CHAPTER 2

# U.S.-Russian Strategic Nuclear Negotiations and Agreements

## START I

THE FIRST ROUND of Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) between the United States and the Soviet Union opened in Geneva in June 1982 and focused for the first time on reductions in the numbers of nuclear warheads. The Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT) had placed limits on the numbers of launchers but did not directly address the numbers of deployed warheads. Progress on START was almost immediately stalled by Soviet concerns about President Ronald Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative, announced in March 1983. The Soviet Union then "discontinued" negotiations in the fall of 1983, in response to the American deployment of intermediate-range ballistic missiles in Europe. Negotiations did not resume until 1985, under what became known as the "umbrella" Nuclear and Space Talks, which combined three independent but interrelated groups of talks: on strategic, intermediate-range, and defensive weapons. In December 1987, Presidents Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, eliminating all land-based missiles with ranges between 500 and 5,500 km. The Soviet Union agreed in 1989 to drop the link between START and missile defenses, clearing the way for negotiations toward a final agreement, which was signed at the July 1991 Moscow summit by Presidents George Bush and Gorbachev. The first START treaty limits each country to no more than 1,600 strategic nuclear delivery vehicles, with 6,000 accountable warheads.[1] Of these, no more than 4,900 can be deployed on ICBMs (intercontinental ballistic missiles) and SLBMs (sea-launched ballistic missiles), no more than 1,540 on heavy ICBMs (a 50% reduction from pre-START levels), and no more than 1,100 on mobile ICBMs.

When the Soviet Union ceased to exist, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Ukraine all had former Soviet strategic nuclear weapons deployed on their territories. In May 1992, all four former Soviet states became parties to the START I treaty by signing the Lisbon Protocol. START I entered into force on December 5, 1994, when the United States and the other four parties exchanged instruments of ratification in Budapest, Hungary. By the end of 1996, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine had all returned the nuclear weapons on their territories to Russia and joined the Non-Proliferation Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon states. Since START I mandates a seven-year period of reductions, the agreed levels should be reached by Russia and the United States by the end of 2001. (See chapter 3 on U.S.-Russian assistance.)

START I contains extensive verification and data exchange provisions that surpass those of

1. Each limited weapon system under START I is attributed with a certain number of nuclear warheads under agreed "counting rules." In fact, many more than 6,000 warheads could be deployed under the START I limits. In particular, heavy bombers are allowed to carry twice as many long-range air-launched cruise missiles (ALCMs) as they are counted with.

any other arms control treaty in force today. It provides for 12 types of on-site inspections and continuous monitoring of mobile ICBM production facilities. Data relevant for treaty limitations and compliance are exchanged continuously and summarized twice a year in a Memorandum of Understanding. The Joint Compliance and Inspection Commission (JCIC) established by the treaty meets regularly to discuss verification and compliance issues.

## START II

At the June 1990 Washington summit, Presidents Bush and Gorbachev agreed that following the signing of START the two sides would begin new talks on further reductions at the earliest practical date. This statement included, among other elements, an agreement to seek a significantly reduced concentration of warheads on ballistic missiles, paving the way for the elimination of MIRVed ICBMs (land-based missiles with multiple independently targetable warheads). Consultations on START II began in the fall of 1991 with the Soviet Union and resumed with the government of Russia in January 1992. At a summit meeting in June 1992, Presidents Bush and Boris Yeltsin agreed on the basic principles of START II, including a ban on MIRVed ICBMs. This was a significant development since MIRVed ICBMs had been considered by nuclear strategists as "destabilizing" weapons, posing an attractive target for a disarming first strike. This ban placed a disproportionately heavy burden on the Russian Federation, since the vast majority of their strategic nuclear weapons were deployed on MIRVed ICBMs. Bush and Yeltsin signed START II in Moscow on January 3, 1993. START II caps the number of deployed strategic warheads in both countries at no more than 3,500, eliminates all land-based ICBMs with MIRVs, and limits the number of warheads on SLBMs to 1,750. Reductions under START II were to be completed by January 1, 2003. Ratification of START II, however, was initially delayed because it could not be ratified until after START I entered into force on December 5, 1994, and since then a series of other factors have intervened to delay START II's entry into force.

