

Russian Foreign and Defense Ministers on US Treaty Breaches

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Region: [Russia and FSU](#), [USA](#)

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*On February 2, Russian **Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov** and **Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu** briefed **Vladimir Putin** on the [history of US Treaty breaches](#) – since the Clinton co-presidency.*

It's nothing new, ongoing for the past 20 years or longer. In 1987, the treaty was agreed on by **Mikhail Gorbachev** and **Ronald Reagan**, a landmark agreement.

According to Lavrov, the US has been violating the treaty at least since 1999 – by “testing combat unmanned aerial vehicles that have the same characteristics as land-based cruise missiles banned by the treaty,” adding:

Since then or perhaps earlier, the US has been “us(ing) ballistic target missiles for testing their missile defense system, and in 2014 they began (deploying) their missile defense system in Europe” close to Russia’s borders – capable of carrying nuclear warheads for offense.

“(T)his is an outright violation of the treaty,” Putin stressed. Russia has been aware of US treaty breaches at least for the past 20 year. Moscow is in full compliance. No evidence suggests otherwise, none cited by the Trump regime in its pullout announcement.

According to Lavrov, the US deployed illegal missiles in Romania. Preparations are underway to position them in Poland, Japan, and elsewhere, including in US territory.

The Trump regime’s 2018 Nuclear Posture Review calls for developing low-yield mini-nukes, capable of being mounted on INF Treaty banned intermediate-range missiles. They’re being produced in America, Lavrov explained.

Last October, the Trump regime declared its intention to withdraw from the INF Treaty.

“We did everything we could to save the treaty, considering its importance in terms of sustaining strategic stability in Europe, as well as globally,” said Lavrov – its efforts in vain based on Friday’s US pullout announcement.

Russia’s Defense Ministry “proposed unprecedented transparency measures that went far beyond our obligations under the INF Treaty in order to persuade the US that Russia was not in violation of this essential instrument.”

“However, the US torpedoed these proposals. Instead, the US presented yet another ultimatum. It is obvious that we cannot accept it since it contradicts

the INF Treaty in both letter and spirit.”

Trump’s selection of neocon extremists Pompeo at State and Bolton as national security advisor doomed the treaty, along with any possibility for improved relations with Russia – all the moreso because of overwhelming congressional hostility.

Only five congressional lawmakers (3 House members and 2 senators) opposed the Orwellian July 2017 Countering America’s Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA – imposing stiff illegal sanctions on Russia, Iran and North Korea besides others in place. Only Security Council members can legally impose sanctions on UN member states.

The Trump regime’s INF Treaty pullout increases the risk of nuclear confrontation by accident or design.

Despite Russia’s best efforts, the Bush/Cheney regime withdrew from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty between the Soviet Union and US in 2002.

It limited the number of anti-ballistic missile systems in defending against ballistic missiles able to carry nuclear warheads.

The treaty dissolved because of “the unwillingness of the United States to take up Russia’s concerns in earnest,” Lavrov explained, adding:

“In 2007, we made another gesture of good will at your instructions by coming forward with an initiative that consisted of working together to resolve the problems related to US missile defense system’s third positioning area in Europe. Once again, the US” rejected the proposal.

In 2010, Russia urged the US and Europe to work cooperatively on a continental missile defense system. The Obama regime rejected the idea.

The US demands all other countries “come to terms with its missile defense approach,” said Lavrov – despite “the obvious risks and threats to our security posed by this approach” – by positioning its missile defense systems for offense close to Russia’s borders for a preemptive first strike advantage with nuclear weapons.

Further Russian outreach to the US on this issue achieved nothing. In 2014, US dialogue on missile defense ended when the Obama regime declared its intention to deploy its missile-defense systems for offense in Eastern Europe, East Asia, Alaska, and on America’s east coast.

Time and again, the US breaches its treaty obligations, including the landmark 1970 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty – agreed to by all nations except Israel, India, Pakistan, North Korea, and South Sudan.

“(D)espite numerous reminders on our part, the United States commits serious violations of the Treaty in its actions within NATO. The Treaty commits nuclear powers to refrain from transferring the corresponding nuclear technologies,” Lavrov explained.

US-led NATO engages in so-called joint nuclear drills with non-nuclear states, a flagrant NPT violation. The Obama regime failed to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), breaking a campaign promise.

Russia is a CTBT signatory. Its entry into force requires US participation, what it refuses to do. Notably it's "completely off the radar," now, said Lavrov – given the Trump regime's rage to increase the power and destructiveness of its nuclear arsenal.

Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties I and II remain in force. START I expired in 2009. The US and Russia agreed to continue observing its terms. For how much longer remains uncertain.

New START agreed on by Obama and Russian President Medvedev in 2010 expires in 2021 if not renewed. Given extreme US hostility toward Russia, renewal is highly unlikely.

According to Lavrov, talks with the US to assure it complies with its treaty obligations have achieved no results since 2015, adding:

"(R)epeated proposals by Russia to launch talks on extending the Strategic Offensive Arms Treaty beyond 2021, when its first term is set to expire, have fallen on deaf ears in the United States. All we hear is that the decision on the New START has yet to be taken."

"(T)he situation is quite alarming. (T)he decision taken by the United States on the INF Treaty is of course a matter of serious concern for the entire world, especially for Europe."

"Nevertheless, the Europeans followed in the footsteps of the United States with all NATO members, speaking out in explicit support of the position adopted by the United States to refrain from any discussions on mutual concerns."

"All we hear are groundless ultimatums requiring us to take unilateral measures without any evidence to support unfounded accusations."

Defense Minister Shoigu explained that US treaty violations have been going on for years, including development and production of short-and-intermediate-range ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads, serious INF Treaty breaches before Friday's announcement.

Shoigu proposed the following retaliatory measures:

1. Undertaking R & D efforts to "creat(e) land-based modifications of the sea-based Kalibr launching systems."
2. R & D "followed by development and engineering to create land-based launchers for hypersonic intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles."

Putin agreed, saying

"(t)his is what we will do. Our response will be symmetrical," including by "suspending" Russia's participation in the INF Treaty in response to the US pullout.

At the same time, Putin wants to avoid an expensive arms race, asking if the above proposals can be accomplished through existing budget allocations.

Shoigu believes so in 2019.

Putin: "This should not entail any increases in the Defense Ministry's budget."

Shoigu: "Yes."

Putin: "Good," adding he proposes modifying the format of meeting every six months "to discuss the implementation of the state defense order with the commanders of the armed forces and the defense sector representatives."

He wishes to stay current on how defense initiatives are progressing, including for Russia's most advanced weapons systems.

The US announced plans to weaponize space. Putin wants to know what's being done to neutralize them.

He asked Lavrov and Shoigu not to initiate talks with the US on arms control issues unless and until the US is "ready to engage in equal and meaningful dialogue on this subject that is essential for us," Russia's allies, "and the entire world, adding:

Moscow will develop and produce but not deploy weapons violating the INF Treaty unless the US takes this step first.

If this occurs, which is highly likely, he asked Lavrov and Shoigu to "closely monitor developments and promptly submit proposals on ways to respond."

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