New START: Extension under what Circumstances?

By Anatoli S. Diakov, Götz Neuneck, Lynn Rusten

The New Strategic Arms Reductions Treaty (New START) is at risk of expiring on February 5, 2021. At the same time, there has been no substantial progress in negotiations on a follow-on nuclear arms control agreement. The Trump administration has offered a short-term extension of New START – should Russia agree to a freeze on all U.S. and Russian nuclear warhead stockpiles including non-strategic warheads and to be monitored by unspecified verification measures. This could pave the way to preserving New START, along with an agreement on a politically binding framework for a future agreement. But time appears too short to resolve all questions about the definition and verification of such an arrangement. With this bleak picture, what is the way forward to preserve strategic stability? What realistic scenarios and options exist to prevent a new arms race between Russia and the United States?

The arms control architecture that has helped to limit military competition and increase confidence in the Euro-Atlantic region is eroding. It is therefore essential to reverse – or at least to better manage – the increasing tensions between the West and Russia, to preserve those arrangements that are still contributing to strategic stability, and to take practical steps forward to reduce the risk of nuclear conflict.

The breakdown of the international arms control regime began in 2002 with the U.S. withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. The removal of all limits on national missile defense systems triggered Soviet and, later, Russian fears that U.S. missile defenses could one day seriously erode or defeat its strategic nuclear deterrent. This concern fueled some of Russia's nuclear modernization programs, which subsequently became threats to the United States and its Western allies.[1] NATO expansion, accusations of treaty violations by both sides, Russia's actions in Ukraine in 2014, and U.S. accusations of Russian interference in the 2016 and 2020 U.S. elections added to the mistrust that had taken hold in the immediate post-Soviet period. Russia and the United States failed to adapt other treaties to the geopolitical changes that followed the dissolution of the Soviet Union and some of these agreements, most notably the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, subsequently failed.

New START works

New START is the only bilateral nuclear arms limitation treaty left standing. The treaty, which entered into force on February 5, 2011, limits U.S. and Russian strategic nuclear arsenals to 1,550 deployed warheads and 700 deployed delivery systems. It includes verification measures, which provide both parties with confidence in each other's compliance.

New START also is a significant benefit for the non-proliferation regime by helping to demonstrate the commitment of the United States and Russia to fulfilling their obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to pursue disarmament measures.

Table 1: U.S. and Russian New START Levels, October 1, 2020

	Warheads on deployed ICBMs, on deployed SLBMs, and on deployed heavy bombers	Deployed ICBMs, deployed SLBMs, and deployed heavy bombers	Deployed and non-deployed launchers of ICBMs, deployed and non-deployed launchers of SLBMs, and deployed and non-deployed heavy bombers
United States of America	1,457	675	800
Russian Federation	1,447	510	764

In February 2018, Moscow and Washington announced they had fulfilled their treaty obligations to meet its numerical limits. According to the October 2020 data exchange, both parties are still compliant with and, indeed, are considerably under the maximum permitted ceiling of deployed warheads.[2]

Instead of simply extending New START, the Trump administration prefers to negotiate a new, more comprehensive nuclear arms control agreement. However, this is unrealistic. The scope of such an agreement appears too complex to be achieved in the current political climate and in the time before New START will expire.

The Deep Cuts Commission has explained at numerous occasions the importance of extending New START.[3] The Extension will allow more time for structured and comprehensive negotiations to prepare a verifiable follow-on treaty or other agreements, which could include additional categories of nuclear weapons and involve further nuclear weapon possessor states.[4]

This Issue Brief will, from a Russian, U.S., and European perspective, first analyse the background of the debate, the prospects for New START extension, and the diplomatic and security implications of such a decision. It then discusses future options and concludes by proposing next steps.

Severe Implications if New START lapses

Without mutual restraint between the United States and Russia, competition in nuclear and conventional capabilities is likely to intensify and strategic stability will be further undermined. A new quantitative and qualitative arms race is looming with severe implications for global nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation, and regional stability.

The expiration of the INF Treaty makes the extension of New START even more important. If New START expires, it will be the first time in nearly fifty years that there are no mutual restraints on U.S. and Russian strategic nuclear forces.

Another negative effect is that Russia and the United States would stop exchanging information about their strategic nuclear forces, thus decreasing transparency and predictability. Both sides would lose the transparency and mutual verification the treaty provides regarding each other's strategic nuclear forces, including on-site inspections. Biannual exchange of extensive data on strategic force levels and the frequent notifications required by the treaty help each side to understand the status of each other's nuclear forces. These data exchanges are especially crucial under the current COVID-19 conditions where on-site inspections have been suspended.

