects.

In early 2004, U.S. President George Bush proposed a moratorium on the activities related to creating the key stages of the nuclear fuel cycle (NFC) in the third world countries (e.g. enrichment of uranium for nuclear fuel production, reprocessing of irradiated nuclear fuel to extract plutonium). It was suggested that exporting countries should not transfer such technologies to these countries, although the IAEA safeguards were applied in full scope to all their nuclear activities. Instead it was recommended that joint production of relevant nuclear materials should be organized in industrially developed countries under international control that would simultaneously guarantee unrestricted, unobstructed supply of the products. The negative reaction of importing countries to such proposal was quite grounded because they justifiably regarded this proposal not only as a violation of their rights under Article IV of the NPT, but also as the U.S. desire to ensure its military, political and economic interests.

In late 2005, the United States launched a new initiative that developed the idea of the previous one – the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP). Washington declared the following GNEP ideas: to facilitate the economic growth of exporting countries, to ameliorate the environment, to introduce new technologies for reprocessing nuclear fuel which pose no threat to nonproliferation, and to produce additional energy while reducing waste generation. It was assumed that the partner states with advanced NFC capabilities would provide the services related to reactor operation to the countries wishing to develop their own nuclear power, and the latter would not need to create their own NFC. Meanwhile, it was obvious to the Russian experts at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rosatom, and other interested agencies that the U.S. ultimate goal was to establish kind of a 'global nuclear cartel' in which the United States would play the leading role. Contrary to the NPT principles, such cartel would limit

the possibility to pursue independent export policy for many countries exporting nuclear technologies and services.<sup>17</sup>

At the same time Russia's participation in the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP) was preconditioned by its support for multilateral approaches to NFC, and also by the fact that it was positioned as one of the forms of implementing the Joint statement by the Presidents of Russia and the United States on nonproliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, made at the G8 summit in Saint-Petersburg in 2006. However, the United States started orienting the Partnership at working out and defining such norms and criteria for international cooperation at the NFC market that would be beneficial to Western companies (AREVA, URENCO, GE, Toshiba, Westinghouse). For that purpose, active efforts were taken to institutionalize GNEP mechanisms into a new international organization. Meanwhile its sphere of interests incorporated various issues falling under the IAEA competence. Additionally, Washington attempted to bring under the GNEP 'umbrella' other international projects in the field of NFC, particularly the IUEC which would disempower the Center and lead to the reorientation of its goals and objectives.

Russia is one of the major suppliers in the global NFC market. Russia's cooperation with the leading countries is preconditioned by a set of bilateral agreements, treaties and statements. Accordingly, the Russian position at that period reflected its commitment to multilateral approaches to NFC as one of the crucial and most prospective mechanisms of nonproliferation that could allow anyone without exception to develop and use its own nuclear capacities, and at the same time not to depend on the world market situation, and not strive to create the closed NFC. In 2007, in the framework of such approach Russia and Kazakhstan established the International Uranium Enrichment Center (IUEC). The Center is open to membership by other states with no discriminatory conditions and aims at meeting the participants' demand for nuclear fuel. Belarus joined the Center in 2008, and serious interest was expressed by various industrially developed countries in all regions of the world. The same year the head of the Rosatom State Atomic Energy Corporation Sergey Kiriyenko delivered a statement at the IAEA General Conference in which he announced the Russian initiative on creating a stockpile of LEU at the IUEC to ensure guaranteed deliveries to IAEA member-states in

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<sup>17</sup> Clause 3 Article II, Clause 2, Article IV.

case they have no opportunity to purchase fuel at the world market, whatever the reason for that failure is (e.g. for political reasons).

The Bush Republican Administration's approaches to the non-proliferation issues were also manifested at the 2005 NPT Review Conference. The Americans focused on the nonproliferation compliance by non-nuclear states and elaboration of the international mechanisms to restrict the access of the 'unreliable' (i.e. unfriendly to the United States) countries to the global market of nuclear materials and technologies. According to Washington, the countries that failed at any time to observe their nonproliferation commitments should not in future claim or aspire to preservation of unrestricted access to the benefits of the 'peaceful atom'. The U.S. delegation also spoke in favor of universalizing the 1997 Additional Protocol to the Agreement on IAEA safeguards and promoting the norms according to which joining the AP should be considered as a mandatory condition when exporting nuclear materials and technologies.

At the same time the United States persistently denied the justified criticism for engaging in activities on new nuclear warheads development under the pretext that the relevant conceptual studies were part of a long-term plan of response to potential threats related to the unpredicted changes in the geopolitical situation, which, in view of the United States, would not lower the threshold for nuclear arms use. Naturally, the developing countries and the so-called 'nuclear radicals' considered such approach as one-sided because it was based on a demand for additional nonproliferation obligations and restrictions on their part with absence of the U.S. reasonable arguments regarding its activities in the nuclear sphere. The injustice was obvious to most participants of the 2005 NPT RevCon and largely resulted in growing contradictions in their attitudes. The Review Conference failed to adopt a substantial final document, which was considered by the international community as a fiasco and serious symptom of the general crisis of nonproliferation. It can be said that the 2005 NPT RevCon was the first 'ring bell' which is turning by the 10<sup>th</sup> NPT RevCon into an alarm bell warning of the regime stability in general.

At the same time, it was the United States who laid the foundation for changing the rules of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) that Russia had been long criticized for — primarily in relation to its cooperation with Iran. In early 2004, the U.S.-India negotiations resulted in the signing of the agreement on strategic partnership that

did not exclude transfer of American nuclear technologies to India. Meanwhile, Washington seemed to forget that the principle of comprehensive safeguards had been till recently the cornerstone of the U.S. export policy. Precisely from this position the United States had sharply criticized the Russia-India agreement on deliveries of uranium fuel pellets to the Indian Tarapur NPP in 2001 and 2003, as well as construction by Russia of new units at the Kudankulam NPP in 2002. Looking ahead, it should be noted that the 2004 U.S.-India agreement finally served a groundwork for introducing changes in the NSG Guiding Principles and in the long run lifting restrictions on cooperation with India (non-member of the NPT) in the nuclear sphere.

Pursuing mutual understanding with Russia on multilateral venues, the United States further proceeds to engaging Russia in bilateral formats of interaction on the matters that are of most interest for Washington.

Against the background of joint promotion of initiatives in the field of multilateral approaches to NFC, a new impetus was given to discussions on the need to conclude an agreement between Moscow and Washington on peaceful uses of nuclear energy – the so-called 123 Agreement. In the late 1990s – early 2000s, the Americans rigidly linked the conclusion of this agreement with Russia renouncing peaceful nuclear cooperation with Iran, particularly on the Bushehr NPP construction. For instance, in mid-November 1998 during the APEC summit in Kuala Lumpur U.S. Vice President Albert Gore told Russian Prime Minister Evgeny Primakov that Russia should choose its nuclear cooperation partners between Iran and the United States.<sup>18</sup>

Following a successful round of negotiations involving six international mediators and Iran on the situation around the Iranian nuclear program in 2006 in Vienna, the Americans ultimately entered the negotiations on 123 Agreement with Russia. The draft was prepared by early 2007, initialized in June of the same year, and signed by the Presidents in May 2008. However (allegedly due to a 'technical error' by the George Bush administration), it was submitted to Congress in such a manner that did not allow its ratification in accordance with the established procedure due to lack of session days. The Agreement was later recalled from the Congress in connection with the situation in Georgia in August 2008.

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<sup>18</sup> Cited by: Khlopkov, Anton (2011) 'Russia-U.S. 123 Agreement went into force: what could we wait for?', available at [www.cenuss-russia.org](http://www.cenuss-russia.org) (17 May, 2021).

The Obama administration's policy on the 123 Agreement with Russia was no different. The United States made it plain that 'ratification of the New START was a priority compared with the 123 Agreement, therefore the latter would be once again submitted to Congress no earlier than the completion of the New START talks and submission of the agreed treaty to the Senate'.<sup>19</sup> As a result, both agreements were submitted to the American legislative bodies simultaneously, with Senators John Kyl and John McCain taking efforts to 'bury' both documents.

Further, in furtherance of earlier agreements on peaceful uses of nuclear energy the U.S. side puts forward initiatives aimed at getting access to Russian nuclear weapons complex facilities and restricting their further development.

In 2010, Russia and the United States signed the second additional protocol to the 2000 Agreement on utilization of plutonium that entered in force in 2011. Adoption of this document was intended to give the 'green light' to the disposal program that had been agreed upon but could not start for technical reasons for a decade. Russia and the United States were to utilize 34 MT of the weapon grade material. However, the following development of the situation showed that the American side was initially not ready to fulfill its obligations. Again under the pretext of addressing the vital issue of consolidating the nonproliferation regime and fulfilling the disarmament obligations under Article VI of the NPT, the United States obtained Russia's consent to modify the design of the BN-800 fast reactor under construction (the reactor was put into operation in December 2015) to be further used for burning plutonium as a component of MOX-fuel.

The U.S. installation for irreversible burning of plutonium – the Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility – at the Savannah River site was never constructed. The announced reason for that was an extremely high cost of the project. The Americans attempted to propose to the Russian side an alternative – downblending and disposal of its own material; meanwhile such approach radically contradicted the spirit and letter of the initial agreement, leaving a possibility for its return into operation as part of the nuclear weapons production complex. As a result, while the United States failed to start fulfilling

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<sup>19</sup> Khlopkov, Anton (2011) 'Russia-U.S. 123 Agreement went into force: what could we wait for?', available at [www.cenoss-russia.org](http://www.cenoss-russia.org) (17 May, 2021).

its obligations, and in the context of the response to unilateral sanctions and unfriendly actions taken by Washington against Russia in 2015–2016, in October 2016 Moscow announced its suspension of the Agreement on plutonium utilization.

Another case in point is the development by the Barack Obama administration of the concept of international Nuclear Security Summits. The first one took place in Washington practically simultaneously with the start of the 'reset' epoch and entry in force of the New START in 2010. The diplomatic preparations for the event and work on draft resolutions and proposed initiatives that are often more important than protocol events, ran parallel to the last rounds of the negotiations on a new nuclear disarmament agreement. In such conditions Moscow was ready to respond to Barack Obama's appeal to intensify international efforts to strengthen nuclear security and the NPT regime in general.

At first the Summits that were convened every two years (a total of four summits were held) underlined the importance of international cooperation on peaceful use of nuclear energy as the global agenda issue. While discussing the advantages of peaceful atom during the Summit sessions, the leaders of the participating countries largely succeeded in leveling the consequences of the 'Fukushima syndrome' and restoring the tattered reputation of nuclear energy in public opinion. New sounding was given to the previously launched initiatives of multilateral approaches to NFC. Introduction of 'best practices' in the sphere of nuclear security and safety on the national level based on the Summits results was an unconditional priority for both exporting countries and those wishing to develop nuclear energy.

At the same time, in preparation for the Summits and during the sessions the Russian diplomats had to repeatedly 'purge' from the draft documents the American initiatives which were designed to obtain a prospective access to Russian nuclear facilities – primarily the nuclear weapons complex, to negatively evaluate nuclear security in Russia and its partnering countries (e.g. the NTI project on 'international index of nuclear security'), to intercept the IAEA functions on elaborating the relevant standards and recommendations through the U.S.-guided international NGOs (specifically, the World Institute for Nuclear Security – WINS established in Vienna 'at the IAEA'). Logically, the Summits finally became obsolete. Russia did not participate in the last Summit held in Berlin in 2016.

## Utilitarian Ethics in Action

Our hypothesis on Washington's solely utilitarian approach to the international mechanisms in the field of nuclear nonproliferation can be further supported by historic evidence. This approach serves a basis for a unified long-term strategy, independent of the changes in the White House, under which the United States creates the required conditions for deliberately pushing their partners to new negotiations, with the intention to revisit its obligations later in the future.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), a deal that was concluded with active participation of large U.S. interagency delegations on diplomatic settlement of the situation around the Iranian nuclear program, and subsequent Washington's withdrawal from the agreement is a case in point. Study of these complicated negotiations and U.S. approaches to the issue remain outside the scope of our analysis, therefore we focus on specific aspects that could verify the hypothesis.

In October 2013, Iran entered a new stage in the long history of diplomatic settlement of the situation around its nuclear program with the international mediators by expressing the clear position of the newly-elected President Hassan Rouhani — to find the points of compromise with the West, and make certain concessions to the U.S. and E3 demands aimed at both removing the international sanctions against Iran and validating the right to develop nuclear power<sup>20</sup>.

The participants achieved a breakthrough by the end of November of the same year, when an intermediate agreement was presented in Geneva: the Joint Plan of Action (JPOA) implied a certain softening of the sanctions in return for a number of restrictive obligations on Teheran's part regarding its nuclear program. Another twenty months of negotiations based on the 'step-by-step' approach adopted by the parties resulted in concluding on July 14, 2015 of what then was called a landmark agreement — the JCPOA. The final agreement provided for a complete removal of the international sanctions against Iran in return for the intrusive and verified restriction of its nuclear program.

Although the JCPOA negotiations were from time to time on the brink of collapse, for two years a constructive international cooperation on nonproliferation, peaceful use of nuclear energy and arms

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<sup>20</sup> See Chapter 6 for more details regarding JCPOA



control was once again considered as a trend. The long-awaited positive outcome of these talks succeeded in levelling the disappointment caused by a cynically obstructed NPT RevCon. The reason for the failure was a refusal by the United States to accept the final document under the pretext of disagreement with its section on establishing of a WMD-free zone in the Middle East. On the tide of the success in the diplomatic resolution (as it seemed at that moment) of one of the key crisis points on the nonproliferation agenda, many experts expressed the rosy expectations of a possibility 'to move further' by applying the obtained experience to the negotiations on the nuclear problem on the Korean Peninsula and seeking a 'JCPOA' for this region.

