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# **United States and Russia Cooperation in Strategic Arms Reduction and Nonproliferation**



A paper submitted to the Faculty of the United States Naval War College, Newport, RI.

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## INTRODUCTION

Relations between the United States and Russia are propelled by a complex relationship of economic, political, and philosophical factors, which generates shifts from caustic superpower rivalry to cautious cooperation. The differences in the political systems of Russia and the United States often inhibits them from reaching any shared interpretation on key policy issues. The common goal of defeating Nazi Germany in World War II allied the United States and Russia together, but differences in political and ideological policies created tensions of superpower conflict for the next three decades, highlighted by the nuclear and missile arms race. The Cold War was a time of intense competition, tension, and conflict short of direct war between the two superpowers. This period was personified by mutual perceptions of hostile intentions aimed at destroying the military and political alliances of the other nation. The collapse of the communist system in the Soviet Union in the early 1990's, opened the door to renewed relations, providing opportunities for the two countries to address many global problems. Despite the prospects of renewed relations, tensions between the two countries grew as the United States diplomacy and superpower status was at its peak, while Russia's future was filled with uncertainty and humiliation. Diplomatic engagements between the United States and Russia further stressed relations. Russia wanted to reaffirm their great-power status and influence in the former Soviet states, while the United States pushed for eastward expansion of NATO, further stoking Russian fears, grievances, and insecurities.

The bilateral relationship between the United States and Russia is critical to the world. Although the relationship has been strained over the years, there are shared interests where the two nations can engage in strategic cooperation. As the principle nuclear powers, Russia and the United States must continue to engage diplomatically, while finding ways to cooperate in areas

of shared interest to build a better foundation of trust and security for the world without compromising their national interests. First, cooperation can begin with reduction and nonproliferation of nuclear weapons with a focused effort on renewing the next phase of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START). Second, successful bilateral agreements can open doors to bring other nuclear powers into the discussions, with a concerted effort to bring China, Great Britain, and France into multilateral treaties for reduction and nonproliferation mutually beneficial for all nations. Third, the United States and Russia can work together on nuclear energy with foreign countries, providing sustainable clean energy and ensuring nonproliferation of nuclear capabilities.

## BACKGROUND

Arms control negotiations are one of the few diplomatic channels of conversation that have been and remain open between the United States and Russia. During the Cold War, the two countries signed four treaties and one executive agreement that limited offensive nuclear weapons and ballistic missile defense.<sup>1</sup> In May 1972, the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) provided the interim agreement on Certain Measures with Respect to the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (SALT I) and the Treaty on Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems (ABM). In 2002, President George W. Bush withdrew the United States from the ABM Treaty to allow for the deployment of U.S. ballistic missile defense systems into Poland. The SALT I agreement imposed a freeze on the number of launchers for intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) that the United States and

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<sup>1</sup> Amy F. Woolf, “*Next Steps in Nuclear Arms Control with Russia: Issues for Congress.*” CRS Report No. R43037. (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, Jan 6, 2014) Pg. 3, <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/nuke/R43037.pdf>

Soviet Union could deploy.<sup>2</sup> In 1979, the two nations completed the SALT II Treaty, which focused on equal limits of both nations' forces, limiting each nation to a total of 2400 ICBM and SLBM launchers and heavy bombers. The treaty also contained sub-limits to multiple independent reentry vehicles (MIRVs).<sup>3</sup> President Carter withdrew the SALT II Treaty from entering into force following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. In 1987, the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty was signed, eliminating all intermediate and short range ground launched cruise missiles and nuclear armed ballistic missiles with a range between 300 and 3400 miles. The most important aspect of the INF Treaty was the intrusive verification regime established, permitting on-site inspections of facilities, storage centers, and deployment zones.<sup>4</sup> Since the signing, both the United States and Russia have accused the other of violating the INF Treaty, with the United States ultimately withdrawing from the treaty in Oct 2018 due to Russian violations.

The Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) was signed by the two nations in 1991. The START put limits on the number of deployed launchers for long-range nuclear forces, focused on land-based ICBMs, SLBMs, and heavy bombers. The START was a continuation of the SALT series, but contained a complex verification process, like the INF Treaty. The START expired in 2009 due to differences of opinions by the two nations and a reliance by the United States to use the Moscow Treaty to replace the START. The Moscow Treaty called for further reductions in offensive weapons, but did not have the complex verification process, instead

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<sup>2</sup> Amy F. Woolf, Paul K. Kerr, and Mary Beth D. Nikitin, "Arms Control and Nonproliferation: A Catalog of Treaties and Agreements." CRS Report No. RL33865. (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, Apr 25, 2022) Pg. 6, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RL/RL33865/55>

<sup>3</sup> Amy F. Woolf, Paul K. Kerr, and Mary Beth D. Nikitin, "Arms Control and Nonproliferation: A Catalog of Treaties and Agreements." CRS Report No. RL33865. (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, Apr 25, 2022) Pg. 7, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RL/RL33865/55>

<sup>4</sup> Amy F. Woolf, Paul K. Kerr, and Mary Beth D. Nikitin, "Arms Control and Nonproliferation: A Catalog of Treaties and Agreements." CRS Report No. RL33865. (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, Apr 25, 2022) Pg. 9, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RL/RL33865/55>

relying on informal monitoring and a U.S. belief the two nations were no longer enemies. The START agreed to reduce the number of weapons by 50%, and the negotiated START II in 1993 agreed to abolish these weapons entirely. Unfortunately, START II never entered into force. In 2008, both countries agreed that they wanted to renew the START, signing the New START in 2010. This treaty negotiated further reductions in the number of deployed strategic warheads, but also extended the extensive monitoring and verification procedures.<sup>5</sup> The New START is a 10-year treaty with an option to extend for another five if both countries agree. In 2021, both countries agreed to extend the treaty to 2026.

### **STRATEGIC ARMS REDUCTION (BILATERAL TREATIES)**

Despite strained relations between the United States and Russia, cooperation between the two countries can continue toward reduction and nonproliferation of nuclear weapons, with a focused effort on building a new reduction treaty before the New START expires in 2026. The United States government has taken two avenues of approach to prevent nuclear aggression against the homeland and its allies. The first approach is maintaining a nuclear deterrence force capable of surviving a first strike and producing a costly response to the aggressor nation. The 2022 Nuclear Posture Review affirms this stating “Central to U.S. deterrence strategy is the credibility of our nuclear forces to hold at risk what adversary leadership values most.”<sup>6</sup> The second approach is negotiating nuclear and conventional arms treaties to mutually limit numbers and capabilities. The U.S. and Russia have cooperated on six nuclear arms control agreements

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<sup>5</sup> Amy F. Woolf, “*Next Steps in Nuclear Arms Control with Russia: Issues for Congress.*” CRS Report No. R43037. (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, Jan 6, 2014) Pg. 11, <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/nuke/R43037.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Paul K. Kerr, “*2022 Nuclear Posture Review.*” (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, Apr 25, 2022) Pg. 1, <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/nuke/IF12266.pdf>

since 1972. As David A. Cooper suggests, these cold-war agreements are the “classical arms control” model for new era arms reduction treaties in the era of great power rivalry.<sup>7</sup>

The New START was a continuation of the reduction and verification procedures from previous treaties, reducing the deployed strategic warheads by approximately 30 percent.<sup>8</sup> The next step in the cooperation process should build on a new strategic arms reduction treaty that will replace the New START in 2026. The new treaty should focus on lowering the accountable deployed strategic nuclear warheads and bombs another 30 percent (capping the total number at 1000 for each nation), reduce the deployed launcher, missile, and bombers to 500 (a reduction of 30 percent), and maintain the current notification and verification process established in the previous START. A novel item that should be added to this treaty should include the transparency and reduction of tactical nuclear weapons.

