

**SECRETARY OF STATE HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY ON THE NEW START TREATY
SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE
MAY 18, 2010**

Chairman Kerry, Senator Lugar, and members of the Committee, thank you for calling several hearings on the new START treaty and for the invitation to appear before you. I appreciate your commitment to this critical issue.

It is a pleasure to testify with Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen. We share a strong belief that the New START Treaty will make our country more secure. We urge the Senate to approve it.

Some argue that we don't need the New START Treaty. But the choice before us is between this treaty and no treaty governing our nuclear security relationship with Russia; between this treaty and no agreed verification mechanisms on Russia's strategic nuclear forces; between this treaty and no legal obligation for Russia to maintain its strategic nuclear forces below an agreed level.

As Secretary Gates has pointed out, every previous President who faced this choice has found that the United States is better off with a treaty than without one, and the U.S. Senate has always agreed. The 2002 Moscow Treaty was approved by a vote of 95 to 0. The 1991 START Treaty – 93 to 6.

More than two years ago, President Bush began the process that has led to the New START Treaty we are discussing today. It, too, has already received bipartisan support. As James Schlesinger, the Secretary of Defense for Presidents Nixon and Ford and Secretary of Energy for President Carter, declared before this committee, "It is obligatory for the United States to ratify" it.

Today, I'd like to discuss what the New START Treaty is, and what it isn't.

It is a treaty that, if ratified, will provide stability, transparency, and predictability for the two countries with more than 90 percent of the world's nuclear weapons.

It is a treaty that will reduce the permissible number of Russian and U.S. deployed strategic warheads to 1,550. This is a level we have not reached since the 1950s. In addition, each country will be limited to 700 deployed strategic delivery vehicles and 800 deployed and non-deployed strategic missile launchers and heavy bombers. These targets will help the United States and Russia bring our deployed strategic arsenals, which were sized for the Cold War, to levels that are appropriate to today's threats.

It is a treaty that will help us track remaining weapons with an extensive verification regime. This regime draws upon our experience over the last 15 years in implementing the original START Treaty, which expired in December. The verification measures reflect today's realities, including the fewer number of facilities in Russia

compared with the former Soviet Union. And for the first time, we will be monitoring the actual numbers of warheads on deployed strategic missiles.

Moreover, by bringing the New START Treaty into force, we will strengthen our national security more broadly, including by creating greater leverage to tackle a core national security challenge: nuclear proliferation.

I'm not suggesting that this treaty alone will convince Iran or North Korea to change their behavior. But it demonstrates our leadership and strengthens our hand as we seek to hold other governments accountable—whether that means further isolating Iran and enforcing the rules against violators, or convincing other countries to get a better handle on their own nuclear materials. And it conveys to other nations that we are committed to real reductions, and to holding up our end of the bargain under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. In my discussions with foreign leaders, including earlier this month in New York, I have already seen how the New START Treaty makes it difficult for other countries to shift the conversation to the United States.

A ratified New START Treaty would also continue our progress toward broader U.S.-Russian cooperation, which is critical to other foreign policy priorities, including dealing with Iran's nuclear program, cooperating on Afghanistan, and pursuing increased trade and investment. Already, the negotiations over this treaty have advanced our efforts to reset the U.S.-Russian relationship. There is renewed vigor in our discussions on every level, including those between our presidents, our military leaders, and with my counterpart, Foreign Minister Lavrov. Our approach to this relationship is pragmatic and clear-eyed. And our efforts—including this treaty—are producing tangible benefits for U.S. national security.

At the same time, we are deepening and broadening our partnerships with our allies. In my recent meetings with the other NATO members, they expressed an overwhelmingly positive and supportive view of the New START Treaty.

There are also things that this treaty will not do.

As Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen will discuss more fully, the New START Treaty does not compromise the nuclear force levels we need to protect ourselves and our allies.

The treaty does not infringe upon the flexibility we need to maintain our forces, including bombers, submarines, and missiles, in the way that best serves our national security interests.

The treaty does not constrain our missile defense efforts. Those of you who worked with me in the Senate know I take a back seat to no one in my strong support of missile defense, so I want to make this point very clearly. Nothing in the New START Treaty constrains our missile defense efforts.

- Russia has issued a unilateral statement on missile defense expressing its view. We have not agreed to this view and we are not bound by it. In fact, we've issued our own statement making clear that the United States intends to continue improving and deploying its missile defense systems. Nothing in the treaty will constrain our missile defense efforts.
- The treaty's preamble does include language acknowledging the relationship between strategic offensive and defensive forces. But this is simply a statement of fact. It does not constrain our missile defense programs in any way. In fact, a similar provision was part of the original START Treaty and did not prevent us from developing our missile defenses.
- The treaty does contain language prohibiting the conversion or use of offensive missile launchers for missile defense interceptors and vice versa. But as General O'Reilly, our Missile Defense Director, has said, it is actually cheaper to build smaller, tailor-made missile defense silos than to convert offensive launchers. And the treaty does not restrict us from building new missile defense launchers, 14 of which we're currently constructing in Alaska.

This Administration has requested \$9.9 billion for missile defense in FY 2011, almost \$700 million more than Congress provided in FY 2010. This request reflects our commitment to missile defense.

Finally, the New START Treaty does not restrict our ability to modernize our nuclear weapons complex to sustain a safe, secure, and effective deterrent. This Administration has called for a 10-percent increase in FY 2011 for overall weapons and infrastructure activities, and a 25-percent increase in direct stockpile work. During the next ten years, this Administration proposes investing \$80 billion into our nuclear weapons complex.

Let's take a step back and put the New START Treaty into a larger context. This treaty is only one part of our country's broader effort to reduce the threat posed by the deadliest weapons the world has ever known. And we owe special gratitude to Senator Lugar for his leadership and commitment on this issue.

This Administration is facing head-on the problems of nuclear proliferation and terrorism. We have several coordinated efforts, including our new Nuclear Posture Review, the recently concluded Nuclear Security Summit, and the ongoing Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference. While a ratified New START Treaty stands on its own in terms of national security benefits for our country, it is also part of our broader efforts.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, and members of the Committee, thank you again for having us here today and for all your past—and future—attention to the New START Treaty. We stand ready to work with you as you undertake your constitutional responsibilities, and to answer all your questions today and in the coming weeks.

We are confident that at the end of this process, you will come to the same conclusion that we and many others have reached—that the New START Treaty makes our country more secure and merits the Senate’s advice and consent to ratification.

Thank you.