The U.S. Senate ratified START II on January 26, 1996. Among other conditions, the Senate resolution prohibited the unilateral reduction of the U.S. strategic weapons before START II entered into force without the consent of the Senate. The resolution further stated that ratification of START II should not be interpreted as an obligation by the United States "to accept any modification, change in scope, or extension" of the ABM treaty and that "an offense-only form of deterrence cannot address by itself the emerging strategic environment," which was characterized by the proliferation of long-range ballistic missiles and efforts by the United States and Russia "to put aside their past adversarial relationship and instead build a relationship based upon trust rather than fear."[2]

Boris Yeltsin submitted START II to the Duma for ratification in the summer of 1995. The draft law on ratification that the president proposed to the legislature was straightforward and did not contain any interpretations, limitations, or conditions for the executive. Yeltsin's letter, however, noted that START II "can only be implemented under conditions of preservation and strict implementation by the United States of the bilateral Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems (ABM) of 1972."[3]

Delays in Russian ratification resulted from strong opposition to START II by Duma members, which grew as more time passed. Aside from domestic political factors, including the struggle between President Yeltsin and Communists in the Duma, many Duma members expressed concern over Russia's need to build new single-warhead ICBMs to reach the START II limit of 3,500. These systems might then have to be quickly eliminated to meet the envisioned 2,000–2,500 warhead limit of the still-to-be negotiated START III treaty. Another major cause of concern was the significant U.S. "upload" capability, that is, the ability to return warheads placed in storage back to delivery vehicles. For the United States a

2. *Congressional Record,* January 26, 1996, S461.
3. Letter from Boris Yeltsin to Ivan Rybkin on June 20, 1995, no. Pr-819.

large part of the reductions could be achieved by the simple removal of warheads from delivery vehicles ("downloading"), whereas the majority of Russian missiles were subject to physical elimination. Finally, Duma members viewed the implementation date of 2003 as increasingly unrealistic.[4]

Growing among the Duma's concerns, and reflected in the eventual conditions the Russian parliament attached to the rectification of the agreement, was the future direction of the U.S. national missile defense (NMD) program. Russian officials opposed any significant modifications to the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty and viewed continued limits on national missile defenses as a precondition for reducing the number of deployed nuclear weapons in Russia's arsenal.

In an effort to speed START II's entry into force, at the March 20–21, 1997, summit meeting in Helsinki, Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin signed the "Joint Statement on Parameters of Future Reductions in Nuclear Forces," which addressed a number of these concerns. In the documents, they agreed:

- to adopt a protocol to the START II treaty (subject to approval by the appropriate legislative bodies in both countries) that would extend the treaty's implementation deadlines to December 31, 2007
- to begin negotiations on a START III treaty immediately after START II's entry into force that would limit deployed strategic forces on both sides to 2,000–2,500 warheads, also by December 31, 2007, and
- to deactivate all systems scheduled for elimination under START II by removing their nuclear warheads or by taking other jointly agreed steps by December 31, 2003, in order to avoid significantly extending the period during which deployed nuclear forces would remain above START II levels.[5]

Russia and the United States signed the START II extension protocol in New York on September 26, 1997. In addition, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov also exchanged letters and signed a joint statement in New York that codified the Helsinki commitment to "deactivate" ICBMs scheduled to be eliminated under START II (Russian SS–18s and SS–24s, and the American MX) by December 31, 2003. Deactivation will either entail the removal of warheads or be carried out by other jointly agreed steps, yet to be negotiated. Primakov also provided the U.S. side with a letter expressing Russia's understanding that the START III treaty would be negotiated and would enter into force well before the deactivation deadline. In addition, the two ministers signed several documents on the ABM treaty (see below) that addressed a number of Russian concerns and paved the way for a renewed effort to ratify START II the following year.

In April 1998, Yeltsin submitted the September 26, 1997, protocols on ratification for part of the START II package. In May 1998, START II came very close to ratification only to be derailed by the Communist Party, which used it as revenge against Boris Yeltsin for having been forced to approve the appointment of young reformer Sergey Kiriyenko as prime minister. According to some reports, the last-minute failure led to the cancellation of the expected summer 1998 visit to Moscow by President Clinton.[6] During that period, Foreign Minister, and later Prime Minister, Primakov emerged as an influential proponent of early ratification.

