

Russia/US New START Extension Talks, No Resolution of Major Differences

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In not renewed, New START expires on February 5, 2021.

Months earlier, Trump falsely called it a “bad deal.”

He never read it and knows no more about it than what Pompeo and other regime hardliners told him.

The decade-ago agreement is the only remaining arms control treaty between Russia and the US.

Preserving it is vital to avoid a greater arms race than already ongoing.

Between them, Russia and the US have an estimated 94% of nuclear warheads.

Trump regime hardliners want China included in a new deal.

Beijing earlier said nuclear talks with the US won't happen unless it's agreeable to nuclear parity — what's clearly off the table for bipartisan militarists in Washington.

New START limits deployed strategic nuclear warheads and bombs to 1,550.

Deployed ICBMs, submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), and nuclear-capable heavy bombers are limited to 700.

Deployed and non-deployed ICBM launchers, SLBM launchers, and bombers are limited to 800 — about 50% fewer than START I permitted.

New START doesn't limit non-deployed ICBMs and SLBMs, but monitors their numbers and locations.

On-site monitoring and verification were agreed on to assure both countries remain in compliance with their obligations.

If New START isn't renewed and expires next February, limits on the world's largest nuclear arsenals no longer will exist for the first time in nearly half a century.

Two days of Russia/US New START renewal talks in Vienna ended Tuesday with both sides miles apart, including the Trump regime's demand for China to be involved.

Russia's representative to Vienna-based international organizations Mikhail Ulyanov said if China joins New START talks, nuclear armed Britain and France should be included.

Due to their “non-readiness” to be involved, the “US and Russia should concentrate on (a) bilateral track.”

If talks remain stalemated between both countries, Ulyanov called for extending the current agreement beyond its February 2021 expiration date while they continue trying to find common ground.

Trump regime arms control negotiator Marshall Billingslea indicated a willingness to discuss the idea if Russia agrees to New START changes the US side demands, falsely claiming the current agreement is “deeply flawed,” adding:

“If we can fix things (the Trump regime wants changed), and if we can address all warheads, and if we do so in a way and if we can address all warheads, and if we do so in a way that’s extendable to China, then we would be prepared.”

“We’re not going to take a bad deal back to Trump, but we would recommend that we consider, that he consider, an extension of New START this year.”

Russian negotiator in Vienna/Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov said Moscow “doesn’t put forward any precondition” on an extension, adding:

“We got the impression that the option of extension of START is not closed, but the US hesitates to say ‘yes’ and has additional ideas on what needs to be done.”

So far, no follow-up meeting is scheduled.

Billingslea said it’s up to Russia to accept US pre-conditions for additional talks before the Trump regime is willing to hold them.

Sergey Lavrov stressed that New START extension talks should proceed with no preconditions.

The US aim is all about seeking a strategic advantage over other countries, mainly Russia and China.

On Tuesday, Billingslea said most likely Putin and Trump would meet if both sides agree on extending New START.

At this time, there are no preparations for a summit-level meeting to take place.

Ryabkov explained talks ended on Tuesday with “the priorities of the US and Russia at this stage” far apart, adding:

“Russia favors extending New START, but is not ready to pay any price for it.”

The US side “expect(s) us to move toward their demands, and, by and large, they avoid answering the direct and logical question.”

“Are they ready to extend the agreement without preconditions, as proposed by President Vladimir Putin?”

"There is still no answer to this question. (T)he current consultations have not changed this situation."

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