The reduction in total numbers of ICBMs, SLBMs, and heavy bombers and warheads supports the diplomatic progress of decreasing weapons of mass destruction for both nations, while still providing deterrence strategy options against other nuclear armed nations. Like the New START, any future treaties do not have to place restrictions on long-range conventional strike capabilities, missile defenses, or modernizing ICBMs, SLBMs, or heavy bombers if each nation stays within the treaty limits. This will be supported from both sides as this is the status quo under current New START, where the focus is on a gradual reduction of the number of items that have been agreed upon in previous treaties. General John Hyten, former USSTRATCOM Commander, stated, “Bilateral, verifiable arms control agreements are essential to our ability to provide an effective deterrent. The treaty contributes to a more stable relationship between the

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<sup>7</sup> Cooper, David A. *Arms Control for the Third Nuclear Age. Between Disarmament and Armageddon* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2021) Pg.1

<sup>8</sup> Tom Z. Collina, “*Senate Approves New START.*” Arms Control Association, Dec 2010, <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2011-01/senate-approves-new-start>

United States and Russia.”<sup>9</sup> The comprehensive verification process and information sharing will reduce reservations about the intentions of the other side, instilling confidence for further cooperation, and provide a better understanding of the other countries overall nuclear forces, alleviating concerns.

Previous reduction treaties between the United States and Russia have not discussed restrictions on shorter-range nuclear weapons, often referred to as nonstrategic or tactical nuclear weapons. The United States and NATO would like to increase transparency on Russia’s tactical nuclear weapon arsenal, especially with the current threat by Russia to use these weapons in the war in Ukraine. Russia has expressed little interest in further reduction of deployed strategic weapons and no interest in limits or reductions in tactical nuclear weapons until the United States withdraws all of its nonstrategic nuclear weapons from Europe.<sup>10</sup> This is an area of cooperation that could be achieved within the next treaty. In 2010, Secretary of State Clinton linked the removal of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe, to the reduction in the number of Russian nonstrategic nuclear weapons.<sup>11</sup> In the 2010 Strategic Concept, NATO endorsed this viewpoint. The United States nuclear weapons stationed in Europe are unpopular amongst the Europeans. Negotiations focused on transparency and reduction of Russian tactical nuclear weapons in exchange for the removal of U.S. nuclear weapons from NATO, is a step toward U.S. and Russian cooperation for nuclear security and global nonproliferation. Achieving a new strategic arms reduction treaty with Russia is difficult, but one that supports cooperation and opens the

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<sup>9</sup> Frank G. Klotz, “The Military Case for Extending the New START Agreement.” RAND Corp. (Santa Monica, CA, Feb 2020, Pg. 11, <https://www.rand.org/pubs/perspectives/PE350.html>)

<sup>10</sup> Amy F. Woolf, “*Next Steps in Nuclear Arms Control with Russia: Issues for Congress.*” CRS Report No. R43037. (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, Jan 6, 2014) Pg. 22, <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/nuke/R43037.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Amy F. Woolf, “*Next Steps in Nuclear Arms Control with Russia: Issues for Congress.*” CRS Report No. R43037. (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, Jan 6, 2014) Pg. 12, <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/nuke/R43037.pdf>

door for future cooperation. Involving other nuclear weapon states in future reduction discussions is necessary and will take more cooperation from the United States and Russia.

### **STRATEGIC ARMS REDUCTION (MULTILATERAL TREATIES)**

The United States and Russia should work together to expand the bilateral discussions and include China in the next strategic arms reduction framework. This will provide the three leading nuclear armed states opportunities to discuss and cooperate on future agreements and open the door for additional nuclear states to join in future arms reduction treaties. The New START is a bilateral treaty between the United States and Russia; therefore, it does not address or limit any other country with nuclear weapons. China is the only nation of the five Non-Proliferation Treaty nuclear weapon states that has been building up and modernizing its nuclear forces, while Russia and the United States have been reducing their numbers.<sup>12</sup> The United States Office of the Secretary of Defense stated in their annual report to Congress that “China’s lack of transparency regarding the scope and scale of its nuclear modernization program raises questions regarding its future intent.”<sup>13</sup> China maintains its official policy of no first use of nuclear weapons and the need to maintain a limited but survivable nuclear force.<sup>14</sup>

China has resisted any discussions or inclusion into trilateral reductions if the United States and Russia maintain arsenals that are five times greater compared to China’s. The Chinese Foreign Ministry has declared Beijing would have no reason to sign a treaty that permits