At the end of 1998, after a series of hearings in the Duma, START II again came close to ratification. The 1997 New York agreements, together with a more determined push by the Primakov government in favor of ratification, helped to improve the outlook for Duma

4. Normally, arms control treaties set a time limit to carry out reductions, but START II is unique in that it sets the precise date (originally it was expected that it would enter into force in 1993). Every delay with ratification shortened the period of reductions, so even with ratification in 1996, immediately after U.S. Senate action, Russia would probably have been unable to implement the treaty on time.
5. "Joint Statement on Parameters of Future Reductions in Nuclear Forces," Clinton-Yeltsin summit, Helsinki, Finland, March 20–21, 1997, White House press release.
6. *Agence France Presse*, May 20, 1998.

approval. Parliamentarians developed their own version of the ratification law, however, which the government accepted. On December 17, 1998, Boris Yeltsin was supposed to resubmit the treaty to the Duma (according to Russian law, the initiative must be taken by the president). The political price for the agreement was added provisions that included a tight linkage between START II and the ABM treaty.

But START II ratification became hostage to a series of international political crises that elicited strong reactions from both the Duma and the government. In December 1998 and January 1999, the Duma twice postponed a vote on the treaty. The first time was in protest of the U.S. bombing of Iraq, and the second time because of U.S. proposals to amend the ABM treaty in order to allow the deployment of a national missile defense (see below). Finally, the vote was scheduled for early April 1999, but then the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia over Kosovo sealed the treaty's fate for the rest of that year.[7]

START II was finally ratified under Russia's new president, Vladimir Putin. On April 18, 2000, Putin signed the law on ratification after both the Duma and the upper chamber of the parliament, the Federation Council, voted to approve it. Among other provisions, the law defined "extraordinary circumstances" that allowed withdrawal from START II to include U.S. exit from the ABM treaty or the deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons on the territories of new NATO members. Further, the law established that if a new treaty were not signed by December 31, 2003 (the original date for START II implementation and the date when the "deactivation" of weapons subject to elimination should be completed under the 1997 accords), then the president and the parliament would review Russia's overall security situation and decide upon further actions. Finally, the ratification law made the entry of START II into force conditional on U.S. ratification of the 1997 agreements with regard to the ABM treaty. This condition has delayed START II's entry into force and may permanently prevent it, given U.S. Congressional attitudes.

## START III

As noted above, Presidents Yeltsin and Clinton signed a joint statement at the Helsinki summit agreeing to begin negotiations on a START III immediately after START II enters into force and identifying certain parameters for the new treaty. In addition to limiting deployed strategic forces on both sides to between 2,000 and 2,500 warheads by the end of 2007, the presidents decided that START III would include measures related to the transparency of strategic nuclear warhead inventories, the destruction of strategic nuclear warheads, and the transparency in nuclear materials.[8] In addition, they agreed to explore possible measures involving long-range nuclear sea-launched cruise missiles and tactical nuclear weapons. These discussions were to take place separately from, but in the context of, START III negotiations. The first post-Helsinki discussion of the future treaty took place in April 1997 during a visit by Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Georgiy Mamedov to Washington.[9]

In September 1997 (just before the signing of the START II extension protocol and ABM memorandum in New York), Bill Clinton and Foreign Minister Primakov agreed in Washington to begin informal consultations on START III before the ratification of START II by Russia, but only at the level of experts. These consultations continued intermittently throughout the fall of 1997 and 1998 at various levels, but the main venue was the meetings between Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott and his Russian counterpart, Mamedov. These consultations were interrupted by the crisis in U.S.-Russian relations caused by the NATO military operation in Yugoslavia in the spring of 1999 but were resumed after a Clinton-Yeltsin meeting during the G–8 summit in Cologne in June 1999.

