

Testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on an “Arms Race 2.0”

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Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Shaheen, and Distinguished Members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee: It is a distinct honor to testify to you today about the grave challenges facing us in the nuclear realm. This hearing was called to reflect on the advent of an “Arms Race 2.0,” and it is indeed a welcome opportunity to explore the fundamentally different nuclear threat environment confronting the United States.

If I may, Mr. Chairman, I would like to summarize some key points in my oral testimony and have the rest of my written testimony placed on the record. Is that acceptable to you?

I would also like to welcome the presence at this table of a distinguished colleague and counterpart, Marshall Billingslea, with whom I have worked, and sometimes sparred, for many years. I believe I first encountered Mr. Billingslea when I testified to then-Chairman Jesse Helms before this committee in the 1990s.

In 2022-23, we had an important chance to work together on the Strategic Posture Commission of the United States, a congressionally mandated study that brought together eminent colleagues from both sides of the political aisle, to examine the increasingly aggressive behaviors of Russia and China over the decade since the previous Strategic Posture Commission published its report in 2009. That report had not even touched on China as a strategic threat to the United States, but in ensuing years, the situation has changed dramatically with China’s rapid buildup of both conventional and nuclear forces.

This dire situation, combined with Russia’s aggressive behavior against Ukraine and the United States and its allies, formed the basis of a remarkable consensus among very different members of the bipartisan commission. I was proud to join with my colleagues in approving the final report. A few of its findings are worth excerpting here:

Regarding the threat in 2027-35, the timeframe of the report, the Commissioners found as follows:

The United States will face two nuclear peer adversaries for the first time. The Commission concludes that China’s rapid expansion of its nuclear forces and Russia’s increasing reliance on nuclear weapons and potentially expanded nuclear arsenal are an unprecedented and growing threat to U.S. national security and potentially the U.S.

homeland...the new partnership between Russian and Chinese leaders poses qualitatively new threats of potential opportunistic aggression and/or the risk of future cooperative two-theater aggression...Due to China's nuclear build-up, the United States will no longer be able to treat the Chinese nuclear threat as a "lesser included case" of the Russian nuclear threat.¹

The implications of this threat environment were also very clear to the Commission:

U.S. defense strategy to address the two-nuclear-peer threat requires a U.S. nuclear force that is either larger in size, different in composition, or both; therefore, decisions must be made now to meet evolving deterrence requirements.²

Today we are trying, precisely, to make decisions to meet evolving deterrence requirements, and I welcome this Committee's evident willingness to grapple with these critical issues. Your work will be a vital contributor to process. I will do my best to assess how I see the top priorities.

First, we must do no harm. The Strategic Posture Commission received extensive briefings about the Program of Record (POR) underway to modernize the nuclear triad of the United States. The Commissioners concluded, after careful consideration, that the POR was necessary but not sufficient to address the nuclear crisis that we are facing. We were also adamant that the POR should be completed as quickly as possible in its current form, without reopening it to add additional requirements, because we were concerned that re-opening the POR would force delays on vital triad modernization programs such as the Columbia SSBN and the Sentinel ICBM.

Second, we must think carefully about the timing of the threat and plan our responses accordingly. We are all concerned that the Chinese are rapidly building up their warhead stocks and may reach 1500 total warheads in 2035.³ Even if they somehow were able to add an additional 1000 to that 1500 by 2035, they would not possess the same hedge that we do with the approximately 3700 nuclear warheads in our total stockpile.⁴ The Chinese might deploy 1500 total warheads against us in 2035—the kernel of our two-peer problem—but they would be doing so without any warheads in reserve. No hedge.

We, by contrast, would have extra warheads to deploy as necessary and we should be planning to do so. Extra warheads can be assigned to the bomber force, for example, and we can upload extra

¹ Creedon, Madelyn R., et al., "The Final Report of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States," *Institute for Defense Analyses*, 2023, 7, <https://www.ida.org/-/media/feature/publications/a/am/americas-strategic-posture/strategic-posture-commission-report.ashx>

² Ibid.

