

Dick Lugar

U.S. Senator for Indiana

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Opening Statement for Hearing on the New START Treaty

U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Ranking Member Dick Lugar made the following statement at today's hearing.

I join the Chairman in welcoming our two distinguished witnesses, former National Security Advisers Brent Scowcroft and Stephen Hadley. Having served for 29 years in the U.S. Air Force and in the White House under Presidents Nixon, Ford, and George H.W. Bush, General Scowcroft was at the forefront of U.S. strategic policy during many critical periods. Steve Hadley was a leader in shaping U.S. arms control policy and managing our relationship with Russia while in the White House and as Assistant Secretary of Defense.

In recent weeks, the Foreign Relations Committee has heard testimony on the New START Treaty from former Secretaries of State Henry Kissinger and James Baker and former Secretaries of Defense James Schlesinger and William Perry, as well as from the Obama Administration's national security team. The Committee also has met in closed session with the New START Treaty's negotiators, and will continue to hold hearings throughout this month.

Following commitments made at the 2001 Crawford Summit, Presidents Bush and Putin signed the Moscow Treaty in 2002. This strategic arms treaty built upon the reductions codified in START I by committing both parties to reduce operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads to between 1,700 and 2,200 by December 31, 2012.

As the first strategic arms control treaty negotiated after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Moscow Treaty advanced an agenda with Russia based on mutual interests and ensured that U.S. and Russian arms control cooperation did not stagnate.

The Moscow Treaty relied entirely upon the verification and transparency measures established by START I, which expired on December 5, 2009. In President Bush's letter of transmittal to the Senate accompanying the Moscow Treaty, he noted that START I would "remain the foundation for confidence, transparency, and predictability in further strategic offensive reductions."

Thus, while reductions of deployed strategic nuclear warheads have continued apace for both parties since December, our confidence regarding Russian nuclear strategic offensive forces has been narrowed. Without a binding treaty, there will be no basis for on-site verification of the reductions and limitations from previous arms control treaties or the broader status of Russia's nuclear posture.

As I have stated before, verification is a key to Senate consideration of arms control treaties. The Bush Administration recognized the perils posed to our national security absent verification measures. Near the end of his term, President Bush concluded a Strategic Framework Declaration with Russia, which stated that: "We will continue development of a legally binding post-START arrangement."

Most of the basic strategic concerns that motivated Republican and Democratic Administrations to pursue nuclear arms control with Moscow during the last several decades still exist today. We are seeking mutual reductions in nuclear warheads and delivery vehicles that contribute to stability and reduce the costs of maintaining the weapons. We are pursuing transparency of our nuclear arsenals, backed up by strong verification measures and formal consultation methods. We are attempting to maximize the safety of our nuclear arsenals and encourage global cooperation toward non-proliferation goals. And we are hoping to solidify U.S.-Russian cooperation on nuclear security matters, while sustaining our knowledge of Russian nuclear capabilities and intentions.

The Committee is pleased to have both of you here to examine the New START Treaty in relation to these objectives, and I look forward to our discussion.

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