We leave beyond our article the attempts to find out at what particular moment of negotiations on the JCPOA the U.S. government developed the understanding of its provisional nature and decided to later on deny its obligations under this deal. One way or another, Washington attempted to benefit from the existing positive conditions at the onset of another stage of active dialogue on diplomatic settlement of Iran's nuclear program to push Moscow to new arrangements that did matter to the United States.

On June 20, 2013 at the Berlin G8 Summit U.S. President Barack Obama proposed a more profound – compared to those stipulated by the New START provisions – reduction of the strategic offensive weapons arsenals – to one thousand warheads, a number that could later decrease to 300-400 while including tactical nuclear weapons (TNW). Naturally, the case was primarily about reducing this type of the Russian weapons arsenal in exchange for reducing the number of the U.S. nuclear warheads on the territory of NATO member states.<sup>21</sup> As is known, control and reduction of the Russian TNW – with no linkage to the U.S. Prompt Global Strike capabilities and missile defense systems in Europe – remained a cherished and unattainable goal of Washington since the time of the New START negotiations.

In 2013-2016, in the positive conditions created by the JCPOA negotiations the U.S. administration considerably intensified its efforts to engage Moscow in another discussion on nuclear disarmament. Even despite the rollback in the relations resulted from the situation in Ukraine and reunification of Crimea with Russia, in April 2016, following the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington Barack

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<sup>21</sup> 'Disarmament one could hardly reject,' *Kommersant*, 20.06.2019, № 105.

Obama gave new signals on the U.S. intention to continue and advance its dialogue with Russia on lowering the limits for nuclear warheads and delivery systems.<sup>22</sup>

## Conclusions

If the terminology of the game theory is applied to describe the current situations, today Russia is pulled into *zero-determinant strategies*<sup>23</sup> – under which an altruistic strategy does not work because one of the actors simultaneously strives to assume the functions of a judge while attempting to force the other one to be satisfied with a lesser stake. Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov described the U.S. attempts to ensure one-sided geopolitical advantages while preserving the status of the sole decision-making center this way: 'The rules are being changed not just in the course of the game, but when the game is over, once the result that satisfies everybody has unanimously been fixed at the UN Security Council'. Washington's strive to adjust the arms control regimes to its mercenary goals facilitates the erosion of the established international security architecture based on the WWII results, aggravation of tension and lowering the level of strategic trust.<sup>24</sup> One should not consider this trend as irreversible, but it is not up to Russia to improve the current situation. Russia's disarmament proposals, including the idea of jointly drafting a new 'security equation', as President Vladimir Putin put it, 'are on the table, and the door is open'.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> 'Obama informed on the intention to continue nuclear disarmament dialogue with Russia,' Lenta, 2016.

<sup>23</sup> Zero-determinant strategies are a new class of probabilistic and conditional strategies that are able to unilaterally set the expected payoff of an opponent in iterated plays of the Prisoner's Dilemma irrespective of the opponent's strategy (coercive strategies)

<sup>24</sup> 'Sergey Lavrov spoke at the Primakov Readings and responded to the questions' (2019) *Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn* magazine, Moscow, available at <https://interaffairs.ru/news/show/22757> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>25</sup> 'Putin demanded not to initiate disarmament negotiations with the USA' (2019) RIA Novosti, Moscow, available at <https://ria.ru/20190202/1550290150.html> (17 May, 2021).

## CHAPTER 17

# DIALOGUE ON NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION UNDER TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

*Sergey Semenov*

As discussed in the previous chapters, the cooperation between the Soviet Union/Russian Federation and the United States of America was instrumental for the emergence and consolidation of the nuclear nonproliferation regime. Even when tensions in the bilateral relations reached new heights, as the longtime Soviet foreign minister Andrey Gromyko put it, nuclear nonproliferation would remain the only silk thread connecting the two capitals.<sup>1</sup> Nonproliferation and arms control has mostly remained an insulated area of cooperation since the hottest days of the Cold War. This is not to say that the two countries' views converged on everything, but at least they were doing their best to resolve their differences in a business-like fashion.

The objective basis for such cooperation is still there. Moscow and Washington are still interested in preventing further proliferation of nuclear weapons, and there are objective reasons for the two nations to insulate this area away from the skyrocketing tension in the bilateral relations. Policymakers both in Moscow and Washington recognize that without the NPT, *'the security equation would become incalculable'*.<sup>2</sup>

On several occasions, the two countries' high-ranking representatives stressed the importance of bilateral cooperation on nonproliferation matters. For instance, on April 17, 2020, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and U.S. Secretary of State Michael Pompeo

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<sup>1</sup> Orlov, Vladimir; Timerbaev, Roland and Khlopkov, Anton (2002) Nuclear nonproliferation In U.S.-Russian relations: challenges and opportunities, PIR Library Series.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with a high-ranking Russian diplomat on November 27, 2020

agreed to intensify the Russian-American dialogue on arms control and nonproliferation.<sup>3</sup>

On the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the NPT entry into force, the foreign ministers of the five official nuclear weapons states (NWS) issued a joint statement, which reads:

The success of the NPT was not foreordained, nor is its future success guaranteed. [...] Even at the height of the Cold War, our predecessors made this wise investment in our shared security and prosperity. Today, we pledge our unstinting commitment to preserving and deepening this legacy for future generations.<sup>4</sup>

Unfortunately, under the Trump administration, the overall deterioration of Russian-U.S. relations affected the nonproliferation domain. Hopes for the renovation of the bilateral dialogue under the 45<sup>th</sup> U.S. president turned out to be far from reality. Never before had the contradictions on nuclear nonproliferation been so acute. In 2017–2021, the two countries, though sharing the same interest in precluding further nuclear proliferation, differed in choosing the means. Russia still favored diplomacy and engagement, whereas U.S. preferred tool was political pressure and brutal force. Russia and the United States, which alongside the United Kingdom are depositary governments of the NPT, were engaged in open verbal skirmishes at the 2018 and 2019 PrepComs.

This chapter seeks to answer two questions. Firstly, why did Russia and the United States fail to establish constructive cooperation on nonproliferation under the Trump administration? Secondly, is this failure an aberration or the new normal? This chapter seeks to find an answer by analyzing the NPT review process context, without

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<sup>3</sup> Press release on Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's telephone conversation with U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, available at [https://www.mid.ru/web/guest/telefonnye-razgovory-ministra/-/asset\\_publisher/KLX3tiYzsCLY/content/id/4101182?p\\_p\\_id=101\\_INSTANCE\\_KLX-3tiYzsCLY&\\_101\\_INSTANCE\\_KLX3tiYzsCLY\\_languageId=en\\_GB](https://www.mid.ru/web/guest/telefonnye-razgovory-ministra/-/asset_publisher/KLX3tiYzsCLY/content/id/4101182?p_p_id=101_INSTANCE_KLX-3tiYzsCLY&_101_INSTANCE_KLX3tiYzsCLY_languageId=en_GB) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>4</sup> Joint Statement by the Foreign Ministers of China, France, Russia, UK, and the U.S. on the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, available at [https://www.mid.ru/web/guest/maps/fr/-/asset\\_publisher/g8RuzDvY7qyV/content/id/4080918?p\\_p\\_id=101\\_INSTANCE\\_g8RuzDvY7qyV&\\_101\\_INSTANCE\\_g8RuzDvY7qyV\\_languageId=en\\_GB](https://www.mid.ru/web/guest/maps/fr/-/asset_publisher/g8RuzDvY7qyV/content/id/4080918?p_p_id=101_INSTANCE_g8RuzDvY7qyV&_101_INSTANCE_g8RuzDvY7qyV_languageId=en_GB) (17 May, 2021).

going into particulars on other nonproliferation-related fora, which all deserve a separate chapter.

The first part of the chapter provides a brief analysis of U.S.-Russian dialogue at the 2015 NPT Review Conference. The discussion of Obama's legacy is followed by a review of U.S.-Russian dialogue on nuclear nonproliferation in 2017-2020, both within and outside of the NPT framework. Finally, the last section deals with the reasons for the lack of nonproliferation cooperation in 2017 – 2020 and lessons learned from this period.

## **Failure and Legacy of 2015 NPT Review Conference**

Before going into the specifics of the 2017 – 2021 NPT Review Cycle, it appears necessary to briefly analyze the course and legacy of the failed 2015 NPT Review Conference. Such an analysis would be useful to put the 2021 Review Cycle into perspective.

The environment around the 9<sup>th</sup> NPT Review Conference was not particularly promising. That review cycle witnessed the growing disillusionment of Arab states with the lack of progress on the establishment of the WMDFZ in the Middle East<sup>5</sup>, the rise of the advocates of the so-called humanitarian initiative. In terms of U.S.-Russian dialogue, things were not perfect either: the Ukrainian crisis and its aftermath could not but affect all the facets of the bilateral dialogue. In the nonproliferation domain, as Robert Einhorn notes, Russia stopped discussions with the United States on preventing the dialogue withdrawal from the NPT.<sup>6</sup> Notwithstanding the cessation of dialogue on this matter, Russia and the United States, alongside other states presented a working paper on addressing the withdrawal from the NPT.<sup>7</sup> Notably, at the 2010 RevCon, as well as at the 2012 PrepCom, Russia's main collaborator on this issue was Ukraine, which partly explains why after 2014 Russia may have been addressing the issue with less zeal.

<sup>5</sup> See Chapter 7 by Ms. Natalia Artemenkova for more detail

<sup>6</sup> 'U.S. Nonproliferation Cooperation with Russia and China: A Call for Finding Common Ground with Great Power Rivals' (2020) CNS Occasional Paper #48, available at <https://nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/U.S.-Nonproliferation-Cooperation-with-Russia-and-China-1.pdf> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>7</sup> See NPT/CONF.2015/WP.47, Reaching Critical Will, available at <https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/documents/WP47.pdf> (17 May, 2021).

The beginning of the RevCon witnessed some bitter exchanges between the Russian Federation and the United States regarding the INF Treaty and the Budapest memorandum. In his opening remarks to the Conference the U.S. Secretary of State emphasized the U.S. *'deep concerns regarding Russia's clear violation of its obligations under the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty'*. He went on to state that Russia disregarded the Budapest memorandum, the document, which, as he framed it, was *'was an incredible act of leadership for the nonproliferation regime'*.<sup>8</sup>

U.S. willingness to bring confrontation to the NPT platform came as a surprise for the Russian delegation. As the acting head of the delegation Amb. Ulyanov noted, in spite of *'deep concerns regarding numerous aspects of the U.S. policy in the areas of strategic stability, nuclear disarmament and nuclear nonproliferation, [Russia] did not intend to engage in controversy at the NPT Review Conference. We assumed that there were other formats to that end'*. He further presented detailed Russian critique of the U.S. nonproliferation and arms control policies, paying particular attention to the build-up of U.S. missile defenses, prompt global strike programs, and NATO nuclear sharing arrangements violating Articles I, II of the NPT.<sup>9</sup>

Later on, in the MC I the Russian Federation further rebuked the allegations by several states (including the United States) that it was not in compliance with its obligations under the Budapest memorandum. In the Russian view, the very concept of negative security assurances, as provided for by the memorandum, to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons.

Thus, the implementation of the NPT related provisions of the Memorandum has confirmed the viability of negative assurances even in a critical situation, in spite of the fact

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<sup>8</sup> Remarks at the 2015 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty Review Conference by John Kerry, Secretary of State, United Nations New York City, NY April 27, 2015, Reaching Critical Will, available at [https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/statements/27April\\_U.S..pdf](https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/statements/27April_U.S..pdf) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>9</sup> Statement by Mikhail Uliyanov, Acting Head of the Delegation of the Russian Federation at the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (General debate), Reaching Critical Will, available at [https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/statements/27April\\_Russia.pdf](https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/statements/27April_Russia.pdf) (17 May, 2021).

that the Memorandum, as opposed to conventional negative assurances, is a political rather than legally binding instrument.<sup>10</sup>

The Ukrainian issue though did not become the central one in the course of the RevCon. Only a few delegations (most notably, Poland, Canada, Estonia, and Ukraine itself) touched upon the subject in their national statements. When on April 30 the United Kingdom delivered a statement on behalf of P5,<sup>11</sup> it became evident that the NWS decided not to escalate their divergencies at the RevCon.<sup>12</sup>

Notwithstanding the Cold War-like verbal altercations on the INF Treaty, the Budapest Memorandum, and NATO nuclear sharing arrangements, the two countries eventually managed to avoid open confrontation. The three co-sponsors of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East (Russia, U.S., UK) presented a joint working paper on the establishment of a MEWMDFZ.<sup>13</sup> Russia and the United States still had more converging stances than differences. As Dr. Vladimir Orlov, a member of the Russian delegation at the 2015 RevCon, noted, at some juncture, there was an impression among the RevCon participants that 'the Russians and the Americans were playing by the same notes'.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Statement by Mikhail Uliyanov, Acting Head of the Delegation of the Russian Federation at the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Budapest Memorandum, Reaching Critical Will, available at [https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/statements/6May\\_Russia\\_MCI.pdf](https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/statements/6May_Russia_MCI.pdf) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>11</sup> Statement By The People's Republic Of China, France, The Russian Federation, The United Kingdom Of Great Britain And Northern Ireland, And The United States Of America To The 2015 Treaty On The Non-Proliferation Of Nuclear Weapons Review Conference, Reaching Critical Will, available at [https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/statements/30April\\_UKJoint.pdf](https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/statements/30April_UKJoint.pdf) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>12</sup> Baklitsky, Andrey (2015) 'The 2015 NPT Review Conference and the Future of the Nonproliferation Regime,' *Arms Control Today*, available at <https://www.arm-control.org/act/2015-07/features/2015-npt-review-conference-future-nonproliferation-regime> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>13</sup> Middle East Nuclear and Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone: progress towards the convening of a Conference attended by all States of the Middle East Working Paper on behalf of the co-convening states of a Conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction (Russia, UK and U.S.), NPT/CONF.2015/WP.48, available at <https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/disarmament-fora/npt/2015/documents> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>14</sup> Orlov, Vladimir (2015) 'The Glass Menagerie Of Non-Proliferation,' *Russia in Global Affairs*, №3, available at <https://eng.globalaffairs.ru/articles/the-glass-menagerie-of-non-proliferation/> (17 May, 2021).

