

MOSCOW PERSPECTIVE ON THE NEW ARMS RACE

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UNDERSTANDING THE NEW ARMS RACE:
VIEWS FROM WASHINGTON, MOSCOW AND BEIJING

Physicists Coalition for Nuclear Threat Reduction

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Moscow Perspective

- New Start Compliance
 - Limits, suspension
 - Actual numbers, modernization, new weapons
- Russia's Nuclear Doctrine
 - Use of nuclear weapons
- Ukraine War
 - Nuclear Threats
- Revision of the Doctrine
- INF Weapons
- Nuclear Spending
- Civil Society?

New START Compliance

- “Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms”
- In force 5 Feb 2011 – 5 Feb 2021, extended to 5 Feb 2026
- New START Limits:
 - 800 deployed and nondeployed ICBM launchers, SLBM launchers, and heavy bombers equipped to carry nuclear weapons
 - **700** deployed ICBMs, SLBMs, and heavy bombers equipped to carry nuclear weapons
 - **1,550** deployed warheads (RVs and bombers)

New START Compliance

Suspension

- February 2023: Russia announced “suspension” of the Treaty
 - Indefinite suspension of inspections
 - Complained about US development of new nuclear weapons
 - Complained about French and UK nuclear forces not accounted
 - Will comply with the limit on warheads

New START Compliance

Actual Numbers

January 2024	Launchers	Warheads (deployed)	Warheads New START
Bombers	67 (58)	586 (~200)	58
ICBMs	329	1,244 (872)	872
SSBNs/SLBMs	12/192	992 (~640)	640
Total	588	2,822 (1710)	~1,560

“Around 36 more nuclear weapons in Jan 2024 than in Jan 2023”

-- most of the numbers are approximate, likely no increase and within limits

January 2023	Launchers	Warheads (deployed)	Warheads New START
Bombers	68 (55)	580 (~200)	55
ICBMs	321	1,197 (834)	834
SSBNs/SLBMs	11/176	896 (~640)	640
Total	567	2,673 (1,674)	~1,530

New START Compliance

Modernization

- Bombers:
 - Retirement and modernization of Tu-95
 - Modernization and new Tu-160
 - Development of PAK DA
- ICBMs:
 - Replacement of RS-12 missiles with RS-24 Yars (silo and mobile)
 - Replacement of RS-20V Voyevoda with RS-18 (Avangard HGV) and with the new RS-28 Sarmat
 - Development of Yars-M, and further developments
- SLBMs:
 - Replacement of older Delfin-class SSBNs with new Borei-class
 - Development of a new SSBN

New START Compliance

New Weapons Announced in February 2018 (as asymmetric response to the US BMD)

- Kinzhal
 - deployed and used conventionally armed
- Sarmat
 - being deployed
- Avangard
 - being deployed
- Burevestnik
 - nuclear-powered cruise missile, in development
- Poseidon
 - long-range nuclear-powered torpedo, tested two times in 2023
- Peresvet
 - “combat laser complex” -- laser for blinding optical sensors

Russia's Nuclear Doctrine

Russia's Military Doctrine (2014):

“27. The Russian Federation reserves the right to use nuclear weapons in response to use against it and (or) its allies of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, as well as in the case of aggression against the Russian Federation with the use of conventional weapons, when under threat the very existence of the state. The decision to use nuclear weapons is taken President of the Russian Federation.”

Russia's Nuclear Doctrine

Basic Principles of State Policy of the Russian Federation on Nuclear Deterrence (2020)

19. The conditions specifying the possibility of nuclear weapons use by the Russian Federation are as follows:

- a) arrival of reliable data on a launch of ballistic missiles attacking the territory of the Russian Federation and/or its allies;
 - b) use of nuclear weapons or other types of weapons of mass destruction by an adversary against the Russian Federation and/or its allies;
 - c) attack by adversary against critical governmental or military sites of the Russian Federation, disruption of which would undermine nuclear forces response actions;
 - d) aggression against the Russian Federation with the use of conventional weapons when the very existence of the state is in jeopardy.
- 20. The President of the Russian Federation might, if necessary, inform the military-political leadership of other states and/or international organizations about the Russian Federation's readiness to use nuclear weapons or about the decision taken to use nuclear weapons, as well as about the fact that nuclear weapons have been used.

Russia's Nuclear Doctrine

Conditions for use of nuclear weapons:

- attacking missile is detected
- nuclear weapons are used
- conventional attack on strategic forces assets
- threat to existence of the state

Ukraine War: Nuclear Threats

Putin's address on 24 February 2022:

*“I would now like to say something very important for those who may be tempted to interfere in these developments from the outside. No matter who tries to stand in our way or all the more so create threats for our country and our people, they must know that Russia will respond immediately, and **the consequences will be such as you have never seen in your entire history.** No matter how the events unfold, we are ready. All the necessary decisions in this regard have been taken. I hope that my words will be heard.”*

-- Russia did not expect resistance from Ukraine (troops carrying parade uniforms, riot police advancing with troops, etc.) – threats against military interference?