7. For a detailed description of these events, see Petr Romashkin, "Novyye Problemy s Ratifikatsiyey Dogovora SNV-2" (New problems with ratification of the START II treaty) at <www.armscontrol.ru>; PIR Arms Control Letters, January 24, 1999, and March 22, 1999; "START II Ratification Dead in the Duma," *Daily Telegraph* (London), April 3, 1999.
8. "Joint Statement," Clinton-Yeltsin Summit, Helsinki, March 1997.
9. *ITAR–TASS*, April 15, 1997.

TABLE 2.1: **LIMITS UNDER START AGREEMENTS**

| Treaty | Limits | Special Conditions |
|---|---|---|
| START I | 6,000 weapons | Special counting rules resulting in more than 6,000 weapons being deployed |
| START II | 3,000–3,500 | Bans land-based missiles with more than 1 warhead |
| START III | 1,500–2,500 | Various proposals made by both sides, including possible release from ban of land-based MIRVed missiles |

Subsequently, the main venue for START III consultations became meetings between Undersecretary of State John Holum and Chief of the Department on Security and Disarmament Grigoriy Berdennikov, who was, after his promotion, replaced by Yuriy Kapralov. During their meeting in August 1999 Russia proposed a lower aggregate ceiling for START III than was originally agreed upon in Helsinki: 1,000–1,500 warheads.[10] The United States, however, did not accept the proposal for deeper reductions. As the Joint Chiefs of Staff explained in May 2000, the Helsinki target of 2,000–2,500 warheads had been based on a thorough study of its impact on U.S. national security. The acceptance of a lower limit would require a similar study.[11] Instead, the United States tabled a draft text of START III in January 2000, together with detailed proposals on amendments to the ABM treaty (see below). The Russian side tabled its draft of START III, including the lower numbers, at a Holum-Kapralov meeting in June 2000.

## Missile Defenses and the ABM Treaty

START III talks have been increasingly intertwined with the controversial issue of the ABM treaty. In July 1999, the U.S. Congress passed legislation requiring the deployment of an NMD system as soon as it became "technologically possible" in order to protect the United States from the emerging threat of ballistic missile programs in states of proliferation concern.[12] In the meantime, the United States tried unsuccessfully to persuade Russia that the deployment of such defenses would not undermine Russian security. The controversy over possible U.S. deployment of an NMD system has become a major obstacle to START II's entry into force and, to an even greater extent, to negotiations on START III.

The defense-related debates can be broken into two distinct periods. Until 1997, Russian concerns centered on the development by the United States of a host of theater defense systems that Russia claimed could conceivably intercept strategic missiles. These disagreements stemmed from the "gray areas" of the 1972 ABM treaty, which does not define the distinction between strategic and tactical defensive systems, the former of which are restricted by the agreement. At the March 1997 Helsinki summit meeting, Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin confirmed that each side was free to develop and deploy nonstrategic defensive systems provided they were not used against the other side and subject to certain confidence-building measures. They also instructed their governments to develop criteria to distinguish between strategic and nonstrategic defensive systems. In the meantime, they confirmed that both sides continued to view the ABM treaty as a cornerstone of strategic stability.[13]

In September 1997 Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Foreign Minister Primakov signed a package of protocols on the ABM treaty that established specific demarcation criteria. They also signed a protocol

10. David Hoffman, "Moscow Proposes Extensive Arms Cuts; U.S., Russia Confer over Stalled Pacts," *Washington Post,* August 20, 1999.
11. *Washington Times*, May 11, 2000; *Philadelphia Inquirer,* May 24, 2000.
12. "National Missile Defense Act of 1999," Public Law 106-38, 106th Congress.
13. Joint Statement concerning the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, Helsinki summit, March 21, 1997, White House press release.

replacing the Soviet Union as a party to the ABM treaty with Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine, thus converting it from a bilateral to a five-party document. The Russian parliament ratified these protocols simultaneously with START II and made their ratification by the United States a condition for START II's entry into force. These protocols have not been submitted to the U.S. Senate for ratification, and opposition to them in Congress remains significant.