In the Main Committee-I, the two countries toned down their statements, heavily emphasizing their progress in nuclear arms reductions. As the U.S. delegate, Amb. Robert Wood stated, 'disarmament is taking place every day'.<sup>15</sup> The United States slightly reprimanded Russia for not accepting its proposal for further nuclear cuts, whereas the Russian delegation highlighted the need for an appropriate environment for more dramatic reduction. Among the relevant prerequisites Amb. Ulyanov cited:

The removal of non-strategic nuclear weapons by other countries to their territories, the elimination of all infrastructure abroad providing for the rapid deployment of non-strategic nuclear weapons and the completion of preparation for their use with the involvement of non-nuclear states would contribute to strengthening international security and further reducing and limiting nuclear arsenals.<sup>16</sup>

The same pattern of refraining from inflammatory remarks mostly persisted in the Main Committees II & III. The positions of principle (nuclear sharing) were touched upon in a reserved fashion, without making accusations warranting a determined right of reply. Later on, when the Draft Final Document was presented neither the issue of Budapest memorandum, nor the concerns about NATO nuclear sharing were included. Such an outcome implies that the two countries (as well as the drafters of the document in the Bureau of the RevCon) put a premium on securing a positive outcome of the forum rather than on engaging in verbal skirmishes.

However, when Russia put forward its own working paper on the MEWMDFZ, it came as a bad surprise for UK and U.S.. This is the issue on which two competing narratives exist in the literature.

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<sup>15</sup> Main Committee I U.S. Statement 2015 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference Ambassador Robert A. Wood, United States Delegation to the Conference on Disarmament, Reaching Critical Will, available at [https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/statements/1May\\_U.S..pdf](https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/statements/1May_U.S..pdf) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>16</sup> Statement Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations in New York by Mikhail I. Uliyanov, Acting Head of the Delegation of the Russian Federation at the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (Cluster 1: nuclear disarmament), Reaching Critical Will, available at [https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/statements/1May\\_Russia.pdf](https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/statements/1May_Russia.pdf) (17 May, 2021).



The Russian narrative is that at the final days of the RevCon, the Russian delegation tried to break the ice and presented its working paper, which it thought would be acceptable for all the parties concerned. The hope was that the Americans would grudgingly acquiesce rather than ruin the entire effort.

The United States, however, did not want to add another irritating factor to its relations with Israel. The Iran deal negotiations, which Israel vehemently opposed, were a higher priority for the Obama administration than a successful Review Conference. According to then-Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Nonproliferation Thomas Countryman, it was the Egyptian intransigence that made a consensus final document impossible. The U.S. red lines were well-known to the President of the RevCon, Russia, and Egypt.

As Mr. Thomas Countryman, who at that time was the Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Nonproliferation, notes:

The U.S. delegation was unable to accept an early deadline for holding an initial conference on the zone. Even more problematic was Egypt's insistence on deleting from the mandate the key phrase that had made compromise possible in 2010, that the conference be held 'on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at'. In the U.S. view, then and today, this phrase was necessary not only to make an initial conference acceptable to Israel but also for the credibility of any process that followed an initial conference.<sup>17</sup>

The American narrative was most clearly relayed by Dr. William C. Potter. As he frames it,<sup>18</sup> by the final days of the conference, Russian diplomats realized that the U.S. would not budge from its position and, therefore, the RevCon was headed for a failure. Being responsible for such an outcome along with the United States was politically disadvantageous for Moscow. Some researchers go further and posit that this shift might have been a part of a shrewd game.

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<sup>17</sup> Countryman, Thomas (2020) 'Learning From the 2015 NPT Review Conference,' *Arms Control Today*, available at <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2020-05/features/learning-2015-npt-review-conference> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>18</sup> Potter, William C. (2016) 'The Unfulfilled Promise of the 2015 NPT Review Conference,' *Survival*.

*'Moscow very much preferred that, if the conference were to fail, it fail over the Middle East, on which Russian views were in the majority, rather than over nuclear disarmament, on which Russia was largely isolated, alongside France'.<sup>19</sup>*

The disarmament aspects of the 2015 NPT RevCon indeed often remain overlooked. One may identify three pressure points of the disarmament agenda at the Conference: the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons use, a reporting system for the NWS to adopt, and the monitoring of the implementation of the 2010 Action Plan.

The reporting system was difficult for Russia to accept. Action 11 of OP 154 of the Draft Final Document presented by the President reads:

The Conference [...] calls upon the nuclear-weapon States to continue their engagement on a standard reporting form and to report to the 2017 and 2019 sessions of the Preparatory Committee, [...] without prejudice to national security: (i) the number, type (strategic or non-strategic) and status (deployed or non-deployed) of nuclear warheads; (ii) the number and the type of delivery vehicles; (iii) the measures taken to reducing the role and significance of nuclear weapons in military and security concepts, doctrines and policies; (iv) the measures taken to reduce the risk of unintended, unauthorized or accidental use of nuclear weapons; (v) the measures taken to de-alert or reduce the operational readiness of nuclear weapon systems; (vi) the number and type of weapons and delivery systems dismantled and reduced as part of nuclear disarmament efforts; (vii) the amount of fissile material for military purposes.<sup>20</sup>

Somewhat less problematic were numerous references to the humanitarian initiative made in the section dealing with Article VI. That section also recommended to convene an open-ended working group *'to identify and elaborate effective measures for the full implementation of article VI, including legal provisions or other arrangements that contribute to and are required for the achievement and*

<sup>19</sup> Ibid

<sup>20</sup> Source: NPT/CONF.2015/WP.58, available at <https://undocs.org/en/NPT/CONF.2015/WP.58> (17 May, 2021).

*maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons. [...] The Conference recommends that the open-ended working group conduct its work on the basis of consensus'.<sup>21</sup>*

In hindsight, one may posit that for nuclear weapons states the adoption of the draft final document presented by the president still would have been a better option than the conclusion of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). A working body tasked with elaborating measures to build a better security environment conducting its activities on the basis of consensus would have been more controllable and thus acceptable.

Russian diplomats, however, deny that the Russian Federation intended to torpedo the adoption of the Final Document over disarmament provisions. Conversely, Russia thought it would be able to put up with the reporting system by making an interpretative statement. As the acting head of the Russian delegation Amb. Mikhail Ulyanov emphasized in the closing statement, despite having some reservations concerning certain provisions, Russia had been prepared to join the consensus on the draft Final Document in order to strengthen the nuclear nonproliferation regime.<sup>22</sup>

What Russia did indeed view as a problem was the U.S., and UK attempt to flirt with disarmament activists by putting forward initiatives on nuclear disarmament verification. In 2007 UK and Norway launched a joint initiative on nuclear warheads dismantlement verification, known as QUAD.<sup>23</sup> In December 2014, the United States along with the Nuclear Threat Initiative launched the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV).<sup>24</sup> While the initiatives had been designed as a creative way to let the steam

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<sup>21</sup> See Draft Final Document I Volume I L Part I. Review of the operation of the Treaty, as prodded for in its article VI'II (31), taking into account the decisions and the resolution adopted by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, the Final Document of the ZOOO Review Conference and the conclusions and I recommendations for follow-on actions of the 2010 Review Conference, Reaching Critical Will, available at <https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2015/documents/DraftFinalDocument.pdf> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>22</sup> Summary record of the 15th meeting. 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, available at <https://undocs.org/en/NPT/CONF.2015/SR.15> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>23</sup> 'About us,' QUAD Disarmament Verification Partnership, available at <https://quad-nvp.info/about-us/> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>24</sup> 'About the IPNDV,' IPNDV, available at <https://www.ipndv.org/about/> (17 May, 2021).

out of the nonproliferation tank, the Russian view was that such initiatives are not helpful. First and foremost, verification is a function of the essence of relevant agreements and treaties rather than a thing in itself. Secondly, there is a danger that such verification will run counter to NPT obligations if inspectors from non-nuclear weapons states get access to sensitive information about the design of nuclear weapons.

## **The 2017–2021 NPT Review Cycle**

The 2017–2021 NPT Review Cycle took place against a murky backdrop — at least, from the U.S.-Russia dialogue standpoint. Despite some initial hopes in Moscow, the election of Donald Trump, did not result in a thaw in the bilateral relations. Conversely, new allegations of Russian meddling in the 2016 presidential elections added up to the already long list of misperceptions and contradictions. The review cycle preceding the 10<sup>th</sup> NPT Review Conference also witnessed the demise of the INF Treaty, U.S. withdrawal from the Open Skies Treaty and the JCPOA, accusations of non-compliance with arms control agreements and chemical weapons use. The dialogue on nonproliferation, previously somewhat compartmentalized from the overall tension in the bilateral relations, seemed to have lost its privileged status. Contacts with Russia became toxic in Washington D.C., while the United States was perceived as a less and less credible and negotiable partner in Moscow.

Back in 2017, though, one could afford some optimism. The 2017 PrepCom was not tarnished with the same degree of confrontation as was the case with 2018 and 2019. One should, however, keep in mind that the PrepComs held in Vienna tend to be calmer and more business-like than the ones held in Geneva and New York. Although the two countries' priorities already diverged significantly, the two delegations did not challenge each other overtly. Such civility may be explained by several factors. Firstly, Russia still had certain hope in the Trump administration's ability to rebuild the bilateral relations and assuage some of the Russian concerns. Therefore, Moscow refrained from openly criticizing Washington at that time. Secondly, the Trump administration initiated a comprehensive review of the U.S. arms control, nonproliferation, and disarmament policies, which was still underway when the 2017 PrepCom took place. Thus, Trump's

efforts in destroying arms control and nonproliferation agreements architecture and starting from scratch did not manifest so overtly as they did later in his presidency.

By the time the 2018 PrepCom was held, the international environment seemingly deteriorated. Alleged chemical attacks in Syria and the United Kingdom, as well as the crisis of the INF Treaty, were not conducive to a successful PrepCom. What happened justified the low expectations: the tension between Russia and the United States remained unmitigated.

From the outset of the 2018 PrepCom, the United States and its allies had been addressing the issue Russia thought was extraneous to the nuclear nonproliferation regime — the alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria and the United Kingdom. As the head of the U.S. delegation, Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Nonproliferation Dr. Christopher Ford stated:

We also cannot ignore the deleterious impact on our collective security of the repeated use of chemical weapons in Syria and the recent chemical weapons attack in Salisbury. The flouting of this critical international norm should be of great concern to us all.

In his right of reply, the head of the Russian delegation, head of the Department for Nonproliferation and Arms Control Vladimir Yermakov stated:

Out of the blue did the esteemed representative [...] here, at an NPT event, start talking about CW uses on Syrian territory. What for? The problem might be important [...] but why raise it here, on the NPT platform? [...] We reiterate our call for the esteemed delegations to never ever, under whatever pretext touch upon the issue of Syrian chemical disarmament within the NPT framework, otherwise they run the risk of undermining our forum.

The tendency towards the ample use of the right of reply continued at the 2019 PrepCom. At this juncture, however, verbal skirmishes increased in intensity and variety of subjects. Although the main clashes took place between Iran and the United States, Russia also exercised the right of reply to refute allegations of its

non-compliance with the INF Treaty. On one particular occasion, the United States even claimed that Russia had provided '*a laundry list of false claims*' about the U.S. being the sole source of everything that is wrong with nonproliferation and arms control, after which Russia characterized the U.S. statement as '*propaganda by an irresponsible state that does not contribute to the NPT*'.<sup>25</sup>

One cannot get rid oneself of the impression that many of the U.S. actions were designed to elicit a strikingly negative response from Russia. In particular, no other reason explains why visas were denied to the members of the Russian delegation at the third session of the Preparatory Committee. As proved by the experience of the 74<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly session, that was not a solitary case: Russian experts were deliberately banned from participation in nonproliferation and disarmament fora. In this case, or not, the United States was solidifying the impression that its policy was to use every opportunity to damage nonproliferation and U.S.-Russian relations.

Therefore, it should come as no surprise that Russia toughened its approaches at the 2019 PrepCom. Whereas in the general debate, the U.S. statements were generally circumventing points of disagreement, Russia voiced every contradiction it had with the United States. For instance, the Russian statement in Cluster II condemned the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA, urging not to attempt to impose additional obligations on Tehran; and called upon Washington to ratify the additional protocols to the Treaties of Pelindaba, Rarotonga, and Semipalatinsk, as well to ratify the CTBT.<sup>26</sup>

**In a nutshell, the disarmament cluster** witnessed the most acute exchanges during the 2017, 2018, and 2019 PrepComs. Still, the two countries have the same success story: they have managed to reduce their nuclear arsenals by up to 85%. In 2018 they reached the numerical limits of the New START (Russia, though, has not

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<sup>25</sup> NPT PrepCom 2019: Live CNS Updates, James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, available at <https://www.nonproliferation.org/npt-prepcom-2019-live-cns-updates/#reply> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>26</sup> Statement by the Delegation of the Russian Federation at the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (Cluster 2: Non-Proliferation and IAEA Safeguards), available at [https://reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom19/statements/3May\\_Russia.pdf](https://reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom19/statements/3May_Russia.pdf) (17 May, 2021).

certified the means by which the U.S. achieved the reductions). However, the situation around the INF Treaty, the Open Skies Treaty overshadowed and destroyed many of the disarmament achievements that the two countries share.

