



BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



15 December– 29 December 2010

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BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (BWC)

U.S. Prepares for BWC Review Conference

Global Security Newswire, 14 December 2010; www.globalsecuritynewswire.org

The Obama administration is taking strides to prepare for the next Biological Weapons Convention review conference one year from now. (1,194 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (CWC)

New Advisory Panel on Future Priorities of the OPCW Holds First Meeting in The Hague

OPCW, 16 December 2010; www.opcw.org

An advisory panel of independent experts, convened by Director-General Ahmet Üzümcü to make recommendations for future OPCW priorities, held its first meeting in The Hague from 14-15 December 2010. (227 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

FISSILE MATERIALS

NNSA Administrator Delivers Opening Remarks at Third International Meeting on Next Generation Nuclear Safeguards

NNSA, 14 December 2010, nnsa.energy.gov

National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) Administrator Thomas D'Agostino today delivered opening remarks at the third annual meeting of NNSA's Next Generation Safeguards Initiative (NGSI). (469 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

Russia Inaugurates World's First Low Enriched Uranium Reserve

IAEA, 17 December 2010, www.iaea.org

The world's first low enriched uranium (LEU) Reserve, located at the International Uranium Enrichment Centre in Angarsk, Russia, opened its doors today. (248 words)

[Click here for full text.](#)



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FISSILE MATERIALS (CONT.)

Serbia Emptied of Highly Enriched Uranium

Global Security Newswire, 23 December 2010; www.globalsecuritynewswire.org

All highly enriched uranium has been removed from Serbia following a final 28-pound shipment of the potential nuclear-weapon material, the U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) announced yesterday. (467 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

NEW STRATEGIC ARMS REDUCTION TREATY (NEW START)

Senate Passes Arms Control Treaty with Russia, 71-26

New York Times, 22 December 2010, global.nytimes.com

The 71-to-26 vote sends the treaty, known as New Start, to the president for his signature, and cements what is probably the most tangible foreign policy achievement of Mr. Obama's two years in office. (1,499 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

Senate Approval of New START

U.S. Department of State, 22 December, 2010, www.state.gov

Remarks, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State

Today the Senate took a great step forward in enhancing our national security by providing its advice and consent to ratification of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation. (309 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

Kremlin Hails Senate's Approval of Nuclear Treaty

Associated Press, 23 December 2010, news.google.com/news

President Dmitry Medvedev on Thursday welcomed the U.S. Senate's decision to ratify a landmark U.S.-Russian nuclear arms control treaty, but Russian legislators said they need to study a resolution accompanying the document before following suit.

(673 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

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U.S. Prepares for BWC Review Conference

Global Security Newswire, 14 December 2010; www.globalsecuritynewswire.org

The Obama administration is taking strides to prepare for the next Biological Weapons Convention review conference one year from now.

The U.S. State Department announced on December 3 that Laura Kennedy, Washington's ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament, would also serve as special representative for Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention issues and head up the U.S. delegation at the 2011 summit.

Last week Kennedy led the U.S. contingent at the pact's annual meeting of states parties in Geneva, Switzerland.

There was a "great deal of interest" in the international community about who would be named as U.S. envoy to the convention "because that is the person who will be actively working this issue over the next year and will, in many respects, be the face of U.S. BWC policy," according to a State Department official who requested anonymity to speak more freely about the issue.

Kennedy will be the "lead U.S. interlocutor" in consultations both in Geneva and around the globe leading up to the convention's 2011 review conference, the official told Global Security Newswire last week.

The official noted that Kennedy's predecessor at the Conference on Disarmament [CD], Ambassador Christina Rocca, also served as U.S. representative for the treaty near the end of the Bush administration.

"In a sense, by having two consecutive CD ambassadors serve as the lead U.S. envoys in BWC we are now more closely aligning ourselves with the way other foreign governments organize their representation at the BWC," according to the official.

"It was not considered automatic that our CD ambassador would be the lead BWC person, so we had to undertake a deliberate process to determine whether that in fact made sense," the official said.

The Biological Weapons Convention entered into force in 1975. The treaty, which today boasts 165 member nations, prohibits the development, production, stockpiling and use of weaponized disease agents such as anthrax, smallpox and plague.

