

Dangerous Crossroads: US to Withhold Nuclear Weapons Data From Russia as Last Treaty Collapses

By [Zero Hedge](#)

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The White House has confirmed what we can call the effective (and expected) collapse of the New START nuclear treaty between the US and Russia, announcing Tuesday it will no longer provide data on its nuclear arsenal under the treaty's stipulated terms.

Moscow had already suspended its participation on March 1st, but still said it will remain in compliance with nuclear weapons caps under the agreement. National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said the decision was made due to Russia being in violation, but still held out hope that the US punitive measure could push Moscow to return.

"We obviously would like to see Russia back in New START in full compliance ... Russia refused to share data, which we agreed in New START to share biannually ... since they have refused to be in compliance with that particular modality of New START, we have decided to, likewise, not share that data," Kirby [said](#). "We would prefer to be able to do that, but it requires them to be willing as well."

"As a lawful countermeasure intended to encourage Russia to return to compliance with the treaty, the United States will likewise not provide its biannual data update to Russia," Kirby said. "The United States informed Russia in advance of this step. In the interest of strategic stability, the United States will continue to promote public transparency on our nuclear force levels and posture."

However, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov rejected Kirby's assertion of ongoing contact between the two sides on New START. But he did emphasize that "our readiness to adhere to the caps on strategic nuclear arms in the treaty is nothing more than a goodwill gesture" – suggesting all is not quite yet completely lost regarding the last nuclear arms reduction agreement between the nuclear-armed superpowers.

On Monday, White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre stated that she has not seen “any indications that Russia is preparing to use a nuclear weapon” – despite the big news this week that Putin ordered tactical nukes to be stationed in neighboring Belarus.

Starting in August last year the US accused Russia of violating the treaty in disallowing US on-site inspections under its stipulations. In response, Washington halted Russian inspectors’ ability to do the same on American soil. Russia had at the time complained that it was actually the US side which “deprive the Russian Federation of the right to conduct inspections on American territory.”

“This is what it has come to, the end of arms control, the end of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, the beginning of the end, the abyss. We are staring it in the face.” <https://t.co/Bz7YblastD>

— Kim Dotcom (@KimDotcom) [March 29, 2023](#)

And then last month, Putin declared, “No one should be under the illusion that global strategic parity can be violated,” in reference to New START.

In March 2021 the two sides renewed New START for a period of five years, and it will expire in February 2026 if it’s not continued – now looking more likely given US-Russia relations have deteriorated so fast over the Ukraine war and are at a complete breaking point.

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