Combined with qualitative improvements of delivery systems and no numerical limitations, uncertainties will grow over time, leading to worst case planning and potential new competition in both offensive and defensive systems. Without restraints on U.S. and Russian nuclear weapon systems, it will be harder to develop new agreements to address additional types of weapon systems.

In case New START expires, both countries would be free to mount additional warheads on their deployed strategic delivery systems. A study of the PIR Center estimated a breakout potential of a total of 3,570 deployed strategic warheads for the United States and 3,205 such warheads for Russia.[5]

Additionally, the impact on the Review Conference of the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), now expected to take place in August 2021, would be disastrous. Non-nuclear weapon states are deeply frustrated by what they see as a failure of the nuclear weapon states regarding their commitment under Article VI of the NPT, which requires that the state parties "pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament." Extension of New START and a P5 commitment to further steps toward fulfilment of their Article VI obligations would greatly improve prospects for a successful Review Conference in 2021. Vice versa, a lapse of New START and total breakdown of the U.S.-Russian arms control process would be very damaging to the NPT. More likely, this would increase support for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), which will enter into force on January 22, 2021.

Under the current circumstances, several scenarios are conceivable:

1) The Trump administration could still agree with Russia to extend New START for five years or a shorter period, and both sides could agree to discuss parameters for future negotiations of a follow-on agreement.

2) If re-elected, the Trump administration could decide to let New START lapse. In that case, there would be no limits on U.S. and Russian nuclear forces, no verification, and no near-term prospects for a new legally binding agreement.

3) A Biden administration could attempt to agree on and implement an extension with Russia in the two weeks between the new President's inauguration on January 20, 2021 and the expiration of the treaty. While Presidential candidate Biden has supported an extension of New START, Russia has cautioned that its domestic process required for an extension will take up to five weeks.[6] Legal analysts, however, believe that it could be possible to provisionally apply an agreement until an extension of New START takes legal effect. Vice President Biden has said that he would then pursue new agreements to build on New START.[7]

The Trump Administration: Last Minute "Hail Mary?"

The Trump administration wants to pursue a trilateral arms control agreement with Russia and China instead of negotiating a bilateral New START follow-on agreement. Even

though the United States has made only general statements regarding its views on the potential scope and objectives for trilateral arms control, it expects Russia to help bring China to the table.

Washington cites concerns about China's strategic modernization, notwithstanding that China has fewer than 300 nuclear warheads, in contrast to the United States and Russia who each possess about 4,000 deployable warheads.[8] The Trump administration characterizes China's relatively small stockpile as undergoing "a crash nuclear build-up" and an emerging threat to the United States. The 2020 Annual Report of the U.S. Department of Defense to the U.S. Congress states that China's nuclear stockpile is "estimated in the low 200s" but could "at least double in size as China expands and modernizes its nuclear forces over the next decade."[9]

Following several rounds of the strategic stability dialogue between the United States and Russia over the summer and fall of 2020, as well as phone calls between Presidents Trump and Putin, the U.S. position has changed, however. The U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Arms Control, Ambassador Marshall Billingslea, told reporters on August 18, 2020 that the U.S. was seeking to negotiate with Russia a politically binding agreement on a framework for future negotiations. With such an agreement, the United States would be willing to extend New START for "some period of time."[10] Regarding the framework, the United States wants a future agreement to include all types of nuclear warheads. This includes non-strategic warheads, where Russia has a large advantage relative to the United States. The U.S. approach is to seek a politically-binding limit on all warheads on both sides, an approach with significant challenges for verification.

Billingslea has also repeated complaints about the adequacy of New START's verification provisions and indicated the United States was seeking additional exchanges of telemetry and "improvements" to the inspection regime by increasing the number of inspections and shortening the time period for announcing intent to conduct an inspection.