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The pact has no verification regime. The last serious effort to establish such a system crumbled after the Bush administration in 2001 withdrew from nearly seven years of negotiations aimed at creating an inspections protocol. White House officials at the time asserted that such measures would not boost confidence in the international agreement and would restrict U.S. biodefense research and the biotechnology industry.

The Obama administration reaffirmed that position when it unveiled its approach to the four-page treaty at the BWC states parties meeting last year.

Since 2007 the United Nations in Geneva has hosted two convention meetings every year, dubbed the "intersessional process," focusing annually on different topics including disease surveillance and investigations of the alleged use of biological weapons.

The BWC review conferences, scheduled every five years, examine the pact's implementation and recommend improvements to the regime. The 2011 summit will be the seventh such meeting.

In a statement to the BWC states parties last week, Kennedy defended the administration's decision not to seek an inspection protocol, saying "a verification regime is not more feasible than it was in 2001, and perhaps even less so, given the evolution of technology and industry."

She said there are "pragmatic and constructive things that can be done to promote transparency" regarding nations' disease-related activities. However, Kennedy did not offer specific actions, saying such topics could be explored in a renewed intersessional period after 2011.

The ambassador also defended a core tenet of the White House's National Strategy for Countering Biological Threats, which focused on using the treaty to increase preparedness in order to reduce the impact of infectious disease outbreaks, whether natural or intentional.

"There has been debate about whether [the conference] should be engaged in discussions of capacity-building for disease surveillance and response," she said. "The U.S. believes that these simple truths – that biological weapons attacks are not always readily identified as attacks, and that effective detection and response to an attack are only possible if there is an effective public health response – make it abundantly clear that this is our business."

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The Obama administration believes there should be a strengthened, revitalized intersessional process that includes greater authority for the annual States Parties meetings to establish their own agendas and adopt decisions, according to Kennedy.

The agenda for the seventh review conference is scheduled to be developed during the convention's preparatory meeting in April [2011].

The State Department official last week described the agreement's review conferences as "landmark" events and predicted that Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Ellen Tauscher would likely be named the "formal head" of the U.S. delegation.

"Ellen will be the formal head of delegation, Ellen or another senior-level official. They will be involved in the behind-the-scenes talks and negotiations but in a day-to-day basis, Laura Kennedy will be our head [of delegation] for practical, working purposes," according to the official, who stressed that a final decision has not been made and was not expected to be announced until about one month before the review conference begins in December [2011].

The official likened the envisioned leadership structure to this year's Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty review conference, where Ambassador Susan Burk represented Washington but Secretary of State Clinton delivered the U.S. statement at the United Nations.

Tauscher supervises Foggy Bottom's three arms control offices, including the International Security and Nonproliferation Bureau, which is responsible the department's efforts to halt the proliferation and acquisition of weapons of mass destruction. The bureau oversees U.S. activities under the Biological Weapons Convention.

"Someone of [Tauscher's] level and stature would be appropriate," the official said. "With past review conferences, you typically have not had foreign ministers or heads of state as head of the delegations, so we wouldn't expect President Obama or Secretary Clinton to be the head of" the U.S. delegation, the official told GSN.

"Undersecretary Tauscher is the person that makes the most sense," the official added. "She's steeped in these issues. She oversees the three bureaus in the department that work in arms control and nonproliferation but she's not a foreign minister."

Another reason to believe Tauscher would head the U.S. delegation is that she delivered the Obama administration's approach to the treaty last year.

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"I think it is highly appropriate for the White House to select a seasoned diplomat like Ambassador Kennedy to manage the complex multilateral diplomacy needed to prepare for the 2011 BWC review conference. Given the regrettable lack of activity in the Conference on Disarmament, she will presumably have enough time to devote to her new job," according to issue expert Jonathan Tucker.

The 65-nation body [the CD], which must make decisions by consensus, has been deadlocked for roughly a decade in its efforts to promote disarmament initiatives. Most recently, Pakistan has resisted repeated attempts to negotiate a fissile material cutoff treaty.

Tucker also approved of the possibility that Tauscher would formally head the delegation once the review conference begins.

