

Why New START is Essential to U.S. National Security: What Bipartisan National Security Officials Are Saying

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The New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START), signed by the United States and Russia in April, has garnered substantial support from the U.S. military establishment and former senior national security officials, both Republicans and Democrats.

The Treaty puts Washington and Moscow back on the path of verifiable nuclear reductions and cooperation on related nuclear security priorities. New START will limit both sides to no more than 1,550 deployed strategic warheads and 700 deployed delivery vehicles, about 30 percent below the existing warhead limit. New START will replace the 1991 START verification regime, which expired last December, with a more up-to-date system to monitor compliance, which is essential for strategic stability and predictability.

Today, the Consensus for American Security, a new bipartisan group of military leaders, including former Secretary of State George Shultz, Chief Negotiator of the first START agreement Ambassador Richard Burt, Lieutenant General John Castellaw USMC (Ret), Lieutenant General Robert Gard USA (Ret), Vice Admiral Lee Gunn USN (Ret), Lieutenant General Donald Kerrick USA (Ret), Rear Admiral Rose Levitre USN (Ret), and others, announced its support for New START (see <http://www.securityconsensus.org>).

The following are some of the most prominent recent statements of support.

Current Senior U.S. Military Leaders

- **Robert M. Gates**, Secretary of Defense; Wall Street Journal, May 13, 2010:

"The New START Treaty has the unanimous support of America's military leadership--to include the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, all of the service chiefs, and the commander of the U.S. Strategic Command, the organization responsible for our strategic nuclear deterrent. For nearly 40 years, treaties to limit or reduce nuclear weapons have been approved by the U.S. Senate by strong bipartisan majorities. This treaty deserves a similar reception and result--on account of the dangerous weapons it reduces, the critical defense capabilities it preserves, the strategic stability it maintains, and, above all, the security it provides to the American people."

- **Admiral Mike Mullen**, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Senate Armed Services Committee, June 17, 2010:

"I am pleased to add my voice in support of ratification of the New START treaty and to do so as soon as possible. We are in our seventh month without a treaty with Russia. This treaty has the full support of your uniformed military . . . the conclusion and implementation of the New START Treaty is the right thing for us to do - and we took the time to do it right."

- **General Kevin Chilton**, STRATCOM Commander; Senate Foreign Relations Committee, June 16, 2010:

"If we don't get the treaty, [the Russians] are not constrained in their development of force structure and...we have no insight into what they're doing. So it's the worst of both possible worlds."

• **Lt. General Patrick O'Reilly**, Missile Defense Agency Director; Senate Foreign Relations Committee, June 16, 2010:

"Throughout the treaty negotiations, I frequently consulted the New START team on all potential impacts to missile defense. The New START Treaty does not constrain our plans to execute the U.S. Missile Defense program."

Former Senior U.S. Government Officials

• **James R. Schlesinger**, former Secretary of Defense and former Director of Central Intelligence, Nixon and Ford administrations; Senate Foreign Relations Committee, April 29, 2010:

"I think that it is obligatory for the United States to ratify [New START]...[F]or the United States at this juncture to fail to ratify the treaty in the due course of the Senate's deliberation would have a detrimental effect on our ability to influence others with regard to particularly the nonproliferation issue."

• **Lt. General Brent Scowcroft**, former National Security Advisor, Ford and George H.W. Bush administrations; Senate Foreign Relations Committee, June 10, 2010:

"[T]he principal result of non-ratification would be to throw the whole nuclear negotiating situation into a state of chaos, and the reason this treaty is important is over the decades we have built up all these counting rules, all these verification procedures and so on, so that each side feels, 'Yes, we can take these steps.' If you wipe those out, you're back to zero again..."

