

U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
Senator Richard G. Lugar
Statement of Introduction at the Confirmation Hearing for
Rose Gottemoeller to be Assistant Secretary of State for Verification
March 26, 2009

Thank you Madame Chairman and Senator DeMint. It is a pleasure to have the opportunity to introduce my good friend Rose Gottemoeller.

I congratulate President Obama and Secretary Clinton for nominating Rose to be Assistant Secretary of State for Verification, Compliance, and Implementation. I have known her for many years and she is uniquely qualified to hold this position and to be the lead negotiator for discussions with Russia on the START Treaty.

I worked closely with Rose in the early 1990s when she was a Director at the National Security Council. At that time she was heavily involved in the Nunn-Lugar Program's work in Russia and the denuclearization of Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus.

When the Soviet Union dissolved, four countries emerged in possession of nuclear weapons. A major U.S. goal at the time was convincing Kiev, Astana, and Minsk to accede to the NPT as non-nuclear weapon states and voluntarily return their weapons to Russia. This was an extremely delicate endeavor. I watched Rose expertly navigate a difficult set of negotiations. It was her job to manage the inter-agency process and to coordinate U.S. efforts. Rose's patience and commitment to detail assisted in securing a tremendous diplomatic success as the third, fourth, and eighth largest nuclear weapons powers in the world agreed to become nuclear weapons free.

Rose later continued her work by serving in the Department of Energy as Director for the Office of Nonproliferation and National Security, as Assistant Secretary for Nonproliferation and National Security, and as Deputy Undersecretary for Nuclear Nonproliferation. Her work helped lay the foundation for cooperation that continues today. The U.S. and Russia recently completed security and safety upgrades at many Russian strategic nuclear warhead sites. This work required U.S. experts to enter and inspect sensitive Russian facilities. The notion that U.S. experts would be welcomed into the Russian nuclear weapons infrastructure was hardly a foregone conclusion. Without the pioneering work of Rose and her colleagues, this important U.S. national security accomplishment would not have been possible.

Most recently, Rose has served as the Director of the Carnegie Moscow Center. In this capacity, she has engaged daily with Russian analysts and leaders in discussions over the bilateral strategic relationship. I enjoyed visiting with her at Carnegie on numerous occasions. Her strong diplomatic capabilities coupled with a complete understanding of the details of ongoing strategic agreements and negotiations were obvious. She not only was respected by Russian and American experts alike but her personal diplomacy and strategy delivered results.

Rose faces an extremely challenging mission. Our most time-sensitive agenda item is the preservation of the START Treaty. It expires on December 5th. The key element of this enduring document is its verification regime, a proven system of on-site inspections and detailed data disclosure that provides each side with confidence that the other is living up to its obligations. This robust verification mechanism is also the underpinning for the 2003 Moscow Treaty, which calls for dramatic reductions in Russian and American deployed nuclear arsenals down to 1,700 warheads each.

If the Senate is to ratify a new START treaty before the December 5 expiration date, the treaty will have to be submitted to Congress by early fall, to allow for hearings, debate and a floor vote. This, in turn, means that the treaty will have to be signed by both sides no later than August to ensure time to prepare the necessary analysis and documentation.

In short, our team will have barely four months to start and finish complex arms control negotiations in an atmosphere of tense relations between Moscow and Washington. Notwithstanding the time pressure, I am confident that Rose has the judgment to make difficult decisions, including, if need be, advising the President that a hastily concluded negotiation does not serve U.S. security interests.

I am hopeful that the Senate will move quickly on this nomination so Rose can begin her important mission. Thank you Madame Chairman.

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