"Naming a high-ranking administration official like Undersecretary Tauscher to head the U.S. delegation to the BWC Review Conference raises the political salience of the event and demonstrates that President Obama cares about the issue," Tucker told GSN today by e-mail. "I would have preferred to see Secretary of State Hillary Clinton play that role, but if she is unavailable, then Tauscher is a good substitute."

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New Advisory Panel on Future Priorities of the OPCW Holds First Meeting in The Hague

OPCW, 16 December 2010; www.opcw.org

An advisory panel of independent experts, convened by Director-General Ahmet Üzümcü to make recommendations for future OPCW priorities, held its first meeting in The Hague from December 14-15, 2010.

The panel is chaired by Ambassador Rolf Ekeus of Sweden and comprises 14 members coming from a broad geographical distribution of OPCW Member States. The panel members were selected for their expertise in the fields of arms control and disarmament, chemical industry, and science and technology. The members are wholly independent and serve on the panel in their personal capacities.

Director-General Üzümcü announced the establishment of the panel at the 15th Session of the OPCW Conference of the States Parties on November 29: “As we look towards the future of the Organization in the years after 2012, I believe that it is useful to examine a wide range of perspectives,” the Director-General said. “In this light, and in order to reflect on the next phase in the evolution of our Organization, I have decided to establish an independent advisory panel.”

Following the initial meeting, the advisory panel will hold a small number of additional meetings in 2011 before submitting its report to the Director-General in mid-2011. The Director-General will thereafter share the report with the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention in order to assist them in their consideration of issues affecting the evolution of the Organization.

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NNSA Administrator Delivers Opening Remarks at Third International Meeting on Next Generation Nuclear Safeguards

NNSA, 14 December 2010, nnsa.energy.gov

National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) Administrator Thomas D'Agostino today delivered opening remarks at the third annual meeting of NNSA's Next Generation Safeguards Initiative (NGSI).

The meeting – attended by safeguards and nonproliferation experts from 13 countries, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the European Atomic Energy Agency (Euratom), and Brazil-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC) – is part of NNSA's effort to work with our international partners to strengthen nuclear safeguards intended to ensure the safe, secure and peaceful implementation of civil nuclear energy programs.

This year's conference will focus on the "Safeguards by Design" concept. By incorporating safeguard requirements into the design of nuclear facilities, phase alongside safety and security considerations, the "Safeguards by Design" concept enables the most effective and efficient use of limited safeguards resources.

The following are excerpts from Administrator D'Agostino's speech:

- ON INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TO STRENGTHEN SAFEGUARDS: "In his landmark nuclear security speech in Prague last year, President Obama made clear that we must work together to strengthen the international safeguards system. We must modernize the technology we use, improve the training and increase the resources we devote to ensuring that nations are not diverting nuclear materials, technology and know-how from peaceful programs to weapons programs."
- ON THE FUTURE OF CIVIL NUCLEAR ENERGY: "As Secretary Chu has made it clear, nuclear power is very likely to play a role in the clean energy revolution of tomorrow. Many of the countries represented here today have already taken steps down this path. As we work to see nuclear power develop as a source of clean, carbon free energy, we must also work together to ensure that greater reliance on nuclear energy does not worsen the threat posed by the proliferation of nuclear weapons and materials."
- ON RECRUITING THE NEXT GENERATION OF SAFEGUARDS EXPERTS: "In order to attract the best and brightest professionals to the nonproliferation and safeguards fields, NNSA is working with nine universities to develop new coursework on international safeguards and

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nonproliferation. We are sponsoring internships at our national laboratories for 136 students from 64 universities, and are launching a new graduate fellowship program to strengthen national laboratory and university partnerships. We hope that these and other efforts to attract the next generation of safeguards professionals will encourage other countries and organizations to promote the kind of international cooperation we will need to keep pace with emerging safeguards challenges.”

– ON SAFEGUARDS BY DESIGN: “NSA is working with the IAEA to advance and institutionalize Safeguards by Design so that international safeguards measures are more fully integrated into new nuclear facilities, along with safety and security measures from the outset of the design process. This will help operators avoid costly and time-consuming redesign efforts, save the IAEA time, money and effort, and ultimately enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of safeguards implementation.”