³ U.S. Department of Defense, "Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2022," Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2022, <https://media.defense.gov/2022/Nov/29/2003122279/-1/-1/1/2022-MILITARY-AND-SECURITY-DEVELOPMENTS-INVOLVING-THE-PEOPLES-REPUBLIC-OF-CHINA.PDF>

⁴ Hans Kristensen, "Status of World Nuclear Forces," Federation of American Scientists, March 26, 2025, <https://fas.org/initiative/status-world-nuclear-forces/>

warheads on our missiles. These are prudent measures to plan and prepare for. But we do not need to panic; we have time to prepare against this threat, which will only approach us in the mid-2030s, when the POR will be nearing completion. We will have time and resources freeing up for new requirements.

Third, we should consider the role of negotiated restraint. I want to state clearly that for me, diplomacy is an important tool in our national toolbox, but it should never be conducted for its own sake. It must be part of U.S. national security policy and go hand-in-hand with other actions that we are taking, such as modernizing our nuclear triad and planning for a potential build-up of deployed nuclear weapons to respond both to China's new build-up and to an upswing in Russian nuclear deployments if all current limits fall away. New nuclear negotiations will have value if they limit a Russian increase and control a Chinese rush to parity with the United States.

Both objectives, in my opinion, are doable and would be beneficial to the United States in preventing a new nuclear arms race. They would also be beneficial to Russia, China and every other nation around the globe worried about the risks of a new era of nuclear arms racing.

Why do I think these objectives are achievable? Because we've accumulated fifty years of evidence that diplomacy can play a beneficial role in limiting and controlling nuclear weapons. The United States and USSR first entered into serious nuclear negotiations in the 1960s, after the Cuban Missile Crisis, and completed a series of agreements—the Limited Nuclear Test Ban, the first Strategic Arms Limitation agreement, and the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty—that began to address the first nuclear arms race, wherein the United States built over 32,000 warheads and the USSR, over 40,000.⁵

After the end of the Cold War, the successor of these treaties, the first Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) was used to steer the reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles that were left on the territory of the newly independent states of the Soviet Union; it brought the United States and Russia from 12,000 deployed warheads each to 6,000. Two additional treaties—the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty negotiated by President George W. Bush and the New START Treaty negotiated by President Barack Obama, brought those numbers down to 1,550 deployed nuclear warheads, where they stand today. From 12,000 to 1,550 deployed warheads in thirty years—these are important accomplishments of the negotiating process.

Of course, “the ash and trash of the Cold War”—the first nuclear arms race—was not dealt with through diplomacy alone. The vast elimination of nuclear warheads that took place was the result of unilateral action in the United States and USSR, later Russia. Moreover, Washington and Moscow both made important unilateral decisions, based on national security requirements, to

⁵ Ibid.

reduce nuclear deployments. President George H.W. Bush, for example, embarked on the “Presidential Nuclear Initiatives” with his Soviet and later Russian counterparts, resulting in success, albeit imperfect, in ending a number of nuclear deployments.⁶

However, diplomacy played an important role in limiting and eventually reducing nuclear weapons in a predictable manner. That predictability, in turn, was indispensable to rational nuclear planning, permitting the Pentagon to devote the bulk of its resources where they were needed most, to vital conventional missions.

Concerns abound that the negotiating process is tainted by constant Russian cheating on its treaty obligations in all of the weapons of mass destruction categories—nuclear, chemical, biological—and in both bilateral and multilateral agreements. The Department of State’s Compliance Reports, which I oversaw for nearly eight years as Assistant and Undersecretary of State, stand testimony to this fact. For that reason, Ronald Reagan’s dictum to “trust but verify” must be constantly before us.

At the same time, we know when the Russians are complying with treaties because we do not depend on treaty verification mechanisms alone, but on our national technical means of verification, or NTM. It is important that since SALT I in 1972, the United States and USSR, now Russia, have agreed not to interfere with each other’s NTM. It is a legal obligation enshrined in the New START Treaty; I am frankly concerned that, once New START goes out of force on February 5, 2026, Moscow and Washington will no longer be committed to non-interference in NTM for the first time in over fifty years.

