

Dick Lugar

U.S. Senator for Indiana

Date: 06/16/2010 • <http://lugar.senate.gov>
Andy Fisher • 202-224-2079 • andy_fisher@lugar.senate.gov

Opening Statement for Hearing on the New START Treaty

U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Ranking Member Dick Lugar made the following statement at today's hearing.

Today, the Committee holds its seventh open hearing on the New START Treaty. We are fortunate to have before us three distinguished Defense Department witnesses who will discuss strategic modernization and missile defense - Dr. James Miller, General Kevin Chilton, and General Patrick O'Reilly.

The New START Treaty comes to the Senate at a time when Senators also are considering a new Nuclear Posture Review, a Ballistic Missile Defense Review, and the implications of the Obama Administration's Phased Adaptive Approach to missile defense in Europe.

Article V of the New START Treaty explicitly provides that "modernization and replacement of strategic offensive arms may be carried out." The treaty is an opportunity for the Senate and the Administration to engage in a serious debate about future plans for our nuclear warheads and their delivery vehicles.

In September 2008, General Chilton and Admiral Mullen wrote: "The United States is the only nuclear weapons state not currently modernizing its nuclear capabilities and supporting infrastructure."

The United States has not produced a new Minuteman ICBM since 1975, and the last new B-52 bomber was produced in 1964. Indeed, under the current plan, the B-52 will have been flying for 80 years when it is finally retired. The United States has not tested a nuclear weapon since 1992, and unlike Russia and China, extends the lifetimes of its warheads through selective replacement, refurbishment, and recertification.

With the New START Treaty, the Administration submitted a 10-year modernization plan, as it was required to do under section 1251 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010. The plan notes that over the next decade, \$80 billion will be invested in sustainment and modernization of the nuclear weapons complex and \$100 billion in nuclear weapons delivery systems.

Most funding in the 1251 Report would go to sustaining existing warheads and delivery vehicles, not building new ones. The Nuclear Posture Review states that this Administration will "give strong preference to options for refurbishment or reuse." Replacement of nuclear warhead components would be "undertaken only if critical Stockpile Management Program goals could not otherwise be met, and if specifically authorized by the President and approved by Congress."

Greater discussion is warranted in Congress and the Executive Branch about modernization of nuclear delivery systems beyond the ten years covered in the 1251 Report. We have some time to consider options now, but we should be planning how to respond to the decline of multiple systems.

For example, there is no clear plan for the maintenance of a nuclear-capable air-launched cruise missile for our heavy bombers. With each bomber counting for just one warhead under New START, bombers would play an especially important and stabilizing role in our nuclear Triad of air-, land- and sea-based nuclear forces.

We also have a chance today to explore the military considerations related to missile defense. Last September, President Obama announced that plans to build a so-called “third site” for ground-based, midcourse interceptor missiles in Poland, and a supporting radar installation in the Czech Republic were to be scrapped. Instead, the U.S. will focus on a Phased Adaptive Approach that would provide, according to the Administration, more capability in a shorter period of time against more mature Iranian short- and medium-range ballistic missile threats.

Yesterday, our treaty negotiators told us that missile defense language, including the unilateral Russian and American statements accompanying the New START Treaty, in no way inhibits future missile defense deployments, and that there are no secret deals with Moscow on missile defense. General O’Reilly and Dr. Miller both have spoken to Russian officials about our missile defense plans and programs, and I am hopeful that they will establish a clear outline of discussions in this area.

Again, I thank our witnesses for testifying today, and I look forward to their insights.

###