Finally, Billingslea indicated the expectation that after the United States and Russia agree on parameters for a future agreement, China would be encouraged to engage as well. Billingslea said that this " involves coming to the negotiation table and sitting down and beginning the process to provide more assurance, more openness, more transparency regarding their plans and intentions, and what their actual capabilities are to reassure the United States."[11]

In the United States, support for extending New START remains strong and generally bipartisan. Although New START extension does not require any action by the U.S. Senate, bipartisan bills expressing support for extension have been introduced in both the Senate (Van Hollen-Young) and the House (Engel-McCaul). Many American military and national security experts – Republicans and Democrats alike – have expressed their support for New START extension because it serves U.S. national security interests.[12] U.S. Senators Dianne Feinstein, Chris Van Hollen-Young, and Rand Paul sent a letter to President Trump urging him "to extend the current treaty, allowing time to negotiate with Russia, as well as China, on the contours of a new agreement." UN Secretary-General António Guterres urged "both sides to agree to move quickly to extend the Treaty by the full five years."[13]

Meanwhile, an August 2020 report by the nonpartisan U.S. Congressional Budget Office estimated that the costs for the U.S. taxpayers

could be up to several hundred billion dollars over several decades if the United States were to expand its nuclear forces to the 2002 Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT) levels (1,700-2,200 accountable warheads), START II levels (3,000-3,500 accountable warheads), or START I levels (6,000 accountable warheads) – noting that existing reserve warheads could be uploaded soon, "but additional delivery systems and warheads would probably not be available before the late 2030s or early 2040s."[14]

China: A Crash Nuclear Build-Up?

There is no realistic prospect of China joining a trilateral negotiation with the United States and Russia at this stage. In June 2020, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said that "China has repeatedly reiterated that it has no intention of participating in the so-called trilateral arms control negotiations with the United States and Russia."[15] China's position is based on the enormous disparity between its current nuclear capabilities and the nuclear arsenals possessed by the United States and Russia. Beijing has long opposed trilateral arms control negotiations until the United States and Russia come down to the Chinese levels. However, Chinese officials are in favor of discussing strategic stability issues including missile defense in the P5 context or in bilateral consultations with the United States.[16]

China is also concerned about new developments that could affect the survivability of its nuclear arsenal against a U.S. pre-emptive strike.[17] The United States and its regional allies in the Asia-Pacific region are concerned about China's nuclear and conventional capabilities. An entanglement of nuclear and conventional capabilities could affect the risk of escalation in the region and makes nuclear risk reduction talks between the United States and China absolutely vital.

While the United States should be concerned about China's modernization plans and lack of transparency, it is unclear why the Trump administration is expressing its concerns in such an exaggerated manner bordering on hysteria. Extending New START would signal to China that the United States and Russia are continuing the process of restraint, nuclear reductions, and transparency with data exchanges and inspections – and thus help move closer to the conditions that would enable a multilateral arms control process.

Russia's Offer to extend New START

Russia has made clear that it is prepared to extend the treaty for a period of five years or less. On December 5, 2019, President Putin declared that Russia is ready to "immediately and unconditionally extend New START."[18] More recently, on October 16, 2020, Washington rejected the Russian offer to extend the treaty for one year. President Trump's national security advisor Robert O'Brien commented that Russia's offer to extend New START without freezing nuclear warheads, including non-strategic warheads, is a "nonstarter."[19]

Russian officials expressed that the extension of the treaty will provide time to continue negotiations on future nuclear arms control and, as far as possible, further reductions. In Russia's view, the extension of New START provides predictability in the field of nuclear weapons of both parties and extends the timeframe for discussing U.S. military policy and plans that concern Russia – including the ongoing development of the global missile defense system, deployment of weapons in outer space, Prompt Global Strike programs, and other military capabilities that Moscow sees as strategic threats.

Regarding its own programmes to develop new strategic systems, Russia has clarified that both the Avangard hypersonic vehicle to be

deployed on intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), and the Sarmat heavy ICBM would be accountable under New START. This clarifies Moscow's position on a key U.S. concern about extending the treaty. Should Russia intend to deploy any other new kinds of strategic offensive arms while the treaty remains in force, those systems should be discussed in the Bilateral Consultative Commission, the treaty's implementation body.

The inclusion of other nuclear weapon states in future negotiations is a longstanding demand of Russian diplomats. Former New START negotiator and Russia's current Ambassador to the United States, Anatoly Antonov, explained that after signing and implementing New START, bilateral nuclear arms control would be exhausted and that other nuclear weapon states such as China, the United Kingdom, and France should be involved.[20]

However, Moscow argues that any broadening of participation can only happen on the basis of a clearly expressed voluntary consent by the parties. Based on this position, Russia has stated that it will not – and as a practical matter cannot – force China to join the talks. Thus, Russian officials have indicated they interpreted U.S. insistence on including China in the nuclear arms talks as an indication that Washington has decided not to extend New START and will use China's opposition to joining such talks as a pretext for letting the treaty expire.