But that is beside the point, which is that U.S. national technical means help us to understand when the Russians are complying with treaties and when they are not; they bolster treaty measures such as on-site inspection. It was thanks to our NTM that we discovered the testing of a new Russian missile over a decade ago that was in violation of the Short- and Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF). This discovery led the U.S. to withdraw from INF in 2019. So, when we discover Russian non-compliance, we can and do take action.

Similarly, the United States can confirm limits because of our national technical means. President Vladimir Putin ceased implementing the New START Treaty in February 2023, after his terrible invasion of Ukraine a year earlier. This is in itself a violation of the New START Treaty and was declared so by the Biden Administration. Thanks to Putin’s decision, Russia no longer provides data or notifications on its strategic nuclear forces, nor does it allow on-site

⁶ Susan Koch, “The Busiest Months of My Life: The Presidential Nuclear Initiatives and Their Aftermath,” Stanley Center for Peace and Security, December 6, 2023, <https://riskreduction.stanleycenter.org/koch-russia-pni-ctr/>; Richard B. Cheney, “Memorandum for Secretaries of the Military Departments et al., Reducing the United States Nuclear Arsenal, September 28, 1991,” in Public Statements of Richard B. Cheney, Secretary of Defense, 1991, vol. IV (Washington, DC: Historical Office, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1992), 1864.

inspections to occur at its nuclear bases. For that reason, what we know about the Russian strategic nuclear forces we know because of NTM. We continue to understand that Russia has not started a build-up beyond the limits of New START.⁷

Now I would like to turn in detail to how I think that the United States can prevent a nuclear arms race 2.0.

The first step must be what we are doing already, keeping our eye on the prize of our nuclear triad modernization, the Program of Record, to ensure that it is completed on time and within a predictable budget. These are difficult challenges in themselves, which is why POR implementation must be the top priority.

While we are completing this vital modernization work, we must also be thinking hard about what we must do to address the worst case of a Chinese rush to 1500 deployed warheads or more, which may happen by 2035. We have time to work the problem, but we must think hard about the options, make some tough decisions, plan and budget to implement those decisions, and begin the acquisition of hardware that may be needed. I understand these very processes are underway to permit the United States to rapidly upload our existing ballistic missiles, and I applaud those efforts.

But I want to stress that I do not believe we need to rush into uploading missiles right now. We need to keep planning and preparing on an intensive basis, using our time wisely, but also initiating diplomatic tracks in parallel. Such a two-track approach is made possible, in my view, by President Trump and his intense interest in controlling nuclear weapons. The President has made clear his expectation that he will meet with President Xi and President Putin in summit settings, and that controls on nuclear weapons will be on the agenda for those meetings.⁸

So now we need to focus on what we need from those discussions—what will be in the best interests of the United States? For the Chinese and the Russians, the goals will be different.

With Xi Jinping, the President will have the opportunity to embark on a conversation that has never taken place before, to engage the Chinese President on the mutual value of more predictability and transparency where nuclear weapons are concerned. He can point out that if Washington and Beijing work together on controlling nuclear weapons, then more resources and

⁷ The 2024 New START Compliance Report states, “The United States assesses with high confidence that Russia did not engage in any large-scale activity above the Treaty limits in 2024. However, Russia was probably close to the deployed warhead limit during much of the year and may have exceeded the deployed warhead limit by a small number during portions of 2024. Therefore, this constitutes a serious compliance concern.” <https://2021-2025.state.gov/2024-report-to-congress-on-implementation-of-the-new-start-treaty/>

⁸ Zeke Miller and Michelle L. Price, “Trump Wants Denuclearization Talks with Russia and China, Hopes for Defense Spending Cuts,” AP News, February 14, 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/trump-china-russia-nuclear-bbc1c75920297f1e5ba5556d084da4de>

attention can be devoted to areas of shared interest and advantage in the trade and economic spheres. The two Presidents will also share the global approbation that will come from finally launching this important exercise to understand each other's nuclear aspirations and guide future strategic developments in a stabilizing direction.