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Russia Inaugurates World's First Low Enriched Uranium Reserve

IAEA, 17 December 2010, www.iaea.org

The world's first low enriched uranium (LEU) Reserve, located at the International Uranium Enrichment Centre in Angarsk, Russia, opened its doors today. The LEU Reserve, currently valued at more than U.S. \$300 million helps ensure an uninterrupted supply of LEU for nuclear power generation.

The Russian Federation funded the 120-tonne reserve's establishment, as well as the costs of maintenance, storage, safety, security and safeguards. The LEU Reserve serves as a last-instance supplier to IAEA Member States at market prices; proceeds from the LEU sales will be used to replenish the LEU stocks.

"This week, IAEA inspectors completed their first inspection of the LEU Reserve, which constitutes now a part of the existing mechanisms of assurances of supply of LEU for nuclear power generation," IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano said in a statement delivered on his behalf at the LEU Reserve's inauguration ceremony at Angarsk.

"The LEU Reserve would be made available for back-up supply to any eligible IAEA Member State that might face a non-commercial disruption of supply of LEU to be used in nuclear fuel for power reactors thereby facilitating the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes," he said.

In November 2009, the IAEA Board of Governors authorized the IAEA Director General to sign and implement an agreement with the Russian Federation to establish the LEU Reserve. The agreement was signed on 29 March 2010. By assuring supply for peaceful uses of nuclear power, the LEU Reserve in Angarsk fulfils a key element of the IAEA's Statute.

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Global Security Newswire, 23 December 2010; www.globalsecuritynewswire.org

All highly enriched uranium has been removed from Serbia following a final 28-pound shipment of the potential nuclear-weapon material, the U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) announced yesterday.

The last transport of the Russian-origin spent fuel from the Vinca Institute of Nuclear Sciences ended an eight-year program to clear all highly enriched uranium from the European state. The material was placed in special containers and then moved by vehicle, train and cargo ship to Russia.

"With the removal of all remaining highly enriched uranium from Serbia, we are one step closer to achieving the president's goal of securing vulnerable nuclear material around the world," NNSA chief Thomas D'Agostino said in a press release. "The elimination of this material reduces the risk that it could be stolen by terrorists and highlights Serbia's commitment to global nuclear nonproliferation efforts."

A total of six nations have rid themselves of their full HEU stocks since April of last year, according to the release. The U.S. nuclear agency to date has helped safeguard nearly 6,700 pounds of highly enriched uranium and plutonium, which could power in excess of 120 nuclear weapons.

The Vinca reactor effort involved collaboration and "cost sharing" by the National Nuclear Security Administration, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the European Union, the governments of Serbia, Russia and the Czech Republic, and the nongovernmental Nuclear Threat Initiative.

The shipment also encompassed roughly 2.5 metric tons of low-enriched uranium.

In addition, the United States over the years has helped to augment security at the Vinca facility.

The last shipment began moving last month and reached its destination yesterday, the Associated Press reported. The project moved 8,030 spent fuel elements nearly 5,000 miles under armed guard through Serbia, Hungary and Slovenia and into Russia, according to an IAEA release. It cost \$55 million and was largely funded by Serbia and "international donors," the UN nuclear watchdog said.

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"This was a very complicated project. We had to involve governments, contractors, and non-governmental organizations," said IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano said in the release. "It was a great success. It was a success story and we are very happy to continue to cooperate with stakeholders to repatriate highly enriched uranium."

Russia is expected to extract uranium from the spent material for use as nuclear power plant fuel and to store the remaining waste in a "deep geological repository," the IAEA release states.

Terrorist acquisition of the spent fuel could have produced "dire consequences," a nuclear security specialist from a Western nation told Reuters. "The material poses more of a 'dirty bomb' threat than a nuclear weapon risk," he said, discussing a weapon that would use conventional explosives to spread radioactive material.

[Editor's Note: The Nuclear Threat Initiative is the sole sponsor of Global Security Newswire, which is published independently by the National Journal Group.]