What was striking in this Review Cycle was the U.S.'s uncompromising approaches and arrogance. As the INF Treaty was coming closer to its end, the U.S. consistently rejected Russian proposals on how to solve the crisis. As diplomats with firsthand knowledge of the INF-related relevant negotiations recall, for years the U.S. side had been refusing to reveal the specifics of what they claimed to be the Russian violations.

**In the nonproliferation cluster**, the two countries' positions continued to diverge. The most striking contradiction was, of course, related to NATO nuclear sharing arrangements, which Russia regards as incompatible with Articles I, II of the Treaty<sup>27</sup>, the implementation of JCPOA. Less inflammatory differences were related to the creation of the WMDFZ in the Middle East, which the two countries supported, and IAEA safeguards.<sup>28</sup>

The areas, where the two countries interests and rhetoric were still close, were export controls, DPRK nuclear and missile program, although the nuances still were different.

The review cycle also showed that Russia and the United States's nonproliferation philosophies are different. Moscow puts a premium on diplomatic engagement rather than pressure. Moreover, proceeding from the assumption that all of the NPT pillars should balance one another, Moscow defends Tehran's right to the development of nuclear energy, which the United States is vehemently opposed to. In the U.S. view, diplomatic engagement with DPRK and Iran exhausted itself, and only pressure can get them back to the negotiation table. The U.S. philosophy in this regard, again, was an example of arrogance, the general approach being 'you do what we tell you, and not otherwise'.





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<sup>27</sup> See Chapters 1, 11 for more details regarding the issue

<sup>28</sup> Wood, Op. Cit

**Chart I. U.S. and Russian positions at the 2017, 2018, and 2019 NPT PrepComs**

	2017 PrepCom		2018 PrepCom		2019 PrepCom	
	Russia	U.S.	Russia	U.S.	Russia	U.S.
TPNW	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Dark Gray
Noncompliance with the INF Treaty	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Dark Gray
Security Environment (CEND)	Dark Gray	White	Dark Gray	White	Dark Gray	Dark Gray
Balance between 3 pillars	Dark Gray	White	White	White	White	White
Successful implementation of New START	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Light Gray	Dark Gray	Light Gray	Dark Gray
JCPOA	Dark Gray	White	Dark Gray	White	Dark Gray	White
IAEA Safeguards:	Light Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray
Nuclear security	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Dark Gray
NSG	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Dark Gray
MEW MDFZ	Light Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray
NWFZ in SEA and CA	Dark Gray	White	Light Gray	White	Light Gray	White
CTBT	Light Gray	White	Dark Gray	White	Dark Gray	White
DPRK nuclear and missile program	Light Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray	Dark Gray
The right to withdraw from the NPT.	White	Dark Gray	White	Dark Gray	White	Dark Gray
Nuclear sharing	Dark Gray	White	Dark Gray	White	Dark Gray	White
Successful implementation of New START	Dark Gray	Dark Gray	Light Gray	Dark Gray	Light Gray	Dark Gray

-  – converging or identical postures,
-  – divergent, but non-confrontational stances,
-  – confrontational approaches,
-  – no position clearly stated

Source: Compiled by the author based on Russian and U.S. statements at the 2017, 2018, and 2019 NPT PrepComs.

## Nuclear Ban & Humanitarian Initiative

One of the few areas of convergence between Russia and the United States, as discussed at the PrepCom, was the rejection of the humanitarian initiatives aimed at concluding the Treaty on the Prohibition



of Nuclear Weapons.<sup>29</sup> Both Moscow and Washington noted that the concerted actions of Russia and the United States helped to overcome at least 80% of the path towards a nuclear-weapon-free world, which was no easy task and took a lot of resources.<sup>30</sup>

At the 2017, 2018, and 2019 PrepComs the two countries openly criticized the TPNW for several serious drawbacks. First and foremost, the proponents of the ban treaty advocate for nuclear disarmament regardless of the security environment, which has become more acute in recent years. Such an approach is a frivolous interpretation of Article VI of the NPT, which, as the two countries believe, envisages nuclear disarmament only in the context of general and complete disarmament.

Moreover, the emergence of the ban treaty only contributes to the broadening of the gap between nuclear and non-nuclear weapons states, bringing more contradictions to the NPT framework. According to Amb. Robert Wood, U.S. permanent representative to the Conference on Disarmament, the proponents of the ban *'have abandoned the consensus-based approach that has served us so well over the past 50 years'*.<sup>31</sup>

The vital problem with TPNW is that it poses an alternative to the NPT regime. Whatever its advocates may state, it is a long-term risk for nuclear nonproliferation. In the short-term, it will only distract attention from other nonproliferation issues. In the long run, one cannot discard a scenario under which the increasing radicalization of disarmament approaches of some NNWS may lead them to withdraw from the 'unequal and discriminatory' NPT under the pretext that their obligations under the TPNW are more comprehensive. It is not by occasion that the obligations under TPNW supersede obligations under other treaties – including those under the NPT.<sup>32, 33</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Wood, Op. Cit

<sup>30</sup> Ibid

<sup>31</sup> Wood, Robert (2017) '2017 NPT PrepCom Cluster One Statement on Disarmament,' Reaching Critical Will, available at [https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom17/statements/5May\\_USA.pdf](https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom17/statements/5May_USA.pdf) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>32</sup> 'Sebe v ushcherb razoruzhat'sya nikto ne budet,' Kommersant, available at <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/3408885> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>33</sup> The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons: A Well-Intentioned Mistake, available at <https://www.state.gov/remarks-and-releases-bureau-of-international-security-and-nonproliferation/the-treaty-on-the-prohibition-of-nuclear-weapons-a-well-intentioned-mistake/> (17 May, 2021).

For the United States TPNW is even more problematic as it can potentially put in risk its extended deterrence and nuclear sharing arrangements with its non-nuclear allies. While Russia displayed tolerance with regard to its allies' stance on TPNW (most notably, the one of Kazakhstan), the United States pressured its allies to vote against the draft treaty in the UN General Assembly.<sup>34</sup> In 2020, the U.S. Department of State sent a letter to the signatory states urging them to withdraw their instruments of ratification or accession.<sup>35</sup>

### **CEND: Creating Excuses for No Disarmament?**

The alternative approach to nuclear disarmament both Russia and the United States favor is to focus on the aspects of the security environment warranting the preservation of nuclear weapons. Although Russia has been emphasizing the need for such an approach from the outset of the 2017–2021 NPT review cycle, it was the United States that presented the initiative on creating the conditions for nuclear disarmament at the 2018 PrepCom. Faced with criticism from the staunchest nuclear disarmament advocates, the U.S. later rebranded the initiative as Creating the Environment for Nuclear Disarmament (CEND) so as not to create an impression that NWS would try to condition the elimination of nuclear weapons.

The move pursued a two-fold objective. The proclaimed purpose was to reframe the nuclear disarmament discourse and focus on how to ameliorate the security environment, which makes nuclear deterrent a necessity. As the author of the concept, Assistant Secretary Christopher A. Ford, posited, the step-by-step approach has exhausted itself and new creative ways are needed to overcome the existing impasse. To do so, the United States intended to engage Track I diplomats in Track II-like open and candid discussions on nonproliferation assurances, successful curtailment of other WMD threats, verification of disarmament,

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<sup>34</sup> 'U.S. pressured NATO states to vote no to a ban,' ICAN, available at [https://www.icanw.org/us\\_pressured\\_nato\\_states\\_to\\_vote\\_no\\_to\\_a\\_ban](https://www.icanw.org/us_pressured_nato_states_to_vote_no_to_a_ban) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>35</sup> 'U.S. urges countries to withdraw from UN nuke ban treaty' (2020), Associated Press, available at <https://apnews.com/article/nuclear-weapons-disarmament-latin-america-united-nations-gun-politics-4f109626a1cdd6db10560550aa1bb491> (17 May, 2021).

stability after nuclear zero as possible conditions for nuclear disarmament.<sup>36</sup>

The second purpose, which is easily discernible between the lines, was to create a more positive image for the U.S. nonproliferation and arms control policies by manifesting U.S. readiness to discuss nuclear disarmament and getting the upper hand over NNWS. Such nonproliferation Potemkin villages were not invented by the Trump administration. The Obama administration also tried to gain a proactive role in nuclear disarmament issues by engaging some of the NNWS on the matters of nuclear disarmament verification, which culminated in the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV). Russia is hardly sympathetic towards such initiatives, viewing verification as a function of arms control agreements, not a phenomenon in itself.

To underpin the informal character of the process, the U.S. opted for the modality of workshops comprising 25 – 30 states.<sup>37</sup> The initiative activities were structured within 3 subgroups focused on, correspondingly,

- Reducing perceived incentives for states to retain, acquire, or increase their holdings of nuclear weapons and increasing incentives to reduce and eliminate nuclear weapons.
- Mechanisms to bolster nonproliferation efforts and build confidence in and further advance nuclear disarmament.
- Interim measures to reduce the risks associated with nuclear weapons.<sup>38</sup>

According to Thomas Countryman, former Under Secretary of State in the Obama administration, for some people in the Trump administration 'talking about creating the environment was the excuse

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<sup>36</sup> Ford, Christopher A. (2018) 'Creating the Conditions for Nuclear Disarmament: A New Approach,' U.S. Department of State, available at <https://2017-2021.state.gov/remarks-and-releases-bureau-of-international-security-and-nonproliferation/creating-the-conditions-for-nuclear-disarmament-a-new-approach/index.html> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>37</sup> The P5 Process and Approaches to Nuclear Disarmament: A New Structured Dialogue. U.S. Department of State, available at <https://www.state.gov/the-p5-process-and-approaches-to-nuclear-disarmament-a-new-structured-dialogue/> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>38</sup> Moving Forward With the CEND Initiative, Department of State, available at <https://www.state.gov/moving-forward-with-the-cend-initiative/> (17 May, 2021).

for doing nothing at all'.<sup>39</sup> As one of the Russian arms control and nonproliferation officials acknowledged, 'CEND is a nothing burger'.<sup>40</sup> In Moscow, the CEND is seen as a reformatted Russian idea, which, implemented by the Americans, mostly lost its essence. The Russian officials interviewed for this chapter say that the American side frames the discussion in a way beneficial only for them, avoiding serious talks about strategic stability.

However, Russia does favor discussing concrete concerns in the field of strategic stability rather than abstract conditions for nuclear disarmament. In its working paper presented at the 2019 PrepCom, Russia was quite specific on the issues to be tackled to create prerequisites for nuclear disarmament. Those include the unrestricted deployment of global missile defense systems, development of non-nuclear high-precision strategic offensive weapons, a prospect of deploying strike weapons in outer space, and growing quality and quantity imbalances in the sphere of conventional arms.<sup>41</sup>

Russia, however, recognizes that it still makes sense for Moscow to participate in this process, because 'it is better to be a part of the process, rather than not'.

## **New START Implementation & Extension Debates**

After the U.S. withdrawal from the INF Treaty, the New START remained the only arms control thread connecting Moscow and Washington. Although both Russia and the United States underscored the value of the New START Treaty implementation as a practical step in nuclear disarmament, the attempts to extend the treaty under

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<sup>39</sup> 'How to Overcome the Impasse on Nuclear Disarmament: An Interview with Thomas Countryman' (2019), *Journal for Peace and Nuclear Disarmament*, Volume 2, Issue 2, available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/25751654.2019.1698142> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>40</sup> Author's conversation on the margins of PIR Center-CSIS joint seminar on reducing nuclear risks during great power competition, December 10, 2019.

<sup>41</sup> Statement by Director General Vladimir Yermakov, Head of the Delegation of the Russian Federation at the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, *Reaching Critical Will*, available at [https://reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom18/statements/24April\\_RussianFederation.pdf](https://reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom18/statements/24April_RussianFederation.pdf) (17 May, 2021).

the Trump administration failed despite all the goodwill displayed by Russian diplomacy.

Although the two countries reached the numerical limits provided for in the treaty in 2018, Russia was unable to certify that the U.S. did so in a manner compatible with the obligations under the Treaty. Firstly, Russia insisted that four ICBM silos had been removed from accountability after being designated for training purposes, which is not envisaged by the Treaty. Secondly, four SLBM silos on all of the fourteen Ohio-class SSBNs had not been irreversibly incapacitated by the U.S. Hence, the U.S. breakout potential at the sea component only was 64 missiles, each capable of delivering up to 8 warheads. Finally, as Russia saw it, there were issues with the reconfiguration of nuclear-capable heavy bombers for non-strategic ends.<sup>42</sup>

Later on, in December 2019, President Putin offered an unconditional extension to the U.S.<sup>43</sup> This proposal, however, did not mean that Russia stopped pressing the U.S. side on the issue of silos removed from accountability by non-certified means. Russia simply decided to refrain from conditioning the extension with the solution to Russian concerns.