• **Stephen Hadley**, former National Security Advisor, George W. Bush administration; Senate Foreign Relations Committee, June 10, 2010:

"I think you do need to see this treaty in context of really a 20-year effort spanning Republican and Democratic administrations. And what it does, even if budgetary and modernization considerations push the forces down, this does provide some transparency, some predictability into the relationship. And quite frankly, it's an indication of one more thing where Russia and the United States have found it in their interest to work together cooperatively. And that's an important contribution to the overall environment between Russian and U.S. relations."

• **James Baker**, former Secretary of State, George H.W. Bush administration; Senate Foreign Relations Committee, May 19, 2010:

"[New START] appears to take our country in a direction that can enhance our national security while at the same time reducing the number of nuclear warheads on the planet."

• **Henry Kissinger**, former Secretary of State and National Security Advisor, Nixon and Ford administrations; Senate Foreign Relations Committee, May 25, 2010:

"The treaty before this Committee is an evolution of the START treaties begun in the Reagan administration and elaborated by its successors of both parties . . . The current agreement is a modest step forward stabilizing American and Russian arsenals at a slightly reduced level. It provides a measure of transparency; it reintroduces many verification measures that lapsed with the expiration of the last START agreement; it encourages what the Obama administration has described as the reset of political relations with Russia; it may provide potential benefits in dealing with the issue of proliferation."

• **George P. Shultz**, former Secretary of State, Reagan administration, and former Senator Sam Nunn (D-GA); letter to Sens. John Kerry and Richard Lugar, July 14, 2010:

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"We strongly endorse the goals of [New START]-to achieve a near-term reduction of nuclear weapons with mutually agreed verification procedures... [W]e urge the Senate to give its advice and consent to ratification of New START as early as is feasible."

• **Colin L. Powell**, former Secretary of State, George W. Bush administration; with former Senator **Howard Baker** (R-TN); former Secretary of Defense **Harold Brown**, Carter administration; former Secretary of Defense **Frank Carlucci**, Reagan administration; former Senator **John C. Danforth** (R-MO); former White House Chief of Staff **Kenneth M. Duberstein**, Reagan administration; former Senator **Chuck Hagel** (R-NE); former Senator **Nancy Kassebaum-Baker** (R-KS); former Governor and 9/11 Commission Chair **Thomas Kean** (R-NJ); former Senator **Warren Rudman** (R-NH); and former Senator **Alan Simpson** (R-WY); joint statement, June 24, 2010:

"Now is the time for a thorough and balanced national discussion about nuclear arms control and nonproliferation. But we must remember that a world without a binding U.S.-Russian nuclear weapons agreement is a much more dangerous world. We, the undersigned Republicans and Democrats, support the new START treaty..."

(For the full statement, see <http://psaonline.org/downloads/START.pdf>)

• **William Cohen**, former Secretary of Defense, Clinton administration; NBC News interview with Andrea Mitchell, April 8, 2010:

"It's a big deal in the sense the optics that here the two biggest possessors of nuclear weapons have agreed to reduce their inventories significantly, although we're nearly down to those numbers already. So it's not that much of a substantive cut where we are today, but it's a significant reduction from where we started from. And secondly, there is not really that much of an impact upon the U.S. forces because we still have what we call a triad -- air, land and sea. So I think it's significant in terms of the optics and the appearance and the fact that we are now working more closely with the Russians."

• **Linton F. Brooks**, former START I negotiator and former Administrator of the National Nuclear Security Administration, George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush administrations; Arms Control Association briefing, April 7, 2010:

"[Y]ou'll hear concerns by some that [New START] may or may not be a good idea but you can't possibly accept it because the U.S. nuclear weapons program is in disarray. And I think the administration's answer to that is the fiscal 2011 budget with a very substantial increase for my former home, the National Nuclear Security Administration. And I will say flatly, I ran that place for five years and I'd have killed for that budget and that much high-level attention in the administration and I just - nobody in government ever said 'my program has too much money' and I doubt that my successor is busy saying that. But he is very happy with his program and I think it does put us on a very firm, firm basis."

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