Of course, President Trump will not be satisfied with launching a strategic stability dialogue alone; he will want agreement on some tangible steps. Here it will be important to agree among government experts what will be possible to propose to both presidents as summit deliverables. I have argued in the past that it would be important for China to agree not to undermine the limits of the New START Treaty; and to agree to a ban on fractional orbital bombardment vehicles (FOBS) and to recommit to a ban on nuclear weapons in space, which is already enshrined in the Outer Space Treaty.⁹ An additional step may be to agree on establishing a Nuclear Risk Reduction Center (NRRC) such as exists between the United States and Russian Federation, to communicate on a routine basis about managing nuclear risks.¹⁰ These are measures of a more tangible nature that may be attractive to the President.

Why do I think that President Xi may agree to them, given the clear message from the Chinese over years that they do not want to engage us bilaterally on nuclear matters? I have three reasons.

First, President Xi has himself agreed to engage in summit meetings in 2026 with President Trump during a telephone call on November 24.¹¹ This openness to meeting with Trump at the highest level conveys a willingness to engage on issues of priority to the U.S. President. Controlling nuclear weapons is clearly one of them. Second, the Chinese issued a White Paper on Arms Control on November 27, which for the first time indicated a willingness to explore "transparency" in the context of nuclear weapons.¹² This is a new development so we do not yet know the full meaning of it, but it is a clear change from the long-standing Chinese treatment of "transparency" as something not to be desired. Third, in multiple Track 2 encounters of which I am aware, the Chinese have begun to flesh out a rationale for their nuclear modernization. Although we cannot take their arguments at face value, they have presented an opportunity, in Track 2 meetings, to talk further about managing nuclear risks and controlling nuclear weapons. Thus, the Chinese seem more open to nuclear dialogue on a bilateral basis than they have in the past.

⁹ The SPC proposed a ban on FOBS. Creedon, Madelyn R., et al., "The Final Report of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States," 8.

¹⁰ Rose Gottemoeller, "Arms Control Is Not Dead Yet," Foreign Affairs, April 15, 2025, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/arms-control-not-dead-yet>

¹¹ Ana Swanson, et al., "Xi Presses Trump on Taiwan as They Agree to Meet in China in April," The New York Times, November 24, 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/11/24/business/economy/trump-xi-meeting-china.html>

¹² "China Releases White Paper on Arms Control in New Era," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of People's Republic of China, November 27, 2025, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xw/wjbxw/202511/t20251127_11761653.html

But what about the Russians? Their reprehensible behavior in Ukraine makes it difficult, some would say impossible, to contemplate working with them. However, President Trump has made clear his intention to do so, first in seeking peace between Russia and Ukraine, but then to open up to broad cooperation once again.¹³ One of his clear priorities from the outset of his second term has been to talk with Putin about controlling nuclear weapons.¹⁴

Putin has reciprocated by delinking a return to nuclear talks with Washington from the war in Ukraine. On September 22, at a National Security Council meeting, he declared that he would be ready to continue the limitations of the New START Treaty—700 delivery vehicles, 800 launchers, 1,550 warheads—for one year beyond February 5, 2026, when the treaty goes out of force. He also indicated a willingness to enter again into discussions on strategic stability.¹⁵

President Trump within a short time indicated his interest by telling reporters that he thought Putin’s proposal was “a good idea.”¹⁶ Since that time, the U.S. government has been studying the proposal but has not yet responded officially.

I would like to put on the record why I agree with the President that it is a good idea. Most importantly, extending New START limits for one year is an easy win for him, burnishing his credentials as a peacemaker—importantly, a nuclear peacemaker. It does not prejudice the other important work that we need to be doing right now to prepare for the possible worst case of a Chinese rush to parity by 2035. As I stated earlier, we must continue urgently to plan and prepare for this worst case, but we can do that while maintaining the limits of New START.

In fact, it will help us to better prepare because we will not have to worry about a Russian build-up beginning immediately in 2026. This is a real concern, as the Strategic Posture Commission concluded:

The Commission concludes that Russia’s active nuclear warhead and missile production lines provide the capability, should Russia decide to discard the limits of New START

¹³ “Read the Full Text of Trump’s 28-Point Ukraine-Russia Peace Plan,” Financial Times, November 20, 2025, https://www.ft.com/content/79eefaf8-2fc1-47ac-9653-24cf6a0239f5?accessToken=zWAGRBX-9oY4kc957vr4L8FHRNOWUyTPagI59Q.MEYCIQCr25BkM_aFyIuaoPIVeVFVvGirU8st-AttcXGcnwJ37AIhAKxgsc7n5VuFHIWfMuJoz3ZziDuo9sLDJ0w4oAN58Ra&sharetype=gif&token=c6bf6431-003e-4713-bd38-401275bb3474

¹⁴ Zeke Miller and Michelle L. Price, “Trump Wants Denuclearization Talks with Russia and China, Hopes for Defense Spending Cuts.”