Regarding the U.S. desire for a new agreement to restrict also non-strategic nuclear warheads which are not covered by New START, Russia has always insisted that the United States should first remove its own non-strategic warheads from Europe before it would be ready for further discussions. Recently, Russia has clarified it would also agree to a politically binding freeze on warheads, but it may be implemented only "exclusively on the premise that 'freezing' of warheads will not be accompanied by any additional demands on the part of the United States."[21] The United States is insisting that verification measures be agreed before it will extend New START.

These competing demands have resulted in a diplomatic deadlock. In this situation, Russia is likely to await the election outcome before concluding any agreements on the parameters for future negotiations.

NATO-Allies: Support for New START ...and More

Many NATO allies support an extension of New START and remain committed to arms control and disarmament.[22] French President Macron said on February 7, 2020, that "it is critical that the New START Treaty be extended beyond 2020."[23] The European Union and many member states have strongly called for the extension of New START. NATO allies not only underscored the importance of New START extension, but also made suggestions for a continued dialogue between the United States and Russia about future risk reduction, confidence-building, and arms control measures.[24] German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas said on August 10 that "it is critical for global security that Russia and the U.S. extend the New START Treaty as quickly as possible." He added that "this presents an opportunity to involve China in particular in the future, thereby strengthening the Non-Proliferation Treaty as a whole."[25] NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said on June 23, 2020, that he welcomes "Russia and the United States sitting down and talking to each other on arms control."[26] He further stated: "We welcome the consultations between U.S. and NATO

Allies, and then we hope that we will be able to reach agreements that can ensure that we, at least, don't weaken the system of arms control, but hopefully we are actually able to strengthen the arms control architecture, because that has served us well for many, many years."[27] In a June 24, 2020, briefing Billingslea argued that the approach of the Trump administration and the NATO approach "are completely in sync," naming many countries that he claimed "called out China for their need to negotiate in good faith."[28] Some allies believe that New START should be extended regardless of whether China can be brought into the talks.

At the same time, some NATO members call for China to join efforts on future regulations in arms control. Although European NATO countries are supporting the U.S. view to engage China in arms control, there is strong support to extend New START as soon as possible and without linkage to other issues.[29] At the NATO virtual Defense Ministerial on June 17, 2020, several Ministers expressed their support for extending New START. In addition, the Stockholm Initiative issued a statement on February 25, 2020, in which the 16 participating states are proposing "stepping stones" on the way to implementing nuclear disarmament, called on "the United States and Russia to extend New START and engage in talks on its possible expansion."[30]

Overwhelmingly, the NATO countries are not only concerned about the demise of the INF Treaty, and the potential lapse of New START, but also about the erosion of arms control more broadly.

Unrestricted Modernization and Arms Racing

If the strategic arms control framework breaks down, the United States and Russia will be able to develop and deploy nuclear weapons and related delivery systems in an unrestricted manner. At the same time, developments of new weapons systems will likely accelerate. Both countries have comprehensive plans modernization plans for their strategic nuclear forces, which could cost hundreds of billions of dollars over the coming decades.[31] Thus, a new arms race is already manifesting itself in the budget planning and development of the nuclear forces of Russia and the United States – including new types and kinds of delivery vehicles designed to penetrate or evade air and missile defenses, delivering weapons to their targets with greater speed and accuracy.

The United States is planning for a new strategic bomber (B-21), a new ICBM (the so-called Ground Based Strategic Deterrent), and a new nuclear submarine to replace the aging systems currently in service. The United States is also developing a new long-range standoff (LRSO) cruise missile as a successor for its current long-range air-launched cruise missile (ALCM) carried on heavy bombers. Potential developments in the sector of hypersonic glide vehicles, missiles for the Prompt Global Strike program, or improved space surveillance capabilities reinforce the concerns of Russia and China over U.S. superiority in the strategic sector.[32]

Table 2: US Nuclear Modernization Programs

System	Description	Planned deployment period
New ICBM ground based strategic deterrent (GBSD)	Replaces the Minuteman III ICBM and associated launch control and C2 facilities.	2020s through 2080s
B-21 'Raider' strike bomber	R&D phase, replacement for B-1 and B-2 bombers	Until 2080s
Long-range stand-off cruise missile (LRSO)	Replacement for the ALCMs. The U.S. Air Force plans to procure approx. 1,000 LRSOs for B-2, B-52, and B-21, production to start in 2021.	Until 2060s
Trident II D5 (SLBM)	Modernization and life extension.	Until 2042

Source: "U.S. Modernization Programmes", Arms Control Association, Fact Sheet, August 2018.