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<sup>12</sup> Cooper, David A. *Arms Control for the Third Nuclear Age. Between Disarmament and Armageddon* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2021) Pg.145

<sup>13</sup> Frank G. Klotz, “The Military Case for Extending the New START Agreement.” RAND Corp. (Santa Monica, CA, Feb 2020, Pg. 17, <https://www.rand.org/pubs/perspectives/PE350.html>)

<sup>14</sup> Frank G. Klotz, “The Military Case for Extending the New START Agreement.” RAND Corp. (Santa Monica, CA, Feb 2020, Pg. 17, <https://www.rand.org/pubs/perspectives/PE350.html>)

it to maintain only a fraction of the U.S. and Russian level of warheads or missiles.<sup>15</sup> The United States and Russia could ease tensions with China, offering them the same strategic limits that are placed on themselves with all deployed strategic nuclear warheads and bombs capped at 1000 for each nation, and the deployed launcher, missile, and bombers capped at 500. This would alleviate China's insecurities about their nuclear arsenal numbers, while simultaneously bringing them into the treaty and opening them up to the notification and verification process established in the current New START. China would not have to reduce their current nuclear arsenal numbers, while watching the United States and Russia reduce their numbers, bringing about more parity amongst the three nations. As well, the United States and Russia would get the opportunity to exchange information with China, obtain a better grasp of their nuclear capabilities, and alleviate tensions and suspicions. Despite the professed friendship and increased support to one another, Russia and China are border nations and have long standing grievances. Russia realizes China is a rising power, and a threat with their growing missile capabilities. China views Russia as a second-tier power, who is not able to sustain an arms race. The United States is in an adversarial position with both nations. The United States and Russia could cooperate for the benefit of both countries by bringing China into trilateral arms treaties.

The United States and Russia could further cooperate along multilateral treaties by looking to include additional nuclear states in multilateral treaties. Discussions could begin at the United Nations Security Council forums, allowing the P5 nations to openly discuss arms control issues, and layout the foundation for future negotiations.<sup>16</sup> The treaties could be parallel negotiations or replace the United States and Russia START with multilateral nuclear states

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<sup>15</sup> Chris Miller, "The INF Treaty is Dead, and Russia is the Biggest Loser." Foreign Policy, Aug 2, 2019, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/08/02/the-inf-treaty-is-dead-and-russia-is-the-biggest-loser/>

<sup>16</sup> Cooper, David A. *Arms Control for the Third Nuclear Age. Between Disarmament and Armageddon* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2021) Pg.167

signing on to reducing their arsenals. The United States has close ties with the United Kingdom and France, both with nuclear arsenals that Russia views as a threat to its stability. The United States could broker negotiations that would ease European tensions and work toward a reduction in the number of nuclear weapons in Europe. Russia and the United States have ties with India, where China and the United States have ties with Pakistan. Working together, the United States and Russia could bring India, Pakistan, and China into the strategic arms reduction treaties, reducing tensions amongst the neighboring nations, setting limits on nuclear weapons, and opening information sharing, monitoring, and verification procedures similar to what has been going on for 50 years between the United States and Russia.

### **NUCLEAR ENERGY COOPERATION**

The United States and Russia should re-engage in a cooperative effort to ensure the safe and productive use of nuclear energy, confirm nonproliferation of WMDs, and use their technical expertise to develop sustainable nuclear energy programs around the globe. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States Congress created the Department of Defense Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program for the purpose of securing and dismantling weapons of mass destruction and their associated infrastructure in the former Soviet Union.<sup>17</sup> The United States and Russia worked together for more than 20 years to remove weapons usable material and improve the security of nuclear weapons from a dozen countries. In 2012, Russia rejected the proposal to renew the CTR agreement on the idea that it was not consistent with ideas for cooperation. The United States has continued to work on nuclear security related work,

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<sup>17</sup> Fact Sheet: The Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program. Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation. Washington, DC. <https://armscontrolcenter.org/fact-sheet-the-nunn-lugar-cooperative-threat-reduction-program-2/>

but not in a joint effort with Russia. The United States and Russia can work together on nuclear energy with foreign countries, providing sustainable clean energy, while ensuring nonproliferation of nuclear capabilities.