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Senate Passes Arms Control Treaty with Russia, 71-26

New York Times, 22 December 2010, global.nytimes.com

The Senate gave final approval on Wednesday to a new arms control treaty with Russia, scaling back leftover cold war nuclear arsenals and capping a surprisingly successful lame-duck session for President Obama just weeks after his party's electoral debacle.

The 71-to-26 vote sends the treaty, known as New Start, to the president for his signature, and cements what is probably the most tangible foreign policy achievement of Mr. Obama's two years in office. Thirteen Republicans joined a unanimous Democratic caucus to vote in favor, exceeding the two-thirds majority required by the Constitution.

In Moscow on Thursday, senior Russian officials said Parliament would immediately begin debating the treaty. Approval is not in doubt because Parliament is tightly controlled by a pro-Kremlin political party. But it is not clear whether a final vote will occur this week or next.

The ratification vote was the third bipartisan victory for the president in the waning days of the session, while Democrats still control both houses of Congress. The treaty had assumed such symbolic importance for Mr. Obama's presidency that Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. took the rare step of presiding personally over the vote, in his role as president of the Senate. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, a former Senator, was on the floor as well.

"This is the most significant arms control agreement in nearly two decades," Mr. Obama said at a news conference after the vote. "It will make us safer and will reduce our nuclear arsenals along with Russia's." Reprising one of Ronald Reagan's famous lines, Mr. Obama added that the return of nuclear inspectors under the treaty will mean that "we will be able to trust but verify."

Senator John Kerry, the Massachusetts Democrat who led the floor fight for the treaty, said the vote will move the world away from the risk of nuclear disaster. "The winners are not defined by party or ideology," he said. "The winners are the American people, who are safer with fewer Russian missiles aimed at them."

Senator Jon Kyl, the Arizona Republican who led the opposition, lamented the refusal to amend the treaty. "The precedent here that we're establishing is that the Senate really is a rubber stamp," he said. "Whatever a president negotiates with the Russians or somebody else we dare not change because otherwise it will have to be renegotiated to some great detriment to humanity."

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Still, the Senate did agree to several proposals by Mr. Kyl and other Republicans to rewrite the resolution of ratification accompanying the treaty to reaffirm American plans to build missile defense in Europe despite Russian objections and to modernize the nation's nuclear weapons complex to make sure a smaller arsenal is still effective.

Arms control advocates welcomed the Senate vote. Richard Burt, head of an anti-nuclear advocacy group called Global Zero, said the vote "was imperative for national security" and "will strengthen U.S.-Russian relations." Daryl G. Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association, called the vote "remarkable in this time of hyper-partisanship" and called on the Obama administration to move to bring down nuclear stockpiles further.

But Michael A. Needham, chief executive of the conservative Heritage Action advocacy group, said the administration should withdraw from the treaty if Russia attempted to block missile defense, aid Iran or refuse to consider reductions in tactical nuclear weapons. "All eyes are now on the Obama administration," Mr. Needham said.

The treaty obliges each country to have no more than 1,550 strategic warheads and 700 launchers deployed within seven years, and it provides for a resumption of on-site inspections, which halted when the original Start treaty expired last year. It is the first arms treaty with Russia in eight years, and the first that a Democratic president has both signed and pushed through the Senate.

While it will make smaller reductions in deployed weapons than its predecessors did, the treaty took on outsized importance in recent weeks as both American political parties invested it with greater meaning and turned the ratification debate into a proxy fight over national security in the 21st century. No other Russian-American arms treaty that was ultimately ratified ever generated as much opposition on the final vote.

Republican opponents said the treaty reflected a dangerous and naïve approach by Mr. Obama to the world, "a foreign policy that sends a message of timidity" in search of "a fantasy world that's nuclear free," as Senator John Cornyn of Texas put it. Senator Jim DeMint, Republican of South Carolina, said the treaty represents "a continued pattern of appeasement."

But supporters said the treaty, even if flawed, was an important step in reducing nuclear arms, resuming mutual inspections and keeping Russia within a legal agreement. "There's no question in my mind that this is in our country's national security interest," Senator Bob Corker, Republican of Tennessee, said in an interview. "This is not one of those votes where you wonder. This is not even a close call."

