

[SE7-OR-1] New START II

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Full Summary

The panel on New START II was moderated by Paul Hughes, United States Institute of Peace and consisted of three panelists: Leonid Ryabikhin, Committee of Scientists for Global Security and Arms Control; Elbridge Colby, Center for Naval Analyses; and Feroz Khan, Naval Postgraduate School. Each panelist addressed various issues relating to the perspectives of the US, Russia and Pakistan.

Prior to the panelists' discussions, Mr Hughes gave a brief overview of arms control in today's world and its current role in providing global security. He expressed his belief that arms control has to be grounded upon realistic assessments, expectations and objectives. For the United States and Russia, who have both possessed nuclear weapons for over 50 years, there are existing flash points, the acceptance of political privacy over their militaries and they both seek cooperation in common interests. Arms control and potential arms control in general, Hughes explained, creates assurances between each side about their intentions regarding their modernization efforts, leads to future relationships and conserves and benefits, the allies and friends of the United States and Russia. Arms control also serves as a tool for strengthening the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Hughes further highlights that arms control progress is not synonymous with arms reduction. The main point of arms control is to provide stability, security, verification and compliance. With those thoughts in mind, he gave a brief overview of the New START Treaty. He explained that both sides are limited to have no more than 800 deployed and non-deployed Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs), Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBM) launchers and heavy bombers. Of that number, the two states should entertain no more than 700 deployed ICBMs, SLBMs and deployed heavy bombers. The limits within the treaty include no more than 1550 deployed warheads and detailed definitions to help calculate the number of warheads under the treaty limits. The verification aspect of the treaty is less costly and complex than its predecessor, since it does not include provisions to curb U.S. missile defense, provides for strategic stability and enhances the national security interests of each country. He concluded by offering some points that he encouraged the panel to discuss, such as, strategic stability and how the treaty enhances or weakens this, command and control issues, parties expectations, the issue of ballistic missile defense, the impact on the modernization of

national arsenals, providing steps for the future of disarmament relating to strategic nuclear weapons, and finally, how non-nuclear powers view the treaty.

Leonid Ryabikhin highlighted that from a Russian viewpoint the New START Treaty was a great change not only in relation to arms control as a process within Russia but also in terms of the states strategic relationship with the United States. This was because, for a time, arms control had been forgotten under the Bush Jnr administration and perhaps during this time the status of the state for both the United States and Russia was more of a priority. It is important to look at the “political wheel” when looking at arms control and look beyond the bilateral agreements between the US and Russia to multilateral agreements. He did caveat this and say this may not be the time for multilateral agreements. These agreements must be legally binding and must continue to be so despite potential regime change. With regard to New START he iterated that the Russian government was happy with the agreement due to the short-time frame in which it was created but felt that it was “not enough.” He believes that the US was “lucky” as the Russian position was quite soft, due to their lack of insistence on including ballistic missile defense within the treaty provisions. The biggest hurdle of the treaty, according to Ryabikhin, is the implantation of policy and the follow up progress. He also discussed how the renewed effort in arms control by both the United States and Russia posed problems for various Russian government departments due to the lack of and lost experience of specialists who could, for example, understand the full scope of the problem and the complexities of such an agreement. Going forward, he believed that it will be important to take multilateral steps to include such states as France, the UK, China, Pakistan and India in future agreement processes.

Elbridge Colby focused on the US perspective and how the New START Treaty fits into the broader U.S. picture. He explained that when considering the New START treaty, many in the U.S. Senate argued that the Treaty represented a sharp break with past U.S. policy – a fundamentally new approach on Washington’s part towards nuclear weapons policy. In Colby’s opinion however, the Treaty did not break the traditional American approach, rather it was a resuscitation and reinvigoration of a traditional view. The Treaty, according to Colby, strengthened rather than undermined the traditional U.S. policy of pursuing practical, modest arms control efforts while maintaining a firm and modern deterrent. He illustrated this by discussing the original Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty signed with the then dissolving Soviet Union in 1991. That treaty, he explained, provided an architecture through which the two powers gained tremendously improved transparency into each other’s forces, made stabilizing cuts in the huge strategic forces that each had built up and demonstrated to the world a commitment to the cessation of the Cold War arms race. Following the first Bush Administration’s footsteps, Colby explained, the Clinton Administration had adopted a “lead but hedge” policy in its 1994 Nuclear Posture Review and pursued further arms control