That, nevertheless did not prompt the U.S. side to agree to extend the treaty. Moreover, the flexibility displayed by Russia created an impression among some decision-makers in Washington D.C. that Russia needed arms control and the New START<sup>44, 45</sup> more than the United States. Hence, there was a misguided perception that Russia would be willing to make concessions to get an extension. Several rounds of consultations led by Deputy Foreign Minister Ryabkov and Special Presidential Envoy Marshall Billingslea,

<sup>42</sup> Foreign Ministry statement, February 02, 2018, available at [https://www.mid.ru/ru/press\\_service/spokesman/official\\_statement/-/asset\\_publisher/t2GCdmD8RNIr/content/id/3054864?p\\_p\\_id=101\\_INSTANCE\\_t2GCdmD8RNIr&\\_101\\_INSTANCE\\_t2GCdmD8RNIr\\_languageId=en\\_GB](https://www.mid.ru/ru/press_service/spokesman/official_statement/-/asset_publisher/t2GCdmD8RNIr/content/id/3054864?p_p_id=101_INSTANCE_t2GCdmD8RNIr&_101_INSTANCE_t2GCdmD8RNIr_languageId=en_GB) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>43</sup> 'Putin predlozhit SSHA prodlit' dogovor o yadernyh vooruzheniyah bez uslovij' (2019), RBC, available at <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/05/12/2019/5de92a069a794720c071e8da> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>44</sup> Transcript: Special Presidential Envoy Marshall Billingslea on the Future of Nuclear Arms Control, The Hudson Institute, available at <https://www.hudson.org/research/16062-transcript-special-presidential-envoy-marshall-billingslea-on-the-future-of-nuclear-arms-control> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>45</sup> 'Rossijskie i amerikanskije ekspertj komentiruyut znachenie i perspektivy DSNV,' PIR Center, available at <http://www.pircenter.org/articles/2216-885200/print/1> (17 May, 2021).

however, demonstrated that pressure in arms control does not work as designed. The U.S. requested too much while offering too little. American attempts to get stronger verification measures, including continued monitoring of Russian nuclear weapons sited and freezing Russia's non-strategic nuclear arsenal in exchange for a fleeting extension of the New START was not the basis for a good deal.<sup>46</sup>

Eventually, the Treaty was extended in the first days of the Biden administration without any preconditions or add-ons, as initially proposed by Russia.

## **P5: Any Chances for Successful Engagement?**

Given the fact that the U.S.-Russia bilateral dialogue was strained at best, it is reasonable to ask if going multilateral would be of any help. The most appropriate multilateral format where Russia and the United States can cooperate is the P5 dialogue on nuclear issues. Established in 2009, its primary objective was to discuss verification matters as an essential element of nuclear disarmament. However, by 2020 its portfolio has significantly expanded. The first work plan adopted at the P5 conference in Beijing in 2019 features discussions on nuclear doctrines, further development of a glossary of key nuclear terms, consultations on FMCT and Bangkok Treaty issues.<sup>47</sup>

In 2017 and 2018, the dialogue between the five NWS stalled due to increased geopolitical tensions, but there were attempts to revive it. In particular, just before ceding the presidency to China, Russia held a P5 dialogue at the 2018 NPT PrepCom. Though it is difficult to say that the Russian effort yielded tangible results, the attempt is a good thing by itself. According to Mr. Vladimir Yermakov, Director of the Department for Nonproliferation and Arms Control Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, such dialogue was necessary because neither the U.S.

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<sup>46</sup> 'Na toj osnove, kotoruyu predlagayut amerikancy, horoshaya sdelka ne prosmatrivaetsya' (2020), Kommersant, available at <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/4501227> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>47</sup> Shetty, Shatabhisha; Williams, Heather (2020) 'The P5 Process: Opportunities for Success in the NPT Review Conference,' European Leadership Network, available at <https://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/report/the-p5-process-opportunities-for-success/> (17 May, 2021).

nor the UK would disappear from the world arena. Moreover, Russia was unwilling to leave the P5 'decomposed' before transferring the presidency to China.<sup>48</sup>

The full-scale P5 conference, which took place in Beijing on January 30–31, 2019 was not able to produce a consensus joint statement either. However, as Deputy Foreign Minister of Russia Sergey Ryabkov stated, the meeting was undoubtedly useful because the exchanges with the United States were sporadic and in short supply. Thus, any opportunity for high-level engagement was important.<sup>49</sup>

Subsequent events under the British presidency neither gave many reasons for optimism, though it was not due to Russian-American divergences. At the conference, the main stumbling block was the increasing Sino-American tension concerning arms control. Beijing deemed the U.S. proposals on trilateral arms control as an attempt to divert attention from its unwillingness to extend the landmark New START Treaty, whereas Washington accuses Beijing of not paying attention to its proposals.

At the 2020 UNGA First Committee session the P5 countries managed to produce a joint statement, heavily focused on the NPT.<sup>50</sup> While its meaning is mostly symbolic, the ability of the five official NWS to cooperate was a positive sign.

All in all, there is a promise in the plans to hold a joint P5 briefing on nuclear doctrines on the margins of the upcoming NPT Review Conference. However, for these plans to materialize the NWS (and Moscow and Washington in particular) have to find a common denominator on the issue, which is currently missing. Another track of interaction is intended to reiterate the Reagan-Gorbachev formula that 'a nuclear war cannot be won and should never be thought' on a multilateral basis.

As to the utility of the format, both Russia and the United States recognize that the dialogue between the five official nuclear

<sup>48</sup> Adlan Margoev's interview with Vladimir Yermakov, 5 December 2018.

<sup>49</sup> 'Ryabkov: Strany "yadernoj pyaterki" ne sdelali zayavlenie po itogam vstrechi,' Rossijskaya gazeta, available at <https://rg.ru/2019/01/30/riabkov-strany-iadernoj-piaterki-ne-sdelali-zaiavlenie-po-itogam-vstrechi.html> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>50</sup> Chair's statement, UNGA First Committee 2020 France on behalf of the P5 countries, Reaching Critical Will, available at [https://reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/1com/1com20/statements/19Oct\\_P5.pdf](https://reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/1com/1com20/statements/19Oct_P5.pdf) (17 May, 2021).

weapons states is helpful. The atmosphere at the closed meetings of the P5 is described as 'business-like'. However, Russian interviewees with first-hand knowledge of the situation lament that such atmosphere disappears into thin air in public statements of the United States.

## Iran Nuclear Deal

In 2017 – 2021, NPT Review Cycle preserving JCPOA was the priority for Russia, whereas the United States, in contrast, did its best to subvert the deal and achieve a broader agreement with Iran on the ruins of JCPOA. At the 2017 PrepCom the United States preferred to keep a low profile on JCPOA, emphasizing the need for Tehran to be in full compliance with the provisions of the deal. In the general debate, the American delegation put a premium on addressing the DPRK nuclear and missile program.

By the beginning of the 2018 PrepCom, anti-Iranian sentiments reached new heights in the American policy. With the appointment of Amb. John Bolton as the national security advisor, the fate of JCPOA was preordained. As John Bolton himself recalls in his memoir, it took him only one month to implement the withdrawal, which was previously blocked by NSC staff and Secretary of Defense James Mattis. The NPT Review Process was not a factor in his calculations. Rather, the decisive role was played by the Israeli Prime Minister, who presented the alleged Iranian nuclear archives acquired by Mossad.<sup>51</sup>

Although the withdrawal from the deal was announced after the PrepCom, the change of heart was conspicuous from the statements by the American delegation, as the head of the U.S. delegation, Assistant Secretary of State for International Security And Nonproliferation Christopher Ford stated in the general debate:

The nonproliferation regime faces a very different, but still very real, longer-term challenge from Iran – a country that for years illegally and secretly sought to develop nuclear weapons, suspended its weaponization work only when confronted by the potentially direst of consequences without

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<sup>51</sup> Bolton, John (2020) *The Room Where It Happened*, Simon & Shuster.



ever coming clean about its illicit endeavors, for several more years continued its efforts to enrich uranium in violation of legally-binding UN Security Council requirements, and retains the ability to position itself, several years hence, dangerously close to rapid weaponization.

The Russian Foreign Ministry condemned the move in the most decisive terms, claiming that it was another corroboration of Washington's intractability.<sup>52</sup> According to the Russian Permanent Representative to the international organizations in Vienna Mikhail Ulyanov the U.S. withdrawal from this landmark agreement would not have been such a problem if the United States had not been trying to push other states out of the agreement with the use of sanctions.<sup>53</sup>

Indeed, not only did the U.S. withdraw from JCPOA, it deliberately interfered with others' making contributions to the nuclear nonproliferation regime. The biggest problem here was the extritorial character of U.S. sanctions against Iran. For instance, faced with the risk of American sanctions, in 2019, TVEL (Rosatom state corporation company in charge of fuel supplies) had to stop works on reprofiling Fordow fuel enrichment plant.<sup>54</sup> In May 2020 Secretary of State Michael Pompeo announced that the United States would end waivers, allowing Russian, British, and Chinese companies to work at Iranian nuclear facilities.<sup>55</sup> Although the major project in Russian-Iranian nuclear cooperation — the Bushehr nuclear power plant — remained unsanctioned, U.S. officials hinted that

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<sup>52</sup> Foreign Ministry statement on developments around the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on Iran's nuclear program, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, available at [https://www.mid.ru/adernoie-nerasprostranenie/-/asset\\_publisher/JrcRGi5UdnBO/content/id/3212053?p\\_p\\_id=101\\_INSTANCE\\_JrcRGi5UdnBO&\\_101\\_INSTANCE\\_JrcRGi5UdnBO\\_languageId=en\\_GB](https://www.mid.ru/adernoie-nerasprostranenie/-/asset_publisher/JrcRGi5UdnBO/content/id/3212053?p_p_id=101_INSTANCE_JrcRGi5UdnBO&_101_INSTANCE_JrcRGi5UdnBO_languageId=en_GB) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>53</sup> 'Interv'yu Postoyannogo predstavatelya Rossii pri mezhdunarodnyh organizacijah v Vene M.I.Ul'yanova,' *Izvestiya*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian federation, 2018, available at [https://www.mid.ru/web/guest/foreign\\_policy/international\\_safety/disarmament/-/asset\\_publisher/rp0fiUBmANaH/content/id/3365452](https://www.mid.ru/web/guest/foreign_policy/international_safety/disarmament/-/asset_publisher/rp0fiUBmANaH/content/id/3365452) (17 May, 2021).

<sup>54</sup> 'Rosatom Drifts Away from Iran,' *Kommersant*, December 5, 2019, available at <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/4181801> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>55</sup> 'U.S. to Cancel Sanction Waivers For Nuclear Projects in Iran,' *RBC*, May 28, 2020, available at <https://www.rbc.ru/politics/28/05/2020/5ecef4b49a794705e8b6d722> (17 May, 2021).

they contemplate imposing restrictions against the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> blocks of the NPP.<sup>56</sup>

The culmination of the U.S. disdain for international institutions and JCPOA was its attempt to reinstate all the UN sanctions, which were in force before the conclusion of JCPOA, invoking the snapback provision. Such a move, however, was rejected decisively by an overwhelming majority of UNSC members, including close U.S. partners.<sup>57</sup>

## IAEA Safeguards

In 2018 Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Nonproliferation Christopher Ford highlighted the differences on IAEA safeguards as one of the 'problem areas'.<sup>58</sup> By not requiring an Additional Protocol, he continued, for the construction of nuclear power plants (NPPs) Russia is advancing its political agenda rather than the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Russia indeed does not have the same requirements for nuclear cooperation with its partners as the United States. This, however, is not a deviation from the nonproliferation regime: Additional Protocol is desirable, but not obligatory. While recognizing that the effective implementation of NPT relies on IAEA safeguards, Russia also warned that safeguards should remain impartial, technically credible, non-politicized, and based on the rights and obligations of the parties under their safeguards agreements. Moreover, as Russia sees it, the work on the state-level approach to IAEA safeguards is far from over. The development of new approaches to apply the IAEA safeguards should be transparent.<sup>59</sup>

The Russian stance on the issue is that the Agency should not go beyond what is explicitly envisaged in the safeguards agreements

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<sup>56</sup> 'U.S. Department of State: U.S. Sanction Waivers Do Not Apply to New Bushehr Blocks,' AtomInfo, May 28, 2020, available at <http://atominfo.ru/newsz01/a0652.htm> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>57</sup> 'Iran nuclear deal: UN rejects U.S. bid to "snapback" Iran sanctions,' BBC, available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-53912771> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>58</sup> The Challenge and the Potential of U.S. – Russian Nonproliferation Cooperation, U.S. Department of State, available at <https://www.state.gov/remarks-and-releases-bureau-of-international-security-and-nonproliferation/the-challenge-and-the-potential-of-u-s-russian-nonproliferation-cooperation/> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>59</sup> Ulyanov, Op. Cit

and should avoid politicization of the safeguards. In particular, verification activities should be carried out solely based on safeguard- and facility-relevant information rather than proceeding from assumptions about the state's intentions or intelligence provided by third parties.

Moscow is specifically concerned about the lack of regulation regarding the information the IAEA receives from third countries and calls for more transparency in the implementation of the SLC.

Another reason for concern is the fact that the motivations or 'state-specific factors' take precedence over capabilities. For instance, countries with a well-developed nuclear fuel cycle, are subject to fewer IAEA inspections, which, as Russia frames the issue, should be corrected.

For the United States, the priority in terms of IAEA safeguards is to universalize the Additional Protocol<sup>60</sup> to enforce the Additional Protocol as '*the de facto standard for assuring compliance with the Treaty's safeguards obligations*'. The U.S. delegate continued by claiming that '*who raise objections to the AP or who craft treaties that ignore this essential standard*' undercut the efficacy of the entire safeguards system.<sup>61</sup> Although not named directly, Russia is being criticized here for not demanding an AP in force for its nuclear cooperation with other nations.

