

Saving the New START Arms Control Agreement between the US and Russia

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The last remaining arms control agreement between Russia and the US expires on February 5 unless extended at the 11th hour.

Hardline Trump regime's arms control negotiator Marshall Billingslea rejected Vladimir Putin's good faith offer to extend it for another five years with no pre-conditions.

Russia's chief arms control negotiator/Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov called his unacceptable demands "a nonstarter for us."

His lack of good faith assured no extension while Trump remained in office surrounded by hardline Russophobes like him and Pompeo.

Ryabkov and other Russian officials said the Kremlin would respond appropriately if the US side let New START expire.

If Washington expands its nuclear arsenal, Russia "would be ready to counter this," he explained.

Earlier, China's Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said the following:

"We made clear our position on multiple occasions."

"China has no intention to take part in so-called China-US-Russia trilateral arms control negotiations. This position is clear and consistent," adding:

"China's nuclear power is not on the same order of magnitude as that of the US and Russia."

New START worked well for a decade, why Russia is willing to extend it for five more years or another period of time with no pre-conditions.

Any extension would give the new US regime time to negotiate a further time frame ahead.

In early January, Biden's national security advisor Jake Sullivan said the following:

"(R)ight out of the gate in the early days and weeks of the administration...we will have to look at extending that treaty in the interests of the United States."

Numerous US arms control experts urged Biden to accept a five-year extension without pre-

conditions straightaway in office.

Trump regime hardliners were never serious about extending the landmark agreement.

Throughout their tenure, they never negotiated in good faith — why no extension was agreed on.

Ryabkov stressed that they made unacceptable demands, showing no interest in reaching common ground.

If Russian and Biden regime negotiators reach agreement before February 5, various steps must follow under Russian law, including approval by its parliament.

Days earlier, Ryabkov said “(w)e are prepared to...do our utmost to be there in time (but) the situation is challenging.”

According to the Washington Post on Thursday, Biden seeks a five-year New START extension, citing two unnamed senior US officials.

At the same time, his regime will demand “new costs on Russia pending a newly requested intelligence assessment of its recent activities (sic).”

There’s the rub. What Biden regime hardliners say they seek may depend on Moscow’s willingness to go along with unacceptable demands that will likely leave things at stalemate as the clock runs out.

Unnamed Biden officials said “reset” with Russia is ruled out, another negative sign.

Dealmaking requires all sides to negotiate in good faith. Time and again, the US fails the test.

With about two weeks to go before New START expires, it’s uncertain at best if extending it is coming or for how long.

It won’t be Russia’s fault if the landmark agreement expires.

Another unnamed Biden official signaled where the new regime in town is going with Russia ahead.

And by extension, it appears to be its intention in dealings with all nations free from its control, saying the following:

“(W)e (will) work to hold Russia accountable for their reckless and aggressive actions (sic) that we’ve seen in recent months and years (sic).”

“Reckless and aggressive actions” reflect longstanding US policy, the same true for its imperial partners.

Russia operates by higher standards the US and partners in high crimes long ago abandoned.

The above remarks show where bilateral relations are likely going ahead — perhaps on the rocks before Biden regime officials are confirmed and settle into their new jobs.

Russia, China, Iran, Syria, Yemen, North Korea, Venezuela, Cuba, Nicaragua, and other nations unwilling to be subservient to US demands can expect no change in its hardline treatment.

On Friday, Putin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Russia “definitely favors the preservation of New START and its extension so as to buy some more time for proper negotiations.”

As of now like always, the US side has a lot of proving to do to achieve anything positive between both countries.

Hostile remarks by senior Biden regime official concealing their identify behind a cloak of anonymity are unacceptable twice over.

In 2017, NYT public editor Liz Spayd said use of unnamed sources leaves readers “unconvinced,” adding:

The public “despise(s)” their use, including vague designations like “government official,” “congressional aide,” or “those familiar” with the issue at hand.

A letter to the editor called their use “poor journalism,” leaving readers with no way to evaluate the credibility of the source, or even it one exists.

I’ve been quoted a number of times by others. I stand by my remarks and always prefer full attribution.

Anonymity is unacceptable. Unwillingness to be identified with remarks suggests something to hide.

At the same time, exceptions to the rule exist under special circumstances, especially when the lives and livelihoods of sources are at risk from what’s revealed.

For the vast majority of what I cite or quote from the Times or other publications, the above exceptions don’t apply.

According to WaPo, Biden’s secretary of state nominee Blinken is amenable to a five-year New START extension, based on his remarks to Congress.

In contrast, neocon hardliner Victoria Nuland favors a one or two year extension of the agreement in hopes of gaining more leverage over Moscow that won’t come whatever the fate of the deal.

Russia is ready to walk away from talks if the US side continues acting in bad faith.

Other Biden/Harris regime officials are split on whether to extend New START and for how long, WaPo reported.

In response to reports of Biden moving ahead with a five-year extension if followed through on, Billingslea slammed the idea, saying it “shows stunning lack of negotiating skill.”

The above remark reflects his failure to achieve anything positive in talks with Russia on this

vital issue.

Arms Control Association executive director Daryl Kimball said the following:

“There is no evidence that Russia is desperate to extend the treaty or that a shorter-term extension would make Russia more likely to negotiate a follow-on agreement,” adding:

“A straightforward five-year extension would provide the new president with an early win and positive momentum, help restore US credibility on arms control issues, and create the potential for more ambitious steps to reduce the nuclear danger and move us closer to a world without nuclear weapons.”

In the coming days, it'll be clear whether New START will be extended for five years, a shorter period, or not at all.

As for Biden/Harris regime relations with Russia and other nations free from US control, its first few days offer no encouragement about positive domestic or geopolitical moves coming — just the opposite as expected.

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