After 1997, Russian concerns shifted to focus on U.S. efforts to develop and deploy a territorial-wide NMD system that would likely violate the 1972 ABM treaty. The ABM treaty prohibits the United States and Russia from deploying nationwide missile defenses or from laying the basis for their deployment, although the pact does allow each side to build one missile defense site to protect either a national capital or an ICBM base. Russia still maintains one such site near Moscow. The United States built a site to defend an ICBM field in North Dakota but deactivated the facility in 1976 as "militarily ineffective." When the ABM treaty was negotiated, both nations believed that the restrictions on NMD-type systems provided the basis for strategic stability and enabled the reduction of offensive forces. The U.S. position has shifted over the past decade in response to the potential development of long-range missile systems in third countries. Iraq's use of Scud missiles in the Gulf War, specifically, had a major impact on interest in the United States in developing increasingly capable missile defenses.

In January 1999, President Clinton wrote to Russian President Yeltsin informing him of U.S. interest in amending the ABM treaty to permit the deployment of national missile defenses. That month, Secretary of Defense William Cohen announced substantial increases in the five-year NMD budget and stated that the deployments the United States was considering "might require modifications to the ABM treaty."[14] Russian officials maintained, however, that Russia would not approve START II or reduce offensive forces if the United States did not comply with the current terms of the ABM treaty.[15]

In mid-February 1999, Deputy Secretary of State Talbott met with Russian officials in Moscow to begin discussions on ABM treaty modifications. At the time, the United States had not settled on a single plan for deploying missile defenses, and the talks did not include specific U.S. proposals on how to amend the ABM treaty. Instead, Talbott sought to explain to Russian officials that the future system would not interfere with Russia's strategic deterrent and that the United States continued to view the ABM treaty as central to the U.S.-Russian strategic balance.[16]

In June 1999, President Clinton and President Yeltsin met at the G–8 summit in Cologne, Germany, resumed consultations on START III, and launched a discussion of U.S. proposals to amend the ABM treaty. The joint statement adopted at that summit described the ABM treaty as "fundamental" to the further reduction of strategic weapons, but it also affirmed the obligation under Article 13 of the treaty to "consider possible changes in the strategic situation that have a bearing on the ABM treaty and, as appropriate, possible proposals for further increasing the viability of the treaty." The two presidents agreed to begin discussions on START III and the ABM treaty in late summer 1999.[17]

The talks got off to a poor start in Moscow in mid-August. Russian officials argued that any changes to the ABM treaty would upset strategic stability and undermine Russia's national security.[18] The United States refused to discuss START III except as a package deal with an amended ABM treaty.[19]

14. Amy Woolf and Steven Hildreth, "National Missile Defense: Issues for Congress," CRS Brief, Order Code IB10034, October 19, 1999.
15. Andrei Khalip, "Russian Papers Attack U.S. Anti-Missile Proposal," *Reuters*, January 22, 1999.
16. Woolf and Hildreth, "National Missile Defense," p. 12.
17. "Joint Statement between the United States and the Russian Federation concerning Strategic Offensive and Defensive Arms and Further Strengthening of Stability," June 20, 1999.
18. Woolf and Hildreth, "National Missile Defense," p. 12.
19. *Yaderny Kontrol (Nuclear Control) Digest* 5(3): 11 (summer).

In September 1999, the U.S. administration announced that it desired treaty modification in two phases. First, it sought an amendment permitting the United States to deploy its single permitted ABM site in Alaska rather than in North Dakota. In the second phase, the United States would seek amendments to permit the deployment of two or more sites and the use of more advanced radars and space-based sensors.[20]

That month, Talbott returned to Moscow and met with his Russian counterpart, Deputy Foreign Minister Mamedov. Russian officials again rejected any changes to the treaty that would enable the United States to deploy national missile defenses, and the Russian Foreign Ministry released a statement that Moscow would insist on the "strict observance" of previous arms control agreements.[21] The chief of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Security and Disarmament Department, Berdennikov, declared that "the creation of a national ABM system by the USA will not only hamper consultations on the parameters of the START III talks, but, moreover, will also force Russia to tear up the START II treaty."[22]