The United States has a history in civil nuclear commerce, purchasing and selling nuclear fuel, reactors, and related components with other countries. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act of 1978 imposed restrictions on United States nuclear commerce, putting safeguards in place to ensure the transfer of nuclear technology would not contribute to the proliferation of nuclear weapons. According to the World Nuclear Association, 16 countries are planning to build their first nuclear power plants by 2030.<sup>18</sup> There are very few countries in the world that conduct commercial enrichment and reprocessing of fissile material. Russia is one of the few countries that is conducting commercial reprocessing and commercial enrichment. The United States conducts commercial enrichment.<sup>19</sup> Together, the United States and Russia can provide technical support to the countries requesting nuclear energy. When the United States and Russia were cooperating in support of the CTR, the two nations converted 500 metric tons of highly enriched uranium from Russian nuclear warheads to reactor fuel, which provided electricity for nuclear power plants.<sup>20</sup> This same cooperative effort could be repeated, with a focused effort of support to new countries with nuclear power for clean energy. Together, the United States and Russia could support the construction of nuclear power plants, provide the enriched uranium for the nuclear plant, and ensure the safety and compliance in accordance with United Nations

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<sup>18</sup> Paul K. Kerr, Mary Beth D. Nikitin, and Mark Holt, “*Nuclear Energy Cooperation with Foreign Countries: Issues for Congress*.” CRS Report No. R41910. (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, Dec 8, 2014) Pg. 2, <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/nuke/R41910.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> Paul K. Kerr, Mary Beth D. Nikitin, and Mark Holt, “*Nuclear Energy Cooperation with Foreign Countries: Issues for Congress*.” CRS Report No. R41910. (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, Dec 8, 2014) Pg. 5, <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/nuke/R41910.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> Fact Sheet: The Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program. Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation. Washington, DC. <https://armscontrolcenter.org/fact-sheet-the-nunn-lugar-cooperative-threat-reduction-program-2/>

Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This cooperative effort could expand to assist nations in upgrading their security around all nuclear facilities.

### **COUNTER ARGUMENT / REBUTTAL – IS RUSSIA WILLING TO COOPERATE?**

The relationship between the United States and Russia is as bad today as it was in the mid-1980's, with suspicion and distrust clouding every discussion, leading critics to question if Russia is willing to cooperate with the United States. Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014, support to Syria's Bashar al-Asaad in the brutal civil war, support to Venezuela's Maduro, U.S. election interference in 2016 and attempts in 2020, and the invasion of Ukraine in 2022 have made U.S. and Russian relations adversarial. In 2014, the United States released a report that stated Russia had tested a land-based cruise missile that flew within the denied range (300 – 3400 miles), violating the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. The Russian nuclear modernization program for 2015-16 has provided Russia with "specialized" capabilities to deliver low-yield, high impact nuclear weapons intended to offset U.S. conventional dominance and ballistic missile defense systems.<sup>21</sup> Many congressional delegates in the United States do not like the New START believing it does not do enough to contain Russia. Senator McConnell stated, "The treaty does nothing to significantly reduce the Russian Federation's stockpile of strategic arms, ignores the thousands of tactical weapons in the Russian arsenal, and contains an important concession linking missile defense to the strategic arms."<sup>22</sup> In the first two decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Russia has become more willing to challenge the western

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<sup>21</sup> Cooper, David A. *Arms Control for the Third Nuclear Age. Between Disarmament and Armageddon* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2021) Pg. 143

<sup>22</sup> Tom Z. Collina, "Senate Approves New START." Arms Control Association, Dec 2010, <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2011-01/senate-approves-new-start>

international order, while competing with the United States for influence around the world. Intensifying this relationship, the United States and Russia have fundamentally different views on what a productive relationship looks like. Many western leaders believe Russia cannot be trusted to stand by any commitment.