initiatives with Moscow, but focus generally began to shift away from strategic issues. Under the younger Bush administration, nuclear issues took a back seat as the administration focused on non-nuclear military capabilities and sought to move away from arms control as a tool. Subsequently, by the end of that decade, the nuclear enterprise was aging and was in serious need of updating. This was highlighted by the accidental transport of nuclear weapons from Minot to Barksdale Air force Base, by the inadvertent shipment of nuclear components to Taiwan, by growing reports of malaise in the U.S. nuclear community and by the impending expiration of the START 1 Treaty. A number of important commissions were chartered to look into how best to move forward. Congress chartered the Strategic Posture Commission, which was created to design a roadmap forward for the U.S. nuclear posture and develop a consensus view in the defense policy community that could help Congress and the Obama administration. In this respect, it succeeded as its recommendations represented an agreement of representative leaders across the substantive spectrum on a way forward that was based on the traditional American dual approach of a strong deterrent and a vigorous arms control agenda. This meant that the Commission endorsed a package to maintain the nuclear triad and invest in the nuclear weapons stockpile and complex while pursuing arms control with Russia – it ultimately endorsed pursuit of a follow-on agreement to the START Treaty. The New START Treaty was signed in April 2011 and the new pact extended in modified form the inspection and data exchange regimes of the previous treaty, which allows the parties to continue to gain important insights into the other's strategic forces, albeit in a less intrusive and comprehensive fashion than the original START agreement, which had been designed with Cold War tensions in mind. The new agreement also included limits on launch vehicles and warheads, but was not focused on the classic issues of strategic stability like START I. The new pact also required modest reductions in the parties' delivery systems and deployed warhead totals. These cuts were not drastic; the Russians already fell below the Treaty's delivery vehicle limit. For the Americans, the rules were written in such a way that most of the reductions would be satisfied by converting systems such as B-1B and some of the B-52H bombers from nuclear to conventional-only roles and by consolidating a comparable number of warheads to a lower number of Trident II submarine-launched missiles. At the political level, the Treaty also helped to give some content and support to "reset" the relations between Washington and Moscow, which may be helpful in encouraging Russian assistance in dealing with the Iranian nuclear question. The Treaty also helped both nations' efforts at the NPT Review Conference in 2011 to demonstrate concrete evidence of their commitment to meeting the requirements of Article VI, to cease the arms race. Ultimately, the Treaty went beyond negotiations between the US and Russia, in effect it became a package pathway for the U.S. nuclear posture because the parameters of discussion about New START immediately moved beyond the pure confines of the Treaty to encompass U.S. strategic posture as a whole, including the vitality of the nuclear enterprise, development and deployment programs for missile defense and conventional prompt global strike, extended

deterrence policy and Washington's understanding of the nature of strategic stability with Russia and other key states. It ended up forging a new coalition – albeit a fragile one that must be tended to – willing to invest the resources and energy necessary to maintain the U.S. strategic force as second to none through most of the 21st century. Going forward this means that rhetorical flourishes aside, the United States is still actively committed to the nuclear policy that it has embraced for half a century. This commitment has been redoubled after a long sting of relative neglect. For allies, especially those in more volatile regions, Washington is committed to exploring ways to reduce and defuse tensions, nuclear or otherwise, through practical arms control but it is firmly committed to maintain a peerless nuclear deterrent, one that is best shaped to provide not only attributes of survivability and effectiveness, but also various targeting options deployment and operational flexibility, and political signaling value, all attributes that should assure U.S. allies such as South Korea and Japan.

The last panelist, Feroz Khan, discussed the perspective of the third world namely of India and Pakistan and the challenges they face regarding strategic stability, survivability and vulnerability. Khan discussed Stephen Cohen's analysis of Pakistan, which determines that arms control is necessary in order to enhance security. He briefly discussed the recent history between the two states, firstly with an explanation of a strategic restraint regime that formed between Pakistan and India following the 1998 nuclear tests and subsequently, the creation of the Lahore Declaration. He further explained that the conflict over Kashmir between the two states increased tensions in the region. He highlighted concepts related to extended deterrence and the viewpoint of both India and Pakistan that every nuclear weapon is for strategic purposes. For India the possession of nuclear weapons creates a direct deterrent against Pakistan and China, and similarly, the same applies to Pakistan. He highlighted that the recent U.S./India Nuclear Deal has inhibited any possible future arms control within the region. India and Pakistan both reject the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and, like the obstacles that face the U.S./Russian arms reduction, such as missile defense, conventional strike capability and lack of transparency, also prevent cooperation and collaboration between the two states. He also discussed in detail the important relationship between conventional and nuclear weapons and how the imbalances between the two pose problems for the future of arms control and the pursuit of global zero. Lastly, he stressed the need for multilateral cooperation and approaches to nuclear disarmament.

At the conclusion Hughes posed a follow up question as to the implications of further reductions by Russia and the United States and if it would encourage a break out. All panelists acknowledged that going forward steps would need to be taken to reduce numbers multilaterally.

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