It would be an overstatement to portray Russian and American differences regarding the peaceful uses cluster as something major. It would be more correct to say that the two countries have different priorities. For instance, the USA is of an opinion that universal adherence to the Additional Protocol should be a norm rather than an exception, whereas the Russian stance with this regard is more liberal. At the same time, Russia keeps a wary eye on the IAEA Secretariat state-level approach, giving it more leeway in planning safeguard activities. Russian diplomacy is mostly concerned about two circumstances. Firstly, the use of third-party information by the IAEA is not regulated. As it was manifested at the Board of Governors session in June 2020, the safeguards might be politicized based on the intelligence gathered by a third country (Israel in the Iranian

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<sup>60</sup> Wood, Op. Cit

<sup>61</sup> Statement by Ambassador Robert A. Wood Permanent Representative of the United States to the Conference on Disarmament, available at [https://reach-ingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom18/statements/27April\\_U.S..pdf](https://reach-ingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom18/statements/27April_U.S..pdf) (17 May, 2021).

case). The second concern is that instead of inspecting countries with developed nuclear fuel cycle (NFC) and focusing on facilities, the Agency may start to focus on motivations, which will make safeguards a tool of punishment.

## Why No Cooperation?

The Russian optics would be that Washington was no longer interested in pursuing multilateral diplomacy as such. Such impression is reinforced by the U.S. provocative actions concerning major arms control and nonproliferation mechanisms, its withdrawal JCPOA, INF Treaty, Open Skies Treaty. The reality of diplomacy, where a good deal is the one all parties are equally dissatisfied with, was inconsistent with the 'America first' credo. Under the Trump administration, there was little or no appetite for seeking well-balanced agreements in nonproliferation and arms control, the objective was to 'squeeze' the counteragents to get maximum concessions.

This intransigence is rooted in the rise of nationalism within the Republican Party, with nationalism being equal to the feeling of superiority over other nations. This perception that America is stronger and more righteous than other countries prompted Washington to pursue policies through strength, all or nothing deals.<sup>62</sup>

Such uncompromising policy, as Russia perceived it, warranted a determined response. While cooperation was still seen as desirable, Moscow did not intend to beg for such cooperation no matter what. Russia would be interested in returning to the previous level of nonproliferation dialogue and does not see NPT as an arena for confrontation, but, unfortunately, the U.S. political agenda under the Trump administration made such an outcome unlikely.

Another issue is that discussions within the NPT framework seem to have fallen victim of the 'general Russophobic approaches' and acute contradictions regarding the OPCW and the cases of chemical weapons use. The introduction of 'fleeting political discussions' to the nuclear nonproliferation agenda impedes fruitful cooperation between the two countries. After the United States and their allies voiced harsh accusations against Russian, the Russian delegation

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<sup>62</sup> 'Tomas Kantrimen o rossijsko-amerikanskikh strategicheskikh otnosheniyah,' *Novyj oboronnyj zakaz*, available at <https://dfnc.ru/arhiv-zhurnalov/2020-6-65/tomas-kantrimen-o-rossijsko-amerikanskikh-strategicheskikh-otnosheniyah/> (17 May, 2021).

had no other option but to respond, there was just no incentive to leave those unsubstantiated allegations unanswered.

Safeguards merit special consideration. High-ranking officials at the Russian Foreign ministry are concerned that the Russian reservations addressed to the IAEA Secretariat are interpreted as if 'the Russians were opposed to the SLC'. The motive for the Russian Federation to insist upon clarity is not just care for the viability of IAEA safeguards — Russian commercial interests are also at stake. The risk Russia sees is that safeguards will become an instrument of unfair competition aimed against Rosatom State Corporation.

A more long-term trend, as it is perceived in Moscow, is that in comparison to the Cold War period Russia is not regarded as a peer competitor, as an equal, and it is not considered a state whose views are to be taken into account. Therefore, Russia is somewhat losing interest in insulating nonproliferation from other issues in the bilateral relations, because there is a perception that such insulation serves only American interests. As a high-ranking Russian official told the author, *'it is not correct to isolate these issues. We had cooperation on JCPOA because the Americans thought that such cooperation was in their interest. And on other matters, we were treated with contempt. Therefore, it is not feasible to completely forget about the overall state of the bilateral relations'*.<sup>63</sup>

At the same time, the lack of cooperative efforts on the U.S. side may be accounted for by several circumstances.

Firstly, various administration officials have acknowledged the Trump administration's aspiration to do things differently than Obama. Trump's domestic considerations also played a role here: he wanted to make nonproliferation and arms control an instrument of seeking re-election rather than a means for advancing U.S. interests. That led to the U.S. diplomacy being focused on low-hanging fruits, which is not the case with U.S.-Russian dialogue.

Secondly, due to the turmoil in the U.S. home politics coupled with the overall deterioration of the bilateral relations, Russia has become a toxic subject in American politics. There are not so many people who would invest their political capital in the reconstruction of the bilateral dialogue. The mainstream in Washington is that Russia is culpable of whatever is damaging the U.S. interests. As it was

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<sup>63</sup> Interview with a senior Russian Foreign Ministry official in charge of nonproliferation matters.

the case with the alleged Russian bounties, however, far-fetched allegations may be, Washington will accept them at face value. Those who understand the futility of this state of affairs are not many and do not run the risk of going against the mainstream. The same goes with the former champions of the reset in the Russia-U.S. relationship suffered a severe blow after Crimea became part of Russia. 'Once beaten, twice shy' proverb is indeed applicable to this case. As John Bolton admits in his memoir, people in Washington D.C. were simply afraid to talk to Russian diplomats.

This argument, however, does not explain why it was impossible to keep at least some level of civility during the three PrepComs. Doing so, apparently, does not take that much political capital.

Thirdly, there is a belief in Washington that Russia will accuse the United States of whatever problem in the nonproliferation realm. Such perception might have been reinforced by the outcome of the 2015 Review Conference, when, as some U.S. experts<sup>6465</sup> put it, Russia prompted the U.S. to frustrate a consensus final document so as not to make concessions on the disarmament pillar. According to a former U.S. Department of Defense official, there is an impression that Russia is just playing politics at various international platforms, including the OPCW, IAEA, and others.<sup>66</sup>

Indeed, the two countries have become increasingly difficult partners in the nonproliferation domain. Based on Russia's stance on Iran, Syria the United States's perception is that Russia will put a premium on protecting its allies and partners rather than on advancing nonproliferation goals.<sup>67</sup> But Russia has no less reasons to claim that Washington is just playing politics. The conspicuous examples of that are the U.S. attempts to snap back UNSC sanctions on Iran or its hard line stance in the IAEA BoG, let alone its unconditional backing of the Israeli stance vis-à-vis the WMDFZ in the Middle East.

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<sup>64</sup> Potter, William C. (2016) 'The Unfulfilled Promise of the 2015 NPT Review Conference,' *Survival*, Volume 58, Issue 1, available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00396338.2016.1142144> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>65</sup> Countryman, Thomas (2020) 'Learning From the 2015 NPT Review Conference,' *Arms Control Today*, available at <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2020-05/features/learning-2015-npt-review-conference#bio> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>66</sup> Author's conversation with Dr. Philip Bleek, professor at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies

<sup>67</sup> Einhorn, Robert (2016) 'Prospects for U.S. Russian nonproliferation cooperation,' *Brookings*, available at <https://www.brookings.edu/research/prospects-for-u-s-russian-nonproliferation-cooperation/> (17 May, 2021).

Finally, there is a factor that is not often voiced and that was most explicitly expressed by Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Ford. Dr. Ford has characterized Russia as a 'grievance state', whose ideology is predicated upon affronted grandeur and the image of foreign enemies. Although challenging such ideologically charged claims is beyond the reach of this chapter, it would be reasonable to assume that the belief in Russia's weakness was shared by at least some decision-makers in the Trump administration. The notion of Russia's grievances and weakness is conducive to negotiations from the position of strength and does not foster real cooperation. While this may not be the main driving force of the U.S. unwillingness to cooperate, it still weighs in relevant deliberations.<sup>68</sup>

It is also a sad reality of the current nonproliferation diplomacy that a blame game against Russia incurs no costs. While the United States thanks to its broad alliances and networks of partnership may multiply their provocative position putting their lines in the mouth of their allies, the Russia CSTO allies prefer to keep a low profile at PrepComs.

## Prospects for the Future

As discussed above, the U.S.-Russia interaction on nonproliferation issues was almost to no avail. Meanwhile, the divide within the NPT is growing, which is the major danger for the resilience of the nuclear nonproliferation regime. The NNWS are dissatisfied with the lack of progress on nuclear disarmament, the Arab states (and, most notably, Egypt) are frustrated over the WMDFZ in the Middle East. The rift between Russia and the United States does nothing to mitigate the aforementioned perils.

The nonproliferation regime, perhaps, should be thankful to the COVID-19 global pandemic responsible for the postponement of the X NPT Review Conference. Should the conference have taken place in April-May 2020 as planned, it most likely would have ended without a consensus final document.<sup>69</sup> It is not that the nonproliferation

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<sup>68</sup> 'Ideological "Grievance States" and Nonproliferation: China, Russia, and Iran,' U.S. Department of State, available at <https://www.state.gov/ideological-grievance-states-and-nonproliferation-china-russia-and-iran/> (17 May, 2021).

<sup>69</sup> Rauf, Tariq (2020) 'Postponement of the 2020 NPT Review Conference: Possible Implications,' Working Paper prepared for the CNS Working Group on Alter-

regime would have collapsed the next day, but its credibility would have suffered a severe blow.

The post-COVID-19 Review Conference is neither safeguarded against a collapse, but the political time-out caused by the pandemic has at least allowed the major world capitals to take some time out. The election of Joseph R. Biden is a positive sign for the X NPT Review Conference, yet, the new administration will still have to address Trump's legacy.

Presumably, many in the world expect that with the new administration policymakers in Washington will experience a catharsis of sorts. Indeed, the Biden foreign policy has displayed more flexibility. Its fundamental objective is to restore the U.S. image abroad. To do so in the nonproliferation domain the U.S. extended the New START and began talks to return to JCPOA.

## Lessons Learned

**Lesson 1. The lack of constant dialogue is a major obstacle for cooperation.** It does not imply that constant dialogue will be able to resolve all the differences by itself, of course not. However, political will, which is instrumental in achieving progress, is impossible without dialogue at the working level. The point is that decision-makers are informed by their subordinates, and in the absence of workable exchanges the U.S. policymakers were misinformed by their subordinates.

A paradox of the U.S.-Russia nonproliferation dialogue under the Trump administration is that the more insistent Russia was on having such dialogue, the more resistant was the U.S. foreign policy establishment. Despite some high-level contacts, including Putin-Trump summits, which seemingly yielded positive results, those summits did not translate into a workable relationship. Perhaps, Russia should have initially lowered its expectations about the opportunities for cooperation under Trump. Its insistence only prompted 'hawks' in the American establishment to believe that Russia benefited from such cooperation to a greater extent than the United States, which is wrong. As Mr. Alexander Kolbin argues in his chapter, U.S.-Russian

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native Approaches to Nuclear Disarmament, Center for Nonproliferation Studies, available at [https://nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/postponement\\_2020\\_npt\\_reviewcon.pdf](https://nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/postponement_2020_npt_reviewcon.pdf) (17 May, 2021).



interaction is only fruitful when the two countries act as peers, as equals. Once Washington understands that it is no more equal than Russia is in terms of nonproliferation, a renewed dialogue will be possible.

It also should be recognized that during the Trump years the importance of personal diplomacy and summits was overestimated. Bureaucracy and the resistance from Congress may undermine whatever political progress if it suits their political agenda. Cooperation is only possible when both the bureaucracy and the political leadership are in touch with their counterparts. Hence, without interparliamentary and working-level interaction, progress on nonproliferation is more difficult to achieve.

**Lesson 2. Washington has become an unreliable partner.** In any negotiations with the U.S., Russia (as well as other stakeholders) will be cognizant that any long-term deals are almost impossible to achieve with Washington. Given the polarization in the U.S. political system, any agreements sealed by the incumbent administration are likely to be scrapped by the other one. Therefore, Russia will now make every effort to make any future agreement with the U.S. 'fool-tolerant'. In particular after U.S. efforts to invoke the snapback provisions of the JCPOA it is hardly conceivable that a similar provision will ever appear again.

For the same reason, at the upcoming Review Conference Russia would forge the cooperation between the entire P5 rather than seek some exclusive partnership with the United States. As demonstrated by the U.S. attempt to invoke the 'snapback' provision of JCPOA, other permanent members can still counterbalance the U.S. actions. The only area where privileged bilateral cooperation is still warranted is the field of arms control. Since the United Kingdom, France, and China are reluctant to join arms control, it is still up to solely Moscow and Washington to make progress in this area and elaborate such proposals, which would be attractive for the rest of the nuclear powers.

**Lesson 3. The U.S.-Russian current nonproliferation cooperation model is crisis management.** As it is evident from the 2017–2019 PrepComs the NPT diplomacy considerations are not a factor that is necessarily conducive to cooperation. Moreover, the two countries are rather unwilling to make concessions on crucial issues

(arms control) for the sake of abstract strengthening of the nuclear nonproliferation regime. It does not, however, take a lot of time for Moscow and Washington to establish constructive cooperation in the cases where NPT faces a threat from the others. Iran's nuclear program was a good example of that before 2017, countering TPNW negative impact on the NPT regime has become one of the areas for early-stage crisis management in the bilateral relations.

However, we are indispensable partners: not a lot can be done without at least the acquiescence of Moscow or Washington in solving real-world nonproliferation problems.

**Lesson 4. Politicization of the nuclear nonproliferation regime may be the new normal. It is, however, no justification for playing dirty tricks in diplomacy.** It is hardly arguable that Russian and the United States are distrustful of each other and hold different and sometimes opposite stances. The overall bilateral relationship is adversarial rather than cooperative, and it is not excluded that dirty linen of the bilateral relations will be washed in public on nonproliferation-related fora. Nonetheless, different stances do not justify dirty tricks: denying visas for delegations or purposeful misrepresentation of each other's policies. Such actions are below the dignity of diplomacy.