Subsequently, though, the Russian negotiating position began to display subtle changes. During a meeting on September 12, 1999, President Clinton met briefly with then–Prime Minister Vladimir Putin in Auckland, New Zealand. Clinton expressed his desire to work together to share the benefits of a missile defense system with Russia. Putin conceded that there are threats from nuclear proliferation and nuclear terrorism that must be addressed in a way that takes account of the security concerns of other nations, but that these were matters for negotiation, which he hoped would proceed.[23] This represented an important change in the Russian approach and signaled that Russia was prepared to entertain options that would allow U.S. security concerns to be addressed. On September 13, when Secretary of Defense William Cohen met with Russian Defense Minister Igor Sergeyev in Moscow, the head of the Defense Committee in the State Duma, Roman Popkovich, stated that greater transparency with regard to the projected anti-missile system could improve the prospects for bilateral discussions.[24] Other Russian government and military officials, however, continued to express strong opposition to U.S. missile defense proposals and threatened the Russian withdrawal from arms control agreements in response to U.S. deployment of such systems. Washington had tried to allay Moscow's fears by offering to help Russia complete a missile-tracking radar installation near Irkutsk, Siberia, but Moscow did not respond to the offer.[25]

As negotiations continued, John Holum, the undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, met with Kapralov, the head of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Arms Control Department, in Geneva on January 19–21, 2000. There, U.S. negotiators presented Russian officials with a draft agreement that would revise the ABM treaty and with accompanying documents detailing the reasons for the proposed amendments.

According to talking points used by the United States at this meeting, "The U.S. national missile defense system, which will be limited and intended to defend against several dozen long-range missiles launched by rogue states, will be incapable of threatening Russia's strategic deterrence." A defense that limited, the administration argued, would preserve each side's "ability to carry out an annihilating counterattack," because "[f]orces of this size can easily penetrate a limited system of the type the United States is now developing." In the event of a first strike, Russia would still be able "to send about a thousand warheads, together with

20. Woolf and Hildreth, "National Missile Defense," p. 12.

21. Ibid., p. 12.

22. "Diplomat Criticizes U.S. ABM Plans," RIA news agency, Moscow, September 11, 1999.

23. Washington File Transcript, September 13, 1999.

24. "ABM Treaty Progress Made," *Radio Free Europe,* September 14, 1999.

25. "Russians Firmly Reject U.S. Plan To Reopen ABM Treaty," *New York Times,* October 21, 1999. See also, "Russia Fears ABM Revision Will Ignite New Nuclear Race," *Detroit News,* October 19, 1999.

two to three times more decoys, accompanied by other advanced defense penetration aids" that would easily overwhelm the American system.[26]

The amendments proposed in January 2000 would have allowed the United States to deploy a "limited NMD system as an alternative to the deployment of ABM systems permitted under the current provisions of the ABM treaty" and to move the site allowed under the treaty to a different location. The draft amendments, however, would retain other restrictions, such as the limit of no more than 100 interceptors within a 150-km radius. The proposed changes would also have allowed the use of existing long-range radar for ABM purposes. The United States also proposed that "at the demand of one Party, the Parties shall begin further negotiations no sooner than March 1, 2001, to bring the Treaty into agreement with future changes in the strategic situation" to allow for subsequent expansion or modification of the NMD system.[27]

Russian negotiators repeated their offer to reduce the number of deployed strategic nuclear warheads held by each side from the START II level of 3,000–3,500 to 1,500, but rejected the U.S.-proposed amendments. The United States, in its turn, rejected the Russian offer for deeper reductions.[28]

On January 31, 2000, Secretary of State Albright held talks in Moscow with acting Russian President Putin and Foreign Minister Igor S. Ivanov but failed to make specific progress. Russians and Americans continued to disagree about the nature and extent of the ballistic missile threat and the wisdom of deploying missile defenses.[29] Albright, however, also spoke with acting President Putin during that visit, who did not completely reject the idea of treaty modifications.[30]

Hopes for a possible compromise were reignited during a spring 2000 visit to Washington by Foreign Minister Ivanov and Secretary of the Russian Security Council Sergey Ivanov. Sergey Ivanov, in particular, reportedly discussed the possible transfer of the U.S. ABM deployment area from North Dakota to Alaska.[31] Foreign Minister Ivanov was also given a highly detailed briefing at the Pentagon on the future NMD architecture and capabilities. At a meeting with Bill Clinton, Foreign Minister Ivanov agreed to hold discussions of possible amendments to the ABM treaty but specifically noted that this only entailed consultations with regard to the U.S.-proposed amendments, rather than talks on precisely how the treaty should be amended.[32]