¹⁵ “Совещание с Постоянными Членами Совета Безопасности” [Meeting with the Permanent Members of the Security Council], President of Russia, September 22, 2025, <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/78051>

¹⁶ Michael R. Gordon, “Trump Praises Putin’s Offer to Extend Nuclear Treaty,” The Wall Street Journal, October 5, 2025, https://www.wsj.com/world/russia/trump-praises-putins-offer-to-extend-nuclear-treaty-4a952daa?gaa_at=eafs&gaa_n=AWetsqekxmE58pAGROzQfQFC7OHCKpGQKoZZH7xYX-FeWc2vxs0TL8GfZdm7IBLIoMI%3D&gaa_ts=6937194f&gaa_sig=ZCj5nNFbxKLPgsDfd51IgfFENfNN5lwIO9dpjtGei0r0UAA4W9yeH2OIAdAhvwPLSBNk129wLaplz-68lzsosOA%3D%3D

(Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty), to expand its strategic nuclear forces.

- Russia's current modernization program added substantial warhead upload capacity to its ICBMs and Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBMs).
- Russia's modernized nuclear warhead design and production infrastructure have significant surplus capacity to implement a decision to upload.¹⁷

My bottom line is that it does not serve U.S. national security interests to have to plan and prepare for the Chinese worst-case scenario while simultaneously facing a rapid Russian upload campaign. The Russians have the capacity and experience to succeed in such a campaign. It will be much better for us to keep them limited for at least another year while we continue to plan and prepare for upload. Again, remaining under New START limits for a year does not prejudice our planning and preparation to upload.

This is not to say that we should accept President Putin's proposal without bettering it. As I have argued in recent days,¹⁸ we should go back to the Russians and propose to resume all of the implementation measures of New START that Vladimir Putin suspended in February 2023. Between now and when the treaty goes out of force in February, it would be in our interest to have the best possible real-time insights about what is going on in the Russian strategic nuclear forces, which we can best achieve by fully implementing the treaty: conducting on-site inspections, receiving notifications about weapon system movements, and doing a data exchange. In this way, we would have the most up-to-date picture of the status of Russian strategic nuclear forces when we embark on a period of maintaining limits with no treaty in force. Of course, the Russians would have the same picture of our strategic nuclear forces. This mutual predictability is the hallmark of a stable nuclear balance and a benefit of treaties.

I would like to comment on one further matter, given my time as NATO Deputy Secretary General in 2017-19, and that is extended nuclear deterrence. The United States has extended a nuclear deterrence commitment to allies in both Europe and Asia practically since those alliances took shape during the Cold War. It was a vital signal to the Soviet Union, our main opponent at the time, of the willingness of the United States to defend its allies, even in the face of nuclear threats emanating from Moscow. The Kremlin could not split the United States from its allies.

Almost equally important was the way in which the U.S. extended nuclear deterrence commitment enabled the allies to back off from acquiring their own nuclear weapons. During the negotiation of the Nonproliferation Treaty in the late 1960s, Soviet negotiators acknowledged that the U.S. commitment was a way to prevent European NATO countries, especially Germany,

¹⁷ Crendon, Madelyn R., et al., "The Final Report of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States," 9.

¹⁸ Rose Gottemoeller, "Getting the Most Out of New START Before It Expires," Arms Control Association, December 2025, <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2025-12/features/getting-most-out-new-start-it-expires>

from continuing with indigenous nuclear weapon programs.¹⁹ During World War 2, the Manhattan Project was a race with Nazi Germany that the United States and its allies won—but Germany was far along the pathway to acquiring nuclear weapons. Thus, the U.S. extended nuclear deterrence commitment has also been a nonproliferation boon, preventing the spread of nuclear weapons among U.S. allies.