Western leaders may argue that Russia cannot be trusted making it difficult to find a common interest for U.S. and Russia cooperation. As the world's two nuclear superpowers, the United States and Russia carry a responsibility to keep the peace and ensure the nonproliferation of nuclear material and WMDs. Former Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security Thomas Countryman stated, "You can only get a new significant agreement when you have built up a better relationship between Moscow and Washington and it would have to be done at a very high level."<sup>23</sup> The New START is the foundation for future nuclear arms reduction treaties. The treaty provides balance, equality, and predictability for both countries, improving each country's ability to be cognizant of the other nation's arsenal and calculate how those forces might adapt and change in the future. The process allows each nation to interact as equals, increasing understanding and encouraging stability. The treaty also provides flexibility for each nation to arrange its forces the way it wants to and decrease them at their own pace to meet its security concerns. The United States should use the lessons learned from the Cold War negotiations where the purpose of arms control agreements was not intended to eliminate nuclear competition between rival superpowers, but rather manage it.<sup>24</sup> Although Russia has made a concerted effort to intervene in U.S. efforts around the world, the strategic arms reduction treaties have proven to be the one area where Russia is complying with the terms and conditions.

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<sup>23</sup> Ask an Expert: Thomas Countryman on U.S.-Russia Relations. Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation. Washington, DC. Apr 14, 2017, <https://armscontrolcenter.org/ask-expert-thomas-countryman-u-s-russia-relations/>

<sup>24</sup> Cooper, David A. *Arms Control for the Third Nuclear Age. Between Disarmament and Armageddon* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2021) Pg.1

These actions open the door for further cooperation between the United States and Russia on continued arms reduction, and the opportunity for inclusion of other nuclear states into arms reduction treaties.

## CONCLUSION

As the principal nuclear powers, Russia and the United States must find ways to cooperate for the security for the world. The 2022 National Defense Strategy (NDS) prioritizes defending the homeland; deterring strategic attacks against the United States, Allies, and partners; deterring aggression, while being prepared to prevail in conflict; and building a resilient Joint Force and defense ecosystem.<sup>25</sup> The Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) details the significance of nuclear weapons providing a unique deterrence unmatched by any other element of U.S. military power, the foundation of all United States national defense priorities. The NPR further details the importance of mutual, verifiable arms control, risk reduction, and nuclear nonproliferation as the most effective and durable path to reducing nuclear dangers, preserving stability, deterring aggression and escalation, and prevent the use of nuclear war.<sup>26</sup> Although relations between the United States and Russia have worsened in recent years, emerging global challenges increase the demand for greater cooperation. Strategic arms reduction and nuclear nonproliferation are areas of strategic cooperation that might help the two countries build a more solid foundation for mutual trust and security.

Strategic arms reduction negotiations have always been a platform for formal communication between Russia and the United States. Arms control negotiations are important

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<sup>25</sup> Department of Defense. Fact Sheet: 2022 National Defense Strategy. DoD NDS. Washington, DC. 2022. <https://media.defense.gov/2022/Mar/28/2002964702/-1/-1/1/NDS-FACT-SHEET.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> Paul K. Kerr, "2022 Nuclear Posture Review." (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, Apr 25, 2022) Pg. 2, <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/nuke/IF12266.pdf>

to Russia because they provide a venue to discuss sensitive security issues with the United States. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia views its nuclear arsenal as the last remaining symbol of its superpower status. Arms control discussions with the United States offer Russia a degree of status in international politics.<sup>27</sup> The United States considered these negotiations to be part of its effort to “reset” U.S.-Russia relations, providing an area of dialogue and cooperation that could help rebuild confidence in the broader relationship.<sup>28</sup> Strategic arms reduction and nuclear nonproliferation discussions are beneficial to both the United States and Russia, fostering stability and predictability, not only for themselves, but for other nuclear armed states as well. Cooperation efforts between the United States and Russia can be further extended to the “nuclear club” as a platform for increased relations.

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<sup>27</sup> Amy F. Woolf, “*Next Steps in Nuclear Arms Control with Russia: Issues for Congress.*” CRS Report No. R43037. (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, Jan 6, 2014) Pg. 9, <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/nuke/R43037.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> Amy F. Woolf, “*Next Steps in Nuclear Arms Control with Russia: Issues for Congress.*” CRS Report No. R43037. (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, Jan 6, 2014) Pg. 10, <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/nuke/R43037.pdf>

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