A large group of U.S. legislators, however, voiced opposition to possible official talks on ABM amendments. Twenty-five senators, including Trent Lott and Jesse Helms, sent a letter to Bill Clinton expressing concern that negotiations with Russia on amending the ABM treaty might constrain U.S. ability to deploy an effective NMD.[33] Representatives Curt Weldon and David Vitter, in a separate letter, asked for assurances that the administration would not initiate formal negotiations with Russia to amend the ABM treaty.[34]

The full scope of the Russian "diplomatic offensive" soon became clear when newly elected Russian President Putin succeeded in pushing START II and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) through the Duma and, shortly after that, advanced the concept of a joint U.S.-Russian-European theater mis-

26. Steven Lee Myers and Jane Perlez, "Documents Detail U.S. Plan To Alter '72 Missile Treaty," *New York Times,* April 27, 2000.

27. *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists,* May–June 2000.

28. Myers and Perlez, "Documents Detail U.S. Plan," *New York Times,* April 27, 2000.

29. Jane Perlez, "Russians Wary of U.S. Pitch for Missile Defense System," *New York Times,* February 1, 2000.

30. Ibid.

31. Alexander A. Pikayev, "Moscow's Matrix," *Washington Quarterly,* summer 2000, p. 191.

32. BBC News Service, April 26, 2000; *New York Times,* April 29, 2000.

33. *New York Times,* April 22, 2000

34. *Defense Daily,* April 18, 2000. Formal talks, including within the framework of the Standing Consultative Commission, would contradict the fact that the U.S. Senate did not approve the 1997 Memorandum of Understanding, which confers the status of parties to Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus as parties to the ABM treaty in the place of the Soviet Union.

sile defense (TMD) system to counter the emerging threat of missile proliferation without changing the ABM treaty. In an interview with *NBC News* on the eve of the June U.S.-Russian summit in Moscow, Putin raised the possibility of a joint U.S.-Russian TMD system,[35] and during later visits to Italy and Germany he promoted the notion of a trilateral defense system.[36] The substance of the new initiative, however, remained unclear. Separately, Russian Deputy Defense Minister Nikolay Mikhaylov told visiting U.S. members of Congress that Russia would be prepared to share its S–500 air defense system (still under development) for such a joint system, but that it lacked the necessary funding to complete work on it.[37]

The United States extended a cautious welcome to the Putin proposal. U.S. Secretary of Defense Cohen called it a "step forward."[38] Pentagon acquisition chief Jacques Gansler stated, however, that joint work with Russia would not stop a separate U.S. NMD system.[39]

The Clinton-Putin summit in June 2000 did not produce the breakthrough that many analysts had expected on strategic nuclear issues. A much-discussed potential compromise might have involved Russia's acceptance of ABM amendments in exchange for U.S. acceptance of the 1,500-warhead limit for START III pushed for by Russia.[40] As noted above, however, the Joint Chiefs of Staff had previously rejected the idea of deeper cuts, pending a comprehensive study of its impact on U.S. national security, a view supported by the U.S. Congress.

Although the summit failed to produce a "grand bargain," the presidents did sign a Joint Statement on Principles of Strategic Stability. This statement reaffirmed the role of the ABM treaty as the "cornerstone of strategic stability," but simultaneously recognized that the international community faces "a dangerous and growing threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery." The presidents noted that the ABM treaty contained provisions for considering new developments in the strategic situation and directed their cabinet members and experts to prepare a report on concrete measures that would address emerging threats while preserving strategic stability. The two sides also noted the importance of the consultative process and expressed their desire to continue consultations in the future as a means of promoting the objectives and implementation of the ABM treaty.[41] The language of the joint statement was carefully written, however, so that it allowed for disagreement on whether the ABM treaty should actually be amended. On October 12, 2000, the Russian Foreign Ministry issued a special statement noting that the June 4 joint statement did not contain agreement by Russia to amend the ABM treaty.[42]

