

Text obtained from the permanent archives at www.state.gov

LETTER OF SUBMITTAL

The Secretary of State,
Washington.

The President,
The White House.

Mr. President: I have the honor to submit to you the Treaty Between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Strategic Offensive Reductions (the Moscow Treaty), signed at Moscow on May 24, 2002.

INTRODUCTION

The Moscow Treaty marks a new era in the relationship between the United States and Russia. This short, legally binding document codifies in a flexible manner both countries' commitment to make deep strategic offensive reductions. It facilitates the transition from strategic rivalry to a genuine strategic partnership based on the principles of mutual security, trust, openness, cooperation and predictability. The Moscow Treaty is one important element of a new strategic framework, which involves a broad array of cooperative efforts in political, economic and security areas.

BACKGROUND

The Moscow Treaty codifies the deep reductions that you announced during the November 2001 Washington/Crawford Summit and President Putin announced at that time and a month later. It reflects the shared desire to conclude a legally binding document that would outlast both of your presidencies and to provide openness and predictability over the longer term in this important area of the U.S.-Russian relationship. The transition to a relationship based on mutual trust and cooperation enabled us to conclude an agreement in months, not years. At the same time, the Treaty affords flexibility to each Party to meet unforeseen future contingencies, while avoiding unnecessary restrictions on either Party's forces or activities.

REDUCTION REQUIREMENTS

The United States and Russia both intend to carry out strategic offensive reductions to the lowest possible levels consistent with their national security requirements and alliance obligations, and reflecting the new nature of their strategic relations. The Treaty requires the United States and Russia to reduce and limit their strategic nuclear warheads to 1700-2200 each by December 31, 2012, a reduction of nearly two-thirds below current levels. The United States intends to implement the Treaty by reducing its operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads to 1700-2200 through removal of warheads from missiles in

their launchers and from heavy bomber bases, and by removing some missiles, launchers, and bombers from operational service.

For purposes of this Treaty, the United States considers operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads to be reentry vehicles on intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) in their launchers, reentry vehicles on submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) in their launchers onboard submarines, and nuclear armaments loaded on heavy bombers or stored in weapons storage areas of heavy bomber bases. In addition, a small number of spare strategic nuclear warheads (including spare ICBM warheads) are located at heavy bomber bases. The United States does not consider these spares to be operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads. In the context of this Treaty, it is clear that only “nuclear” reentry vehicles, as well as nuclear armaments, are subject to the 1700-2200 limit.

RELATIONSHIP TO START

The Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) continues in force unchanged by this Treaty. In accordance with its own terms, START will remain in force until December 5, 2009, unless it is superseded by a subsequent agreement or extended.

START’s comprehensive verification regime will provide the foundation for confidence, transparency and predictability in further strategic offensive reductions. As noted in the May 24 Joint Declaration on the New Strategic Relationship, other supplementary measures, including transparency measures, may be agreed in the future.

BILATERAL IMPLEMENTATION COMMISSION

The Treaty establishes a Bilateral Implementation Commission (BIC), a diplomatic consultative forum that will meet at least twice a year to discuss issues related to implementation of the Treaty. The BIC will be separate and distinct from the Consultative Group for Strategic Security, established by the Joint Declaration of May 24, which will be chaired by Foreign and Defense Ministers with the participation of other senior officials.

ENTRY INTO FORCE; DURATION; RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL

The Treaty will enter into force on the date of the exchange of instruments of ratification. It is to remain in force until December 31, 2012, and may be extended by agreement of the Parties or superseded earlier by a subsequent agreement.

The Treaty also provides that each Party, in exercising its national sovereignty, may withdraw from the Treaty upon three months’ written notice to the other Party.

STATUS OF START II TREATY

The START II Treaty, which was signed in 1993, and to which the Senate gave its advice and consent in 1996, never entered into force because Russia placed unacceptable conditions on its own ratification of START II. Russia's explicit linkage of START II to preservation of the ABM Treaty and entry into force of several agreements, signed in 1997, which related to ABM Treaty succession and ABM/TMD demarcation, made it impossible for START II to enter into force. With signature of the Moscow Treaty, the United States and Russia have now taken a decisive step beyond START II.

CONCLUSION

Accompanying this report is an article-by-article analysis of the Treaty. By deeply reducing operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads while preserving each Party's flexibility to meet unforeseen future contingencies, the Moscow Treaty will enhance the national security of the United States. I strongly recommend its transmission to the Senate for advice and consent to ratification at the earliest possible date.

Respectfully submitted,
Colin L. Powell.

Enclosures: As stated¹.

¹ Enclosures include the Moscow Treaty and the Article-by-Article Analysis