

## Session 7: New START II

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### Summary

Col. Paul Hughes (USA, Ret.) of the United States Institute of Peace moderated a discussion on New START featuring experts Leonid Ryabikhin of the Committee of Scientists for Global Security and Arms Control, Elbridge Colby of the Center for Naval Analyses, and retired Pakistani Brig. Gen. Feroz Khan of the Naval Postgraduate School. The panel focused on Russian, American, and Pakistani perspectives on the New START process and arms control more broadly, its accomplishments, limitations, and future prospects. Mr. Ryabikhin opened by suggesting that, from a Russian perspective New START was a great achievement in a “modern era of stagnation” for arms control as a process and a step forward for the U.S.-Russian relationship. He stated that following START I, both Russia and the U.S. focused more on the immediate national security concerns of each state by pursuing less formal national security agreements than focusing on strategic issues and arms control as a whole. Ryabikhin argued this resulted in a strain in U.S.-Russian relations and a realization early on in the Obama administration that a formal mechanism for the implementation of legally arms control measures was needed. However, Ryabikhin suggested that the absence of such talks for over a decade led to a loss of experienced negotiators on the Russian side that was difficult to overcome. Fortunately, he said, the two countries enjoyed close consultation at the Track I and Track II levels, and both countries understood early on the incremental nature of the agreement. Due to time constraints and the domestic political situation in the United States, other critical issues, such as ballistic missile defense, non-strategic nuclear warheads, and strategic conventional capabilities, would have to wait.

Colby then questioned whether New START actually represented a sharp change from

the policies of previous administrations. He argued that it did not. Instead, Colby suggested that New START represented a reinvigoration of traditional U.S. approaches to nuclear policy by pursuing “practical, modest arms control efforts while maintaining a firm and modern deterrent.” Following the deep reductions and intrusive verification of START I, U.S. administrations placed less and less emphasis on strategic issues following the end of the Cold War. That lack of attention, Colby argued, was responsible for the degradation of the strategic forces and supporting infrastructure, and led to accidents, incidents, and the impending expiration of START I in 2009. The endorsement of a world without nuclear weapons by the Four Horsemen (Shultz, Perry, Nunn, and Kissinger) reinvigorated interest in nuclear issues, and led to a number of influential commissions, including the congressionally chartered Strategic Posture Commission. The Posture Commission developed a view that balanced deterrence with arms control and nonproliferation to reduce nuclear dangers. Colby stated that it was against this backdrop that the Obama administration developed its nuclear policy and initiated New START negotiations. The Commission’s recommendations also influenced the inclusion of nuclear modernization commitments by the United States to help balance reductions in New START and any follow-on agreements. This, Colby suggested, constituted a basic continuity with the traditional U.S. approach to strategic issues, which is reflected in the simultaneous commitment of the United States to nuclear reductions and security assurances to its allies.

Finally, Brig. Gen. Khan provided a third party reaction to U.S.-Russian bilateral reductions with particular attention to arms control dynamics between India and Pakistan. Following the 1998 nuclear tests by India and Pakistan, Khan said, the United States took an aggressive approach behind the scenes, suggesting that India and Pakistan to develop a strategic restraint regime, which culminated in the Lahore Declaration. However, problems arose. Tensions between India and Pakistan escalated with the breakout of conflict in Kashmir, and Khan noted that India increasingly had difficulty applying what was largely considered a U.S.-Russian arms control model in the region. Khan argued that India’s problem was really two tiered—it must direct a credible deterrent to both Pakistan and China. Pakistan shares similar concerns. Khan also cited inconsistencies in U.S. behavior, including

the conclusion of the U.S.-India nuclear deal as a blow to arms control initiatives in the region. Furthermore, he noted, India and Pakistan share the position that neither can accept in the short term a CTBT, and progress on the FMCT has stalled. Also precluding arms control progress in the region is possibility that 20-30 countries worldwide have a nascent nuclear capability that could be converted into weapons programs in a short period of time and only resolved through a multilateral approach. Many of the same issues that cloud U.S.-Russian progress in arms reduction—missile defense, conventional strike capability, and a lack of transparency on nuclear issues—also complicate prospects for India-Pakistan bilateral arms control. Khan concluded by suggesting the best strategy for arms control is a broader commitment to international disarmament.

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