Russian officials continued to warn that a unilateral U.S. withdrawal from the ABM treaty would trigger a wholesale withdrawal from a number of arms control treaties by Russia. Simultaneously with the Clinton-Putin summit in Moscow, Chief of Strategic Rocket Forces General Vladimir Yakovlev declared in an interview that inspection and verification activities could be terminated if the United States were to withdraw from the ABM treaty. He also noted a number of other possible shifts in Russian policy, including equipping the new Topol-M missile with multiple warheads, giving warheads enhanced penetration aids, changing the deployment of tactical

35. Ivan Safranchuk, "The U.S.-Russian Summit: Negotiations on the ABM NMD Issues and START III," letter of June 2000, *Arms Control Letters,* PIR, June 7, 2000.

36. "Putin Goes to Rome To Promote Russian Arms Control Alternative," *New York Times,* June 6, 2000.

37. "Washington Awaits Details on Putin Missile Defense Proposal Says White House," *Russia Today,* June 7, 2000; *Agence France Presse*, June 14, 2000.

38. *Agence France Presse*, June 6, 2000.

39. House Armed Service Committee Transcript, June 28, 2000.

40. Alexander Pikayev, "The Rise and Fall of START II," Carnegie Endowment Working Paper no. 6, September 1999.

41. "Text: Joint Clinton-Putin Statement on Strategic Stability," U.S. Department of State International Information Programs, Washington File web site: <usinfo.state.gov/products/washfile.htm>, June 4, 2000.

42. Official statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, no. 1063-12-10-2000.

nuclear weapons, increasing the number of nuclear-tipped air-launched cruise missiles, and restarting production of intermediate-range ballistic missiles.[43] Earlier, Security Council Secretary Sergey Ivanov had stated that Russia would automatically withdraw from the START II and START I agreements if the United States were to withdraw from the ABM treaty.[44] On June 22, senior Russian government officials yet again publicly expanded the list of measures that Russia might take if Washington were to withdraw from the ABM treaty. These measures included abrogating the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty of 1987 and producing modernized intermediate-range missiles that would be targeted at Europe.[45]

In the meantime, the United States and Russia proved more successful in reaching agreement in the area of early warning and missile launch notification. Discussion of these issues began at the initiative of the United States in 1998, and at the September 1998 summit Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin adopted the Joint Statement on the Exchange of Information on Missile Warning. This agreement foresaw the creation of a joint center on Russian territory to prevent miscalculations about missile launches and promised to examine the possibility of a multilateral ballistic missile and space launch vehicle notification regime. During the June 2000 summit, Presidents Clinton and Putin signed a Memorandum of Understanding establishing a Joint Data Exchange Center with the goal of a "near real-time" exchange of data produced by U.S. and Russian space- and land-based missile-launch early-warning systems. This center will feature a built-in expansion capability so that additional countries can eventually join it to create a multilateral launch notification regime.

In mid-summer 2000 Putin visited North Korea immediately before the G–8 meeting in Okinawa, Japan, and announced that North Korea had promised to scrap its military missile program in exchange for access to peaceful satellite launch capability. During their meeting on June 21 on the fringes of the G–8 conference, Putin briefed Clinton on the results of his talks with Kim Jong-Il.[46] This unexpected development subsequently generated a cautious dialogue between the United States and North Korea on Pyongyang's military missile program.

Generally, however, as the second term of the Clinton administration approached its end, disagreements pertaining to START III and the future of the ABM treaty remained unresolved. Both sides exchanged draft texts of START III, but differences remained substantial. The United States continued to press for a Russian amendment of the ABM treaty to allow the deployment of an NMD system, which Russia continued to reject. Meanwhile, many in the U.S. Congress objected to these efforts by the White House on the ground that NMD deployment should be pursued irrespective of Russian views.

43. *Kommersant,* June 3, 2000.

44. "Russia Threatens To Scrap START Accords If U.S. Ditches ABM," *Interfax Diplomatic Panorama,* February 28, 2000.

45. "Russia Could Withdraw from Key Arms Treaty If U.S. Violates ABM," *Russia Today,* June 22, 2000.

46. *New York Times,* July 22, 2000.