Since the 2000s, Russia is also in a modernization cycle and has updated or replaced about 80 % of its strategic nuclear forces. On March 1, 2018, President Putin spoke for the first time publicly about several new nuclear delivery vehicles in various stages of research and development, such as the heavy ICBM RS-28 (Sarmat), a manoeuvrable hypersonic gliding vehicle (Avangard), an autonomous nuclear-powered torpedo with a nuclear warhead (Poseidon), and a nuclear-powered long-range supersonic missile (Burevestnik).[33] The central message of these announcements was that Russia would have sufficient technological capabilities to overcome current and future U.S. missile defense systems and thus has a comprehensive second-strike potential.

While Russia is demonstrating new capabilities, it also offers negotiations on those systems. Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov and other Russian officials have stated that two of the new strategic systems – the Avangard and Sarmat – will fall under the scope of New START.[34] In fact, the Avangard was demonstrated to U.S. New START inspectors during a visit to Russia on November 24-26, 2019.[35]

Other potential strategic delivery systems, such as Burevestnik or Poseidon, are unlikely to be available for deployment before 2026 and Russia argues that these systems are not automatically accountable under New START. Yet, they could become subject of negotiations between the United States and Russia. Both sides could discuss how to bring them under arms control regulations in the Bilateral Consultative Commission or, more likely, in the context of strategic stability talks or future negotiations on a New START follow-on agreement. Thus, new kinds of delivery systems with intercontinental range such as ground- and air-launched hypersonic vehicles, nuclear-powered torpedoes, and cruise missiles – whether nuclear or conventionally equipped – should become treaty accountable in the future.

Laying the Ground for better Arms Control by extending New START

Any bilateral nuclear arms control agreement to follow New START should build on the treaty's provisions and verification regime. Such an accord could verifiably limit deployed strategic warheads as well as new strategic delivery sys-

Table 3: Russian modernization plans, selected delivery systems

Program	Description	Mission
Sarmat ICBM	Heavy ICBM with liquid propulsion, replaces the SS-18 ICBM.	46 ICBMs are planned after 2020.
Burevestnik nuclear-propelled cruise missile	Stealth capability, subsonic low-flying with „unlimited range."	Equipped with a nuclear warhead, can bypass air and missile defenses.
Poseidon high-speed underwater torpedo	Nuclear propulsion, operates with high speed in deep ocean.	Can be equipped with a conventional or nuclear warhead (1 megaton), aimed against aircraft carriers, sea-fortresses, and harbors.
Kinzhal air-launched hypersonic missile	Mach 10, manoeuverable in all phases of flight, has range of more than 2,000 km, deployed since December 2017.	Invulnerable against air and missile defenses due to high speed, aimed against sea and land targets.
Avangard strategic hypervelocity glide vehicle	Lateral and vertical manoeuvrability with high precision.	Manoeuverable warhead to overcomes the U.S. national missile defense systems.

Based on "Presidential Address to Federal Assembly", President of Russia Vladimir Putin, March 1, 2018.

tems and reduce the risk of escalation of a military conflict between Russia and the United States.[36] Without any such future agreement, Russian and U.S. modernization efforts will proceed and could expand unconstrained. A number of steps are urgently required to avoid such a scenario:

1. It is essential for the United States and Russia to extend New START for five years to preserve its benefits and allow time to agree on parameters and negotiate a follow-on agreement that could supersede New START.

2. Europeans at the highest level must try to reach the Kremlin and the White House to make unequivocally clear that extending New START for five years is important for European security. From a European perspective, it is important to gain time to discuss the complex questions affecting nuclear strategic stability and to negotiate new agreements. NATO countries should understand that the continuation of the strategic dialogue between the United States and Russia is in their highest interest. NATO and all Europeans have a role to play in helping to shape future agreements that can enhance their security and reduce the risk of conflict on their territories.

3. Once New START is extended, the United States and Russia must intensify their efforts to reach new understandings and agreements to increase strategic stability and continue the arms control process. Future agreements should address not only (new) strategic systems, but also intermediate and shorter-range nuclear-capable systems no longer limited after the demise of the INF Treaty, and U.S. and Russian non-strategic nuclear weapons

based in and near Europe. The offense-defense relationship, prompt conventional strike capabilities, cyber nuclear threats, and military activities in space are all on the agenda for strategic stability talks. The challenge for the United States and Russia will be how to move from articulation of each side's concerns to practical ideas and actions that can improve mutual security. This will take time, but agreements can take many forms – from formal treaties to rules of the road, norms, or transparency- and confidence-building measures, to name a few. New START's limitations and verification for another five years will be a critical underpinning for additional steps.