# CONCLUSIONS

*Vladimir Orlov,  
Sergey Semenov*

We are now more than half a century away from the first Soviet-U.S. exchanges on the matters of nuclear proliferation. The two countries' cooperation in constructing the edifice of the NPT alongside the negotiations of the Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT) was one of the first cases of great power cooperation during the Cold War. Moscow and Washington managed to overcome their geopolitical and ideological differences to advance their shared interest in averting the dangers posed by various Nth countries scenarios.

The bilateral interaction has undergone certain evolution. Logically, the fifty-plus years of bilateral exchanges may be divided into the following periods:

## **1966–1991: Superpower Cooperation**

This period began in 1966 when the Soviet Union and the United States managed to overcome their disagreements (or, rather, agreed to disagree) on Articles I, II of the NPT. Such convergence was not easy since it required Moscow and Washington to make palpable concessions and forego parts of their political agenda for the sake of achieving the NPT. With its own ups and downs, the epoch of the two superpowers' cooperation lasted until the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991.

At that time, the cooperation between Moscow and Washington was predicated on the following premises:

- In the mid-1960s, the Soviet Union and the United States began to feel that the international system and the bilateral confrontation had to be stabilized. Further proliferation of nuclear

weapons and nuclear know-how would have added additional unknowns to the security equation of that time. Moreover, the threat posed by proliferation was perceived as an acute one: Moscow and Washington had specific scenarios they wanted to avoid. The Soviet Union wanted to prevent the West Germany from acquiring nuclear weapons by any means (including through a multilateral alliance). The United States, in its turn, kept a wary eye on various Nth countries.

- The acquiescence of the other side with the proposed rules of the game was necessary to uphold the nonproliferation regime given that the world was divided into three blocks: capitalist world led by the United States, the socialist camp by the Soviet Union, and the third world where Moscow and Washington competed for influence.
- The two countries had equal 'sticks and carrots,' equal heft to punish for noncompliance with the nonproliferation regime, and equal benefits to offer for compliance.

One should not nurture illusions that the cooperation became self-sustained after the instrumentation of the NPT. It took another acute crisis prompted by India's peaceful nuclear explosion in 1974, Pakistan's nuclear aspirations, and further proliferation of nuclear know-how (especially, in light of West German aggressive nuclear marketing campaigns) for the Soviet Union and the United States to come together again. At this time, alongside other nuclear exporters of importance, they managed to institute the Nuclear Suppliers Group, which is as relevant today as it was at the moment of its creation.

The creation of several institutions led to the need for closer policy coordination between the superpowers within the NSG, IAEA, and at NPT Review Conferences. As William Potter notes, several ad hoc formats were created to discuss safeguards, export controls, and other nonproliferation-related business. Formal and informal exchanges within these formats created some modicum of mutual trust between the Soviet and American officials in charge of nonproliferation issues.

The exchanges on the South African nuclear program are particularly telling in this regard. In 1977, the Soviet Union provided its American counterparts with intelligence and satellite imagery, pointing at the preparations for a nuclear test in South Africa.

The subsequent discussions at the ambassadorial level and the U.S. demarche to the South African authorities are believed to have forestalled the test. In terms of the bilateral dialogue, this means that the level of mutual trust was perceived as adequate to exchange sensitive information.

The factor of mutual trust was instrumental in retaining at least some elements of the bilateral nonproliferation dialogue after the unraveling of the *détente* in 1979. Even under the Reagan administration, known for its hawkish policies, nonproliferation-related exchanges continued. It is also worth mentioning the successful outcome of the 1985 NPT Review Conference, which owes to the 'no polemics' approach adopted by Moscow and Washington. A successful Review Conference was seen as creating positive background for the resumption of the bilateral dialogue on arms control.

Gorbachev's 'new political thinking' was conducive to further progress in the dialogue on nuclear nonproliferation issues. A series of landmark bilateral agreements and non-binding measures reduced the risks of nuclear conflict and made an exceptional contribution to the fulfillment of NPT Article VI objectives.

The period also witnessed closer policy coordination on yet another state of proliferation concern – the DPRK. In 1986, the Soviet Union forced Pyongyang to join the NPT in exchange for the construction of a nuclear power plant. The CIA estimated that the move was designed to bolster the Soviet influence in the country. In 1987, the United States got intelligence information revealing the military character of Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions. Accordingly, Washington began consultations with Moscow on the matter. DPRK also became a topic of consultations on regional issues between Foreign Minister Shevarnadze and Secretary of State Baker in 1990. More technical details were discussed at the level of permanent representatives to the international organizations in Vienna.

The bottom line is that by 1991 Moscow and Washington elaborated mutual trust to discuss the issues of concern in confidence. The two countries appreciated the degree to which the other was informed, the capabilities of each other's intelligence services, and the ability of the partner to influence nonproliferation developments. Due to their unique standing, the Soviet Union and the United States were indispensable partners in the nuclear nonproliferation regime.

## 1991–2000: Rise and Fall of U.S. Patronage

The collapse of the USSR, however, brought about significant changes to the previous patterns of bilateral cooperation. First and foremost, the element of 'equality' was shattered. Russia temporarily lost the international influence of the former Soviet Union. In the list of U.S. foreign policy priorities, the Russian Federation moved from being a peer partner to one of many. The economic crisis following the disintegration of the USSR further increased the Russian dependence on major international financial centers. Moreover, in the view of the United States, the former Soviet Union states and the Russian Federation, in particular, became a nonproliferation concern given lax security conditions at the nuclear facilities.

These factors could not but affect the perception of Moscow in the U.S. policymaking circles. The pattern of the U.S. policy shifted to a partnership with the elements of patronage. Russia did not become an unimportant state, but it became to be seen as a difficult partner, which, however, can be persuaded with the help of sticks and carrots.

The period should not be viewed as completely negative. While it is true that the balance was heavily tilted in favor of the United States, the 1990s witnessed new forms of cooperation, which benefited Russia. American assistance should not be regarded as designed to somehow denigrate Russia or steal sensitive information. It is true that the United States first and foremost pursued its own interests. Yet, it is one of the rare cases where our interest overlapped though for different reasons. A testament to the fact that the Nunn-Lugar program was in the best of the Russian interests is the unchanged support of the Ministry of Defense for the program in spite of the changes in its leadership in the 1990s. HEU-LEU program and others were among the mutually beneficial projects, which allowed to maintain the Russian nuclear potential in the most difficult times of the economic crisis.

Notwithstanding the changed pattern, some significant breakthroughs were achieved in the international arena. A great success of bilateral coordination is the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995 and the successful conduct of the 2000 NPT Review Conference as well as the negotiations of the CTBT.

For the first time in the history of bilateral cooperation on nonproliferation, presidents were directly involved in nonproliferation

discussions: as discussed in Chapter 15, presidential-level conversations were instrumental in breaking impasses over Ukraine, Iran, HEU-LEU, etc. Such high-level engagement had its pros and cons, but it certainly brought additional momentum into the dialogue.

Yet, such a pattern of cooperation had its limits. The period when the security of Russian nuclear objects was accomplished on U.S. money could not last forever. As Russia war recovering from the internal economic and political crises and restoring its international standing, it no longer felt that patronage was an adequate form of cooperation.

### **2001–2008: Consolidation of Unilateralism in U.S. Approaches to Nonproliferation**

The period of 2001 – 2008 is most difficult to give a clear-cut characterization. On the one hand, this period was a period of enormous opportunities for the bilateral nonproliferation dialogue. The new challenge, the threat of WMD terrorism, which became particularly conspicuous after the 9/11 terror attacks, led to the establishment of completely new mechanisms: UNSCR 1540, GICNT, GNEP. A 123 Agreement was signed between our countries. The successful implementation of numerous projects within the CTR program translated into a bilateral expert-level dialogue of unprecedented depth and scope.

On the other hand, the enormous credit of confidence was squandered. With unilateralism prevailing in U.S. policy, the entire U.S. nonproliferation agenda came to be seen as false-bottomed. What on the surface was presented as 'nonproliferation-related' policies, in essence, were attempts to change regimes in hostile countries, preserve U.S. dominance in international affairs, and achieve absolute security for the United States at the expense of other members of the international community. Such a framing of the issue did not leave any significant room for an equitable bilateral partnership on nuclear nonproliferation issues.

Of particular importance is the shift towards new fora in the U.S. nonproliferation policy. The premium was put on ad hoc platforms, which would not strive to achieve global consensus and instead would align other members of the international community under the U.S. banners. In this context, the maintenance and preservation

of key institutions were relegated. The most eloquent proof of that is the 2005 NPT Review Conference, which ended up in failure.

Among the crucial milestones in this regard, one may cite:

- The U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, which only fueled the Russian perception of vulnerability;
- The 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq in circumvention of the United Nations Security Council;
- The 2008 Russian operation in Georgia, on which two narratives exist. Their detailed analysis is beyond the purposes of this book, however, the main outcome was the loss of mutual trust in the bilateral relations.

As a result of this period the bilateral cooperation on nuclear nonproliferation seems to have lost its confiding character. The perception in Moscow was that its sincere attempts to build a better relationship with Washington were to no avail. Washington just did not attach the same degree of importance to its relations with Russia. The issues of proliferation came to be politicized

## **2009–2015: Reset & Error 404**

The subsequent reset of the bilateral relations under the Obama administration created some momentum, which, regrettably, was not sustained. The negotiation of the New START Treaty created a positive backdrop for the success of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. At the same time, the decisions included in the final document of the 2010 RevCon were not necessarily underpinned by the real willingness to deliver.

Among the important milestones of the period is the termination of cooperation within the CTR with nothing else coming as a replacement. As is evident from open sources and official comments, there were plans to reformat the CTR into a truly equal partnership designed to reduce threats in third countries. However, there are not so many countries with WMD capabilities where the CTR-like program would have been applicable. A notable example is Syria. In 2013, Russian and the United States negotiated the chemical disarmament of the Syrian Arab Republic. However, that agreement did not translate into broader cooperation as Russia appears to have been unwilling to invest serious resources into the material



implementation of the deal. The overlap of interests was not as sizeable as it had been previously. The United States' objective was to prevent the Syrian chemical arsenal from being used against the civilian population or falling into the hands of non-state actors. The Russian objective was to prevent U.S. strikes against Syria. Moreover, the aftermath of the Syrian chemical disarmament has reduced the appetite for bilateral cooperation in this area since the two countries perceive each other as playing politics in this field.

The period is titled 'Error 404' because the two sides failed to find an adequate 'ideology' for their further cooperation on nuclear issues. Their visions of the future were no longer aligned. Mutual trust was at its lowest levels and continued to decline. The dialogue on strategic stability and nonproliferation was still sporadic in character and it is unclear if there really was room and demand for such dialogue.

Against this backdrop, U.S-Russian nonproliferation cooperation became case-by-case. If there is an acute threat to the nonproliferation regime, our countries would cooperate like was the case during the JCPOA negotiations. At the same time, the political momentum and trust to move to some sort of broader partnerships were lost. Perhaps, at that period U.S.-Russian nonproliferation cooperation finally lost its privileged status: the two sides started to perceive it the way it should be perceived: just one of the tools in the national security toolkit.

## **2016-present: Distrust & Rhetoric. What's Next?**

The toxic climate of the bilateral relations following the 2016 elections only gave additional arguments to the opponents of the dialogue. The two countries no longer perceive each other as trustworthy confiding partners. The Trump administration's unilateral policies aimed at the dismantlement of the nonproliferation and arms control architecture further confirmed the view that the United States could not be trusted as a partner, that one could not rely upon a country that unstable. The same goes with the United States: for not strictly nonproliferation-related reasons Russia is not regarded as a trustworthy partner.

One, however, should not fall into the temptation of writing off the Trump administration's nonproliferation policies as a nightmare

that is over. The fundamental objectives of the U.S. foreign policy remain the same, what will be different under the Biden administration is the style. The Israel lobby will still weigh in the American decision-making on the JCPOA or the WMDFZ in the Middle East. The aspiration to impose restraint on Iran's missile program and regional activities is still there. In order to achieve a broader deal with Iran the new U.S. administration may not be averse to pick the fruits of the maximum pressure campaign against Iran. The Trump administration was heavily tilted towards only stick approaches. The precedent Trump set is something few people around the world would love to see again, Therefore, with Biden in the White House, the carrots may be expected to be more attractive for U.S. counterparts in the world.

Even against this backdrop, there are objective premises for U.S.-Russian nuclear cooperation. Little in this field can be done by Moscow or Washington without each other's consent or acquiescence. And beyond any doubt the two countries will benefit from such cooperation, because neither Russia, nor the U.S. are interested in the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Russia and the United States still have a lot to cooperate on in the nuclear nonproliferation domain, their differences are not insurmountable.

In the disarmament pillar the two countries still share the basic philosophy, that of proper security environment needed for nuclear disarmament. The CEND initiative is not perfect, and its future is not preordained. Nonetheless, its core message will be relevant for many years ahead, and only cooperation between all the relevant stakeholders and, most notably, Russia and the United States will be conducive to such an environment. Moscow and Washington are also interested in preventing further polarization within the NPT, and doing so is impossible without their constructive cooperation.

One may argue that the long-term threat posed by the existence of TPNW is that at some juncture some states may decide to withdraw from the NPT, protesting against the perceived lack of disarmament. However theoretical and far-fetched such a scenario may seem, it is a good occasion to restart cooperation on preventing withdrawal from the NPT.

The existence of TPNW, at the same time, can theoretically contribute to solving one of the most acute disputes in U.S.-Russian nonproliferation dialogue — NATO nuclear sharing arrangements. If pro-nuclear disarmament sentiments prevail in the countries hosting U.S. nuclear weapons on their soil, prompting them to join

TPNW, the United States will have to withdraw their nuclear weapons from Europe (see the chapter by Nikita Degtyarev for more detail).