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The treaty had the support of the nation's uniformed military leaders and of a host of Republican national security veterans, including former President George H. W. Bush and five former secretaries of state, Henry A. Kissinger, George P. Shultz, James A. Baker III, Colin L. Powell and Condoleezza Rice. But many of the party's potential 2012 presidential candidates, like Sarah Palin, Mitt Romney, Newt Gingrich and John Thune, came out against it, as did the two top Republican leaders in the Senate, Mitch McConnell of Kentucky and Mr. Kyl, the lead Republican negotiator.

Just a month ago, prospects for the treaty appeared to be bleak, when Mr. Kyl declared that there was not enough time to approve the treaty before the end of the year. Mr. Obama decided to wage a high-profile campaign for the treaty over Mr. Kyl's objection, risking a large share of his prestige and testing his clout in the new political environment.

To bypass the hostile leaders and win over other Republican Senators, Mr. Obama made a commitment to spend \$85 billion over 10 years to modernize the nation's nuclear weapons complex, so that the smaller arsenal would still be well-maintained and effective. He also gave repeated assurances that he would follow through on development of missile defense in Europe, despite Russian resistance.

The final vote on the treaty came after the Senate disposed of a raft of Republican-proposed amendments Tuesday night and Wednesday morning. Most of them were rejected entirely, but Senator Kerry accepted a few of them as side statements, which do not formally become part of the treaty and therefore do not require renegotiation with Russia.

Among those accepted on Wednesday was one by Mr. Kyl on modernization and one by Mr. Corker on missile defense. Senator John McCain, Republican of Arizona, who had been trying to work out his own side statement on missile defense, joined in backing Mr. Corker's amendment instead.

Mr. Kerry also accepted on Tuesday night a declaration that the United States should open new talks with Russia within a year to negotiate a new treaty curbing tactical nuclear weapons, the smaller battlefield bombs that are not covered by New Start or any previous Russian-American treaty.

Russia has far more such weapons than the United States, and according to American officials, as recently as last spring Russia moved some of them closer to its borders with NATO nations,

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as a response to American missile-defense deployments. Some experts consider these smaller bombs a greater risk of theft or black-market diversion to rogue states or terrorist groups.

The New Start treaty lowers the ceiling on strategic weapons set by previous Russian-American treaties, which it will now supplant. Under the Treaty of Moscow, signed by President George W. Bush in 2002, each side was allowed no more than 2,200 strategic warheads as of 2012. Under the original Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, or START, signed by the first President Bush in 1991, each side was required to reduce launchers to 1,600 before the treaty expired last year.

The United States currently has 1,950 deployed strategic warheads and 798 deployed launchers, according to the Federation of American Scientists, while Russia has an estimated 2,540 deployed strategic warheads and 574 launchers. The technicalities of counting rules mean that not as many weapons may have to be shelved as those figures imply. The limits do not apply to the thousands of weapons kept in storage.

The treaty must still be approved by the Russian Parliament, an endorsement that the Kremlin had withheld while waiting for the Senate to act. Given the authoritarian nature of Moscow's political system, that approval is seen as certain.

In addition to Mr. Corker, the Republicans voting for the treaty on Wednesday were Senators Lamar Alexander of Tennessee, Robert F. Bennett of Utah, Scott P. Brown of Massachusetts, Thad Cochran of Mississippi, Susan Collins and Olympia J. Snowe of Maine, Judd Gregg of New Hampshire, Johnny Isakson of Georgia, Mike Johanns of Nebraska, Richard G. Lugar of Indiana, Lisa Murkowski of Alaska and George V. Voinovich of Ohio.

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Senate Approval of New START

U.S. Department of State, 22 December, 2010, www.state.gov

Remarks, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State

Today the Senate took a great step forward in enhancing our national security by providing its advice and consent to ratification of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation. I congratulate the Senators of both parties who worked tirelessly to ensure that New START was approved, and I thank all the Senators who voted for this treaty for their commitment to our national security.

Once this treaty enters into force, on-site inspections of Russia's strategic nuclear weapons facilities can resume, providing us with an on-the-ground view of Russia's nuclear forces. The information and insight from these inspections forms the core of our ability to "trust but verify" compliance with New START. A responsible partnership between the world's two largest nuclear powers that limits our nuclear arsenals while maintaining strategic stability is imperative to promoting global security. With New START, the United States and Russia will have another important element supporting our "reset" relationship and expanding our bilateral cooperation on a wide range of issues.