4. Based on a serious dialogue on strategic stability, the United States and Russia should begin negotiations on a New START follow-on treaty. A new regime for strategic arms control should include definitions for new kinds of strategic offensive weapon systems which are not yet captured by New START, clear rules for the conversion of nuclear delivery systems to conventional roles, inclusion of certain long-range conventional and dual-capable strike systems, and a robust verification regime. Regarding ballistic missile defense, politically binding transparency- and confidence-building measures about ballistic missile defense locations and capabilities would be a step forward for national missile defenses as well as theater defenses in and around Europe.

5. The United States has long wanted to address Russia's numerical advantage regarding non-strategic nuclear warheads and seeks to include this category of U.S. and Russian weapons in a future, verifiable agreement. At the same time, Russia demands that the nuclear arsenals of the United States' allies, the United Kingdom and France, should be taken into account as well. One way to pursue this would be through an agreement that limits the total warhead stockpiles, with sublimits on deployed strategic warheads and perhaps locational restrictions on non-deployed nuclear warheads. In any case, this should be part of a discussion with Russia on which categories of nuclear warheads and delivery systems should be included in future agreements.

6. As the nuclear arms control agenda extends beyond the United States and Russia, it is vital that all P5 states start discussing risk reduction measures in the context of new technological developments. New developments in the field of offensive conventional weapon systems with high accuracy, hypersonic systems, missile defenses, cyber, and space surveillance capabilities can affect strategic stability and significantly increase the risk of use of nuclear weapons. Structured dialogue in bilateral formats and in the P5 format can lead to new confidence and trust building measures.

7. The P5 should intensify their dialogue on nuclear doctrines, risk reduction, and transparency measures in the NPT context and make a public statement using the Reagan-Gorbachev formula that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought." They should also clarify how and when they will begin to engage in the process of nuclear limitations and reductions. Such steps are essential for a successful NPT review process and for the long-term viability of the NPT regime. A breakdown in the U.S.-Russian arms control process will make it even less likely that other nuclear weapon states will agree to become a part of future nuclear arms control discussions. Chinese officials have stated at numerous occasions that they

are not interested in talks as long as Russian and U.S. arsenals are significantly larger than China's. Nevertheless, China, as the other P5 members, must become more transparent about its intentions, current nuclear forces, and modernization plans.

8. The United States should take steps to start a dialogue with China on plans and intentions, exchange views on their respective security concerns, and pursue measures to reduce nuclear risks and enhance confidence. These discussions can take place bilaterally, multilaterally on a regional basis, and in the P5 context. Realistically, any considered effort to engage China in nuclear arms control in the future will likely have to involve all P5 states, or to be developed on a regional basis in the Asia-Pacific. Additionally, separate talks with China on the build-up of ground-launched ballistic missiles in the Asia-Pacific region are necessary.

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About the Authors

Anatoli S. Diakov is a Professor of Physics and a Researcher at the Center for Energy and Security Studies (CENESS) and a leading Researcher at the Primakov Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO).

Götz Neuneck is Professor of Physics and Senior Research Fellow at the IFSH and formerly its deputy Director and Head of the interdisciplinary research area "Arms Control and Emerging Technologies".

Lynn Rusten is Vice President of the Global Nuclear Policy Program at the Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI). Before joining NTI in March 2017, Rusten held numerous high-ranking government positions.

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The Deep Cuts Commission provides decision-makers as well as the interested public with concrete policy options based on realistic analysis and sound research. Since it was established in 2013, the Commission is coordinated in its deliberations by the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg (IFSH), the Arms Control Association (ACA), and the Primakov Institute of World Economy and International Relations, Russian Academy of Sciences (IMEMO, RAN) with the active support of the German Federal Foreign Office and the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg.

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Institut für Friedensforschung und Sicherheitspolitik an der Universität Hamburg (IFSH)

Beim Schlump 83
20144 Hamburg, Germany

Phone: +49 (0)40 86 60 77 70
Fax: +49 (0)40 866 36 15

Project Management
Lina-Marieke Hilgert (hilgert@ifsh.de)
Oliver Meier (meier@ifsh.de)