As discussed before, divergencies in the nonproliferation cluster are neither absolute. Once the United States returns to JCPOA, further cooperation on Iran will be possible. IAEA safeguards will neither be an apple of discord. As a recent joint study by Russian and American experts suggests, IAEA should clarify its internal procedures regarding the implementation of the SLC.

At the same time, some officials in Moscow are concerned and resentful that such cooperation is only possible when Washington thinks it is in its best interest to cooperate.

Is it in Russia's interest to cooperate with the United States? The answer is positive. Such cooperation, however, should be driven not by the assumptions regarding the importance of the U.S.-Russia dialogue, its special role in global security. Rather, the main driver of interaction is the still shared vision that the two countries want to avoid deepening division lines in the nuclear nonproliferation realm. Lack of bilateral engagement would do nothing to advance this vision.

But such cooperation should not be strictly bilateral: as the Trump presidency years have shown, the multilateral solutions tend to be more resilient.

There would be no comeback of the past patterns. Russia would probably like to return to the patterns of the 1960-1970s when the bilateral engagement was crucial to the nonproliferation regime and took place on equal footing. The United States would probably like to return to the experience of the 1990s when so many things, in their view, had been accomplished. But those patterns are the children of their times and are hardly viable nowadays.

The potential of U.S.-Russian engagement has not exhausted itself. However, the balance has indeed undergone tremendous changes since the late 1960s. Now, Russia's strength is more about carrots: Russian has a lot to offer in terms of peaceful uses of nuclear energy solutions and its ability to find compromises in international deal-making. The United States has been more reliant on sticks – the sanctions-based approach to advance the goals of nuclear nonproliferation. Their contribution to the area of peaceful uses has become less noticeable but is still relevant. Such a balance is conducive to solving the international nuclear nonproliferation issues.

Thus, bilateral cooperation is still viable and has its applications. The main obstacle is the lack of mutual trust: each side views the counterpart's political agenda as double-bottomed. This is natural given the current climate in the bilateral relations and there are no universal solutions to that. The only possible answer is to talk and to consult with each other. One should not nurture illusions that such dialogue will merge into a new reset, improve the overall state of bilateral relations. But it would fully unblock the potential of the bilateral dialogue as an instrument in the toolkit of nuclear nonproliferation policy.

# REFLECTIONS

U.S.-Russian relations in their current form infuse me with little optimism. Even where the common interest is evident — in the nuclear nonproliferation domain, in the cause of preventing a nuclear conflict, divergencies in stances are unprecedentedly wide, there being little or no normal respectful engagement. That is not who it should be! Our countries can and should cooperate — and the rest of the world expects such partnership from us.

That is why the new PIR Center monograph *Russia-U.S. Dialogue on Nuclear Nonproliferation: Lessons Learned and Road Ahead* is as relevant as never before. Its leitmotiv, the key lesson learned is that our nations' interests diverge in many areas, but that does not justify renouncing cooperation on everything.

For me as a practitioner rather than an armchair scholar, the importance of cooperation between our countries is no mere word and no abstraction. In the 1990s and later the 12<sup>th</sup> Main Directorate of the Ministry of Defense that I led in 1992-1997, was directly involved in the Cooperative Threat Reduction program. As a result of that program, we managed to concentrate all Soviet nuclear warheads on the Russian soil. À propos, it is 25 years since the last nuclear warheads were withdrawn from Ukraine following three years of intensive talks. The security and safety of transporting nuclear warheads by car and by rail had greatly increased. Emergency response system for addressing possible accidents with nuclear weapons has been established, emergency teams had been provided with modern equipment. In the 2000s nuclear arsenals were instrumented with nuclear security systems.

That was only one of many directions of CTR program: active work was carried out by Minatom to eliminate decommissioned

nuclear submarines. This activity was aimed at precluding fissile material smuggling, mitigating possible proliferation risks and was in line with both Russian and U.S. interests.

I am confident that there are enough spheres where Russian and U.S. interests overlap even now.

New PIR Center's book is addressed to those Russian and American specialists, diplomats, military men, scholars, who like their predecessors in Cold War times, defended the national interests through dialogue rather than confrontation. And I am sure that a thoughtful, unbiased reader will find good food for thought in this book.

In my view it is particularly important that there are many young people, junior specialists among the authors. If the youth on both shores of Bering Strait puts their thoughts into how to rectify the Russian-U.S. relations, I am optimistic.

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Member of PIR Center Executive Board

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We [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation] attentively follow and highly appreciate the multidimensional professional activity of PIR Center that you head in the field of nuclear nonproliferation and arms control. We are grateful for your efforts to maintain Track II dialogue in this area, which does not lose its importance with time passing.

We regard the monograph "*Russian-American Dialogue on Nuclear Nonproliferation: Lessons Learned and the Way Forward*" prepared by your team as an invitation to continue a substantive conversation on the entire set of nonproliferation problems. It is not only Moscow and Washington, but also other members of the international community that are interested in solving these problems. This multi-page work reflects the growing concern on both sides of the ocean, including in Russia, vis-à-vis the current state of the international legal architecture in the field of nonproliferation and the prospects for multilateral cooperation in this sensitive area.

For many years, our country and the United States have acted as the main intellectual drivers in the constructing the supporting

structures of the global nuclear nonproliferation regime, the cornerstone of which is the NPT. It is worth noting that despite all sorts of speculations and myths that are so widespread in the expert community, Russia has always pursued an independent and consistent line in the field of nonproliferation, invariably setting the tone and moving in the forefront of the relevant processes, never agreeing to be in the rear-guard. It is important that all the rational and positive from this legacy be not lost and "trampled" on the international agenda, which is becoming more and more intense from year to year.

Undoubtedly, the impressive burden of problems aggravating relations with the United States hinders our productive dialogue on many pressing issues of our time. We nevertheless regularly offer our American colleagues a direct conversation on specific issues with an eye to tangible results. We sincerely hope that Washington will hear us. As permanent members of the UN Security Council and NPT depositaries, our countries bear a special responsibility in world affairs, which makes Russian-American cooperation the only possible option and incetivizes the continuation of an intense search for the necessary solutions in the interests of ensuring lasting peace and security on Earth.

I am confident that the issue of nuclear nonproliferation is one of those areas where our basic interests with the United States converge, and cooperation is possible. For this, as all previous experience shows, our partners need to abandon opportunistic thinking and focus on those universal values and fundamental goals that are embodied in treaties and agreements that form the basis of the global non-proliferation regime. We hope that the Americans, who have made many grave mistakes in recent years, will be able to draw the right conclusions, restore their negotiability and authority in nonproliferation matters.

All that remains is to wish the PIR Center, without lowering the dynamics, to continue its research, focusing on the unifying principles that cement Russian-American relations, and contributing to the deepening of equal and constructive interaction between our countries, proceeding from common interests and relying on the principle of common and indivisible security.

**Sergey Ryabkov**  
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs  
of the Russian Federation

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The publication of PIR Center's collective monograph «Russian-American Dialogue on Nuclear Nonproliferation: Lessons and Prospects» is an example of a deep, thoughtful study of the evolution of cooperation between Russia and the United States in this area. The authors cover in detail the key milestones of the interaction between the two countries, put forward forecasts and recommendations.

It is difficult to overestimate the relevance of the problems discussed in the book. Nonproliferation issues have been at the center of attention of the world community for decades. The monograph rightly notes the merit of multilateral platforms, where the main efforts were made to create the nonproliferation architecture. Today we can say with confidence that the system is effective.

I fully share the authors' thesis that the NPT remains the cornerstone in the field of nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament. It is no coincidence that the first part of the monograph is devoted to the history of its development. The accents set in the research once again confirm how important it is to prevent the erosion of the Treaty, to continue to create mechanisms that would strengthen its foundation.

The advantage of this publication is that it gives an objective picture of Russia's contribution to solving nonproliferation problems. The authors focus on the results that we have been able to achieve together with our partners. In particular, we managed to lay the foundations for a number of effective formats on safeguards and export control issues, including the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

Experts place special emphasis on Russian-American cooperation. The second part of the study clearly demonstrates how effective such cooperation can be. First of all, on the issues of nonproliferation of nuclear weapons in South Asia, as well as in contacts on the Iranian nuclear program.

The analysis carried out by the authors confirms the need to accelerate efforts to stop regional proliferation threats. In this regard, we hope that in the near future it will be possible to resolve the situation around the Iranian nuclear program, returning the operation of the JCPOA to a stable channel. At the same time, we need to become more active on the Korean Peninsula, to make it free of any type of WMD and their delivery vehicles.

Arms control is an integral part of strengthening the global security architecture. In the third part of the work, specialists focus on the Soviet-American negotiations on the Strategic Arms Reduction



Treaty, compare the countries' approaches to "global zero," and discuss NATO's nuclear sharing missions.

The questions raised in the monograph once again remind us of the special responsibility that lies with Russia and the United States. This, by the way, was again demonstrated at the June 16 summit in Geneva, when the Presidents of Russia and the United States reaffirmed their commitment to implementing joint goals to ensure predictability in the strategic sphere, reduce the risks of armed conflicts and the threat of nuclear war.

I am convinced that today, more than ever, it is important that words turn into deeds. Our countries, being permanent members of the UN Security Council and possessors of the world's largest nuclear arsenals, are simply "doomed" to cooperate. It is not only about strengthening bilateral ties, but also about the entire international structure serving the purposes of the nonproliferation regime.

I support the idea of analysts that interaction in this area meets the interests of both countries. This kind of work is especially in demand now, when, due to the epidemiological situation, the number of face-to-face meetings has seriously decreased.

In conclusion, I would like to note that Russian official representatives have always treated the recommendations of PIR Center specialists with respect and attention. Their expertise has repeatedly been in demand at various specialized forums, incl. within the framework of NPT Review Conferences. I am confident that this work will make a worthy contribution to the development of Russian approaches to combatting modern challenges and threats to nonproliferation.

**Anatoly Antonov,**  
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary  
of the Russian Federation to the  
United States of America

# LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>ABM</b>	– Anti-ballistic Missile Treaty;
<b>ACDA</b>	– Arms Control and Disarmament Agency;
<b>ALCM</b>	– Air-Launched Cruise Missile;
<b>AP</b>	– Additional Protocol;
<b>CD</b>	– Conference on Disarmament;
<b>CEND</b>	– Creating Environment for Nuclear Disarmament;
<b>CIS</b>	– Commonwealth of Independent States;
<b>CTBT</b>	– Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty;
<b>CTR</b>	– Cooperative Threat Reduction;
<b>CWC</b>	– Chemical Weapons Convention;
<b>DCA</b>	– dual-capable aircraft;
<b>DPRK</b>	– Democratic People’s Republic of Korea;
<b>ENDC</b>	– Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee;
<b>EU</b>	– European Union;
<b>FSU</b>	– Former Soviet Union;
<b>GICNT</b>	– Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism;
<b>GNEP</b>	– Global Nuclear Energy Partnership;
<b>GP</b>	– Global Partnership;
<b>HB</b>	– heavy bomber;
<b>HEU</b>	– high enriched uranium;
<b>IAEA</b>	– International Atomic Energy Agency
<b>ICBM</b>	– intercontinental ballistic missile;
<b>INF</b>	– Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty;
<b>IPNDV</b>	– International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification;
<b>IUEC</b>	– International Uranium Enrichment Center;
<b>JCPOA</b>	– Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
<b>LEU</b>	– low enriched uranium;

<b>MEWMDFZ</b>	– zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East;
<b>MFA</b>	– Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
<b>MLF</b>	– Multilateral Nuclear Force
<b>NAC</b>	– New Agenda Coalition;
<b>NAM</b>	– Non-Aligned Movement;
<b>NATO</b>	– North Atlantic Treaty Organization;
<b>New START</b>	– New Strategic Arms Reductions Treaty;
<b>NFC</b>	– nuclear fuel cycle;
<b>NNWS</b>	– Non-Nuclear-Weapons State;
<b>NPG</b>	– Nuclear Planning Group;
<b>NPP</b>	– nuclear power plant;
<b>NPT</b>	– Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;
<b>NPTREC</b>	– NPT Review and Extension Conference;
<b>NSG</b>	– Nuclear Suppliers Group;
<b>NSNW</b>	– non-strategic nuclear weapons;
<b>NWFZ</b>	– nuclear-weapons-free zone;
<b>NWS</b>	– Nuclear-Weapons State
<b>PMDA</b>	– Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement;
<b>PrepCom</b>	– Preparatory Committee;
<b>PTBT</b>	– Partial Test Ban Treaty;
<b>R&amp;D</b>	– research & development;
<b>RevCon</b>	– NPT Review Conference;
<b>SALT</b>	– Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty;
<b>SDI</b>	– Strategic Defense Initiative;
<b>SLBM</b>	– submarine-launched ballistic missile;
<b>SLCM</b>	– sea-launched cruise missile;
<b>SNF</b>	– spent nuclear fuel;
<b>SORT</b>	– Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty;
<b>START</b>	– Strategic Arms Reductions Treaty;
<b>SVR</b>	– Foreign Intelligence Service of the Russian Federation;
<b>TNW</b>	– tactical nuclear weapons;
<b>TPNW</b>	– Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons;
<b>UNAEC</b>	– United Nations Atomic Energy Commission;
<b>UNGA</b>	– United Nations General Assembly;
<b>UNSC</b>	– United Nations Security Council;
<b>UNSCR</b>	– United Nations Security Council resolution;
<b>WMD</b>	– weapons of mass destruction;
<b>WMDFZ</b>	– zone free of weapons of mass destruction.

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