Successive U.S. administrations have regularly restated the commitment, including during this, President Trump’s second term in office. In February 2025, Secretary of Defense Hegseth stated to the NATO allies that they would be expected to pick up the conventional defense of Europe, but that the United States would continue to provide for its nuclear defense.²⁰ His statement was important and welcome, and should be repeated officially, including at the highest level. That would help to assuage anxieties that have arisen as U.S. allies in Europe and Asia grapple with how to increase their self-sufficiency for conventional deterrence and defense in the near term.

Such a statement would also play a role in tamping down the temptation among some U.S. allies to launch or relaunch, after many years, nuclear weapon programs. I do not believe that so-called “friendly proliferation” among U.S. allies would enhance stability in either Europe or Asia; instead, it would increase nuclear dangers and escalation risks. Furthermore, nuclear weapon programs are expensive and would drain resources away from vital conventional acquisitions that the allies must make.²¹ They would not enhance stability for either the United States or its allies.

Before I leave this topic, I would like to make one final comment about the extended nuclear deterrence commitment in Europe: The European allies are now better equipped to assist in this mission than they were even when I was NATO DSG five years ago. All the basing countries have decided to invest in the F-35 fighter as the delivery platform and to certify it for dual missions, conventional and nuclear. The October NATO nuclear exercise “Steadfast Noon” showed how these new capabilities are already being incorporated into the extended nuclear deterrence mission.²² I would also like to stress that that B 61-12 warhead deployments have

¹⁹ William Alberque, “The NPT and the Origins of NATO’s Nuclear Sharing Arrangements,” Proliferation Papers, No. 57, *Infra*, February 2017, https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/migrated_files/documents/atoms/files/alberque_npt_origins_nato_nuclear_2017.pdf

²⁰ Pete Hegseth, “Opening Remarks by Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth at Ukraine Defense Contact Group (As Delivered),” U.S. Department of War, February 12, 2025, <https://www.war.gov/News/Speeches/Speech/Article/4064113/opening-remarks-by-secretary-of-defense-pete-hegseth-at-ukraine-defense-contact/>

²¹ Mariano-Florentino Cuéllar, Ernest J. Moniz, and Meghan L. O’Sullivan, “Preventing an Era of Nuclear Anarchy: Nuclear Proliferation and American Security,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, September 22, 2025, <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2025/09/preventing-nuclear-anarchy-nuclear-proliferation-and-american-security?lang=en>

²² “NATO’s Annual Nuclear Exercise Steadfast Noon Begins,” North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), October 13, 2025, <https://www.nato.int/en/news-and-events/articles/news/2025/10/13/natos-annual-nuclear-exercise-steadfast-noon-begins?selectedLocale=>

already been completed, so the U.S. warhead devoted to this mission is among the most modern in the U.S. arsenal. And the United States has made considerable investments to improve the basing structure, storage facilities and handling equipment for the mission. Therefore, the NATO basing countries, working in tandem with the United States, are as ready as they must be to deter and defend in the event of nuclear threats against the alliance.

To conclude, I would like to reiterate some top-line messages: first, President Trump can gain an easy win in agreeing with President Putin to extend the limits of the New START Treaty by one year. But he should do one better: he can improve Putin's offer by proposing that the United States and Russia return to full implementation of the treaty for its remaining time in force. If the two countries are able to exchange data and notifications and conduct on-site inspections, it will ensure that they have the most up-to-date information—in effect, providing a real-time status of nuclear forces to the two signatories as the treaty ends.

Such a one-year extension would not prejudice any of the vital steps that the United States is taking to respond to the Chinese nuclear build-up. We must continue to plan against it and work carefully to determine what capabilities will be needed, including in the realm of uploading warheads. Indeed, the period will buy extra time for preparation without the added challenge of a Russian Federation, newly released from New START limitations, embarking on a rapid upload campaign. That would not be in the U.S. interest.

Most importantly, the hiatus will provide President Trump time to pursue his instinct to control nuclear weapons at the negotiating table. The President has already agreed with Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping to meet in 2026, and these summits will be a real opportunity for him to strike nuclear deals with his two counterparts, in the U.S. national security interest.