President Obama and Vice President Biden have been unwavering in their dedication to this treaty to both strengthen our domestic security and reduce the international threat of nuclear weapons. This day would not have been possible without their leadership or the efforts of Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen. I also thank President George H.W. Bush and all the former Secretaries of State who added their support to this treaty and worked to see New START approved. I and all my colleagues at the State Department look forward to working with our Russian partners to conclude the approval of New START in Russia, bring the treaty into force, and deliver the global and national security benefits of New START.

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Kremlin Hails Senate's Approval of Nuclear Treaty

Associated Press, 23 December 2010, news.google.com/news

President Dmitry Medvedev on Thursday welcomed the U.S. Senate's decision to ratify a landmark U.S.-Russian nuclear arms control treaty, but Russian legislators said they need to study a resolution accompanying the document before following suit.

Medvedev's spokeswoman Natalya Timakova said that when he signed the New START treaty with President Barack Obama, they agreed that the ratification process should be conducted simultaneously.

She said that Medvedev voiced hope that both houses of Russian parliament would ratify the pact, but added that they would need some time to analyze the Senate's conditions for its ratification before making their decision.

The New START treaty, signed by Obama and Medvedev in April, would limit each country's strategic nuclear warheads to 1,550, down from the current ceiling of 2,200. It also would re-establish a system for monitoring and verification which ended last year with the expiration of a previous arms control deal.

Legislators in the Kremlin-controlled parliament had said before the Senate landmark ruling on Wednesday that they would approve the treaty quickly after it is ratified in the U.S.

Lower house speaker Boris Gryzlov, however, told reporters Thursday that the Senate's ratification resolution contained some conditions and the legislators need to carefully study the text before making decision.

He added that the State Duma may ratify the pact Friday if the text of the treaty itself remained unchanged.

"If these conditions don't change the text of the treaty, we may pass a ratification bill even tomorrow," Gryzlov said.

He said that the house would need more time if it finds any changes in the body of the treaty.

Conservative Republicans said the pact would limit U.S. options on missile defense, lacked sufficient procedures to verify Russia's adherence and deserved more time for consideration.

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Obama called the treaty a national security imperative and pressed strongly for its approval before Congress, with a Republican majority, assumes power in January. In recent days, he had telephoned a handful of wavering Republicans, eventually locking in their votes.

The Obama administration has argued that the United States must show credibility in its improved relations with its former Cold War foe, and the treaty was critical to any rapprochement. The White House is also counting on Russia to help pressure Iran over its nuclear ambitions.

Republicans had tried to kill the treaty by forcing changes in its language that would have sent it back for negotiations with Moscow. Democrats sought to appease some Republican senators by letting them raise these issues in legislation accompanying the treaty that would not directly affect the pact. On Wednesday, two such amendments, one on missile defense and one on funding for the U.S. nuclear arsenal, passed with support from both parties.

Konstantin Kosachev, the head of the Duma's foreign affairs committee, said that decision is conditioned on the analysis of the amendments. "We realize that the process shouldn't be delayed, but we intend to work in such a way that it doesn't affect the quality," he said.

Kosachev said that the Duma may quickly approve the pact Friday without any conditions, or could decide to include some conditions of its own, which could delay the vote.

The treaty must also be ratified by the upper house, whose speaker Sergei Mironov said that could happen on Friday as well, if the Duma approves the document, the ITAR-Tass news agency reported.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said Thursday that Moscow was still waiting for the official text of the resolution and refused to comment on issues raised by Republicans in the Senate resolution. "The specific content of the Senate resolution will naturally determine the wording that our legislators will put in the Russian ratification bill," Lavrov said at a briefing.

Retired Gen. Vladimir Dvorkin, who helped negotiate previous arms deals with the United States, predicted that the Kremlin-controlled parliament will quickly ratify the New START.

"This treaty is important for the Russian leadership because it formally preserves the nuclear balance with the United States, the last attribute of a superpower," Dvorkin said, according to the Interfax news agency.

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