Ukraine War: Nuclear Threats

Putin's address on 21 September 2022:

*“They have even resorted to the nuclear blackmail. I am referring... to the statements made by some high-ranking representatives of the leading NATO countries on the possibility and admissibility of **using weapons of mass destruction – nuclear weapons – against Russia.**”*

*I would like to remind those who make such statements regarding Russia that our country has different types of weapons as well, and some of them are more modern than the weapons NATO countries have. **In the event of a threat to the territorial integrity of our country** and to defend Russia and our people, we will certainly make use of all weapon systems available to us.”*

-- Use of the “threat to existence” clause although there was no threat to internationally recognized Russian territory.

Ukraine War: Nuclear Threats

July 2023:

Medvedev (former President, now Deputy Chair of Security Council):

“if the Ukrainian Armed Forces’ offensive had progressed successfully and they had occupied part of Russian territory, Moscow would have been forced to use nuclear weapons.”

-- Before the expected major offensive of Ukraine

Ukraine War: Nuclear Threats

Minister of Foreign Affairs Lavrov On F-16

July 2023:

*“Just one example of an extremely dangerous turn of events is the United States plans to transfer F-16 fighter jets to the Kiev regime. We have informed the nuclear powers, the United States, Britain and France, that Russia cannot ignore the ability of these aircraft to carry nuclear weapons... We will regard the very fact that the Ukrainian armed forces have such systems as a threat from the West in the **nuclear sphere**.”*

-- This was before the Ukrainian offensive. F-16 could have tipped the scale in Ukrainian favor.

Ukraine War: Nuclear Threats

Minister of Foreign Affairs Lavrov On F-16

May 2024:

*“F-16 fighters have long been the main delivery vehicle for NATO's so-called joint **nuclear missions**. Therefore, we cannot help but view the delivery of these systems to the Kyiv regime as a deliberate signal action by NATO in the **nuclear sphere**. They are trying to make us understand that the US and NATO are ready to do literally anything in Ukraine.”*

-- Ukraine will receive F-16 this Summer.
Threat to use nuclear weapons used clause.

Revision of the Doctrine

Putin 20 June 2024:

*“...we are still thinking about what can be changed in this doctrine and how. This is because new elements are arising (at least we know that the potential adversary is working on it) related to lowering the threshold for using nuclear weapons. In particular, **ultra-low-power nuclear explosive devices** are being developed, and we know that expert circles in the West are entertaining the idea that **such weapons could be used**, and there is nothing particularly terrible about it. It may not be terrible, but we must be aware of this. And we are.”*

Revision of the Doctrine

Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov 27 June 2024:

*“The doctrine and the basics of state policy describe in detail the scenarios of resorting to this extreme, ultimate means of conducting armed struggle. There will probably come a moment when further amendments can be made to the basics of state policy, reflecting the experience gained in the course of the special military operation, when, let's call things by their proper names, the old, **classic interpretation of nuclear deterrence did not work properly...**”*

INF Weapons

Putin, 28 June 2024 at the Meeting with Permanent Members of the Security Council:

*“Today, we will review the steps the Russian Federation should take regarding the unilateral moratorium on the **deployment of ground-based intermediate- and shorter-range missiles**.*

As you are aware, several years ago, under a far-fetched pretext, the United States withdrew from this treaty and announced that they would start producing these missile systems.

In 2019, we announced that we would neither produce these missiles, nor deploy them as long as the United States does not deploy such systems anywhere around the globe.

We now know that the United States is not only producing these missile systems, but has brought them to Europe, Denmark, to use in exercises. Not long ago, it was reported that they are in the Philippines. It is unclear whether they have taken these missiles out from the Philippines or not.

*In any case, we need to respond to this and decide on our further steps in this regard. It appears that **we need to begin producing these attack systems** and then, based on the actual situation, decide on where to deploy them to ensure our security, if necessary.”*

Nuclear Spending

ICAN Data:

2022:

- \$88.3B military spending
- \$9.6B on nuclear weapons (669.6B roubles)

2023:

- \$109.5B military spending – 24% increase
- \$8.3B on nuclear weapons (710.5B roubles)

Civil Society

Civil Society

A) 2012 Foreign Agents Law

- Defines any civil or public activity as political and demands that any independent entity receiving foreign money be stigmatised as a “foreign agent”, a phrase that has clear connotations of treachery
- In 2022 the law was updated to include a very loosely defined “foreign influence” as the ground to be designated as a foreign agent

Civil Society

B) 2022: Extended list of forbidden “military and military-technical topics”

- The list is very extensive and non-specific
- Anything published on military policy can be declared secret and the author criminally charged

C) 2022: Law on “Fakes”

- Up to 15 years in jail for "discrediting" or dissemination of "unreliable information" about the Russian Armed Forces
- People actually receive jail time for stating obvious truth