

## **Recommendations of the Sustainable Partnership with Russia (SuPR) Group**

**March 2011**

A sustainable U.S.-Russian partnership requires further action in arms control, disarmament and nonproliferation to ensure a stable and enduring relationship. During the meeting of the Sustainable Partnership with Russia (SuPR) Group in Gstaad, Switzerland, on February 2, 2011, participants discussed the steps needed for further development and, where applicable, improvement of cooperation between Russia and the United States in two critical areas:

- Bilateral and multilateral arms control and disarmament
- Bilateral collaboration in the Middle East

In our conversations, SuPR Group members also raised two overarching ideas that provided context for our discussions.

Europe remains central to both the United States and Russia, albeit for different reasons. Russia and United States, as leading European players, should work jointly with other European nations on it. The Russian European Security Treaty (EST) initiative should be viewed as an invitation for an open-ended debate, with a goal that the vision of a functional security community “from Vancouver to Vladivostok” should one day be made a reality.

Secondly, in a world which is increasingly multipolar and in which proliferation and nuclear terrorism pose the primary nuclear threats, the Cold War concept of deterrence no longer provides an appropriate basis for the U.S.-Russian relationship. U.S. and Russian officials could discuss concepts that might form the foundation for a more stable relationship in which both sides could reduce their nuclear inventories.

### **BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT**

The ratification and entry into force of the New START treaty is a positive achievement – which

helped the United States and Russia to “reset” their relationship – but is only a first step in nuclear disarmament. There is a 50/50 chance that this relationship could relapse into a cold pause and not find the momentum necessary for future cooperation.

To maintain the momentum of the New START treaty, the United States and Russia could take action on several issues simultaneously, including:

- ***Further Nuclear Reductions.*** The U.S. and Russia could accelerate the reductions mandated by New START ahead of the 2018 implementation deadline, so that they are implemented by 2014 (prior to the next NPT Review Conference). At the same time, the countries could begin new bilateral negotiations in 2011 aimed at further reductions of strategic offensive nuclear weapons down to 1000 warheads or below. In the next round of negotiations, the sides could discuss limits on deployed strategic systems (warheads and delivery vehicles), deployed and non-deployed launchers, non-strategic nuclear weapons and non-deployed strategic warheads.<sup>1</sup> In parallel, the U.S. and Russian governments could consider:
  - Reducing the operational status of nuclear weapons, which could be seen as not only as a technical fix, but also as a strategic step in deemphasizing the military role of nuclear weapons.
  - Steps to prepare for broadening the nuclear arms reductions process to include other nuclear weapons states. (Some SuPR participants believe that reductions in non-strategic nuclear forces should best be handled in a multilateral forum.)
- ***Missile Defense.*** The SuPR Group recognizes that there is an interrelationship between strategic offensive weapons and strategic defensive weapons. Some participants believe that limits on missile defense may be necessary if Russia is to agree to further nuclear

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<sup>1</sup> Some SuPR Group participants, though not expressing the view of the majority of the Group, believe that a new agreement should include a single limit covering all U.S. and Russian nuclear warheads, with a sublimit of 1000 deployed strategic warheads.

reductions, while others believe that the U.S. Senate will not ratify any treaty with meaningful missile defense limits. The SuPR Group believes that NATO-Russia missile defense cooperation may offer a way out of this dilemma. The U.S. and Russian governments could consider:

- Greater transparency regarding their missile defense programs.
  - Integration of warning and assessment data from U.S. and Russian radars and other sensors in a single, jointly-manned NATO-Russia center.
  - Integration of the decision to launch an interceptor missile by agreeing in advance on a set of NATO-Russia protocols that would determine whether NATO and/or Russian interceptors would engage a particular ballistic missile.<sup>2</sup> The same protocols could guide NATO and Russian military officers in their separate decisions to launch interceptor missiles, forming a common missile defense system for Europe without need for a single, overall NATO or Russian commander. In this system, NATO and Russian missile defense capabilities would be additive to one another.
- ***Non-strategic (or “Tactical”) Nuclear Weapons.*** Finding an agreement on non-strategic nuclear weapons has always been difficult because of the disparity in such weapons, the difficulty to verify compliance, and their central role in Russia’s military concept. To overcome this impasse, the U.S. and Russian governments need to establish common definitions of what they include in non-strategic, sub-strategic, and tactical nuclear weapons. Both governments, in our view, could consider:

- A requirement that all nuclear weapons be based on national territories<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Such protocols would be necessary even for a NATO-only or Russia-only missile defense system, as the short flight times of attacking ballistic missiles will require that decisions on launching interceptors be pre-programmed, subject only to a human decision to execute.

<sup>3</sup> Some participants suggested this could be possible within the context of an acceptable bilateral treaty reducing and limiting all U.S. and Russian nuclear weapons, while others insisted that it should be done through a UN Security Council Resolution co-sponsored by Russia and the United States and addressing nuclear weapons of all nations.

- Implementation of the recommendations contained, in the form of the Action Plan, in the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, avoiding a “pick-and-choose” approach of taking only those actions that coincide with national preferences.
- Increased transparency on both sides.
- ***Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty.*** SuPR Group participants agree that progress on the CFE Treaty regime could facilitate a new U.S.-Russian agreement on further nuclear arms cuts. CFE and non-strategic nuclear weapons-related issues could be put in a broader context of re-building European security architecture.
- ***Publicizing Warhead Elimination.*** Regarding transparency and confidence-building, Russia and the United States could make public unilateral annual declarations regarding their elimination of nuclear warheads. These declarations could include data on how many warheads were eliminated, how much nuclear material was extracted and, when applicable, converted for civilian purposes.
- ***Weapons in Outer Space.*** Some SuPR Group members indicated that opening of a multilateral negotiation process on the issue of banning nuclear weapons from outer space should be desirable. In the view of those participants, the negotiations’ starting point could be Russia’s and China’s draft treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space, or another mutually acceptable draft.
- ***Role of Nuclear Weapons.*** The United States and Russia could reassess their national nuclear policies and the role of nuclear weapons in them. This could including banning the development of new types of nuclear weapons, reducing the role of nuclear weapons in national policies, and taking steps to reduce the risk of accidental use of nuclear weapons.

## COLLABORATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Regional cooperation in the Middle East is limited by political instability, lack of trust and lack of unity. The SuPR Group recommends strengthening practical cooperation between the United States and Russia in that region as a step toward a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction. Potential collaboration in nuclear energy in the Middle East and confidence-building measures could also contribute to easing tension in the region. To further these objectives, the governments of the United States and Russia could pursue joint action in the following areas:

- ***Nonproliferation Efforts.*** The SuPR Group believes the United States and Russia could take active steps to widen participation by states in the Middle East in the international architecture of WMD nonproliferation, including the CTBT, BWC, CWC and the IAEA's Additional Protocol, as well as the Nuclear Security Summit. The United States and Russia should continue to call for universal adherence to and compliance with the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, including by Israel and Iran. Efforts could begin now to make the 2015 NPT Review Conference a success.
  
- ***Promotion of Peaceful Uses of Civilian Nuclear Energy.*** The development of peaceful civilian nuclear programs will continue in the Middle East for the foreseeable future. Closer collaboration between the United States and Russia in helping states in the Middle East develop nuclear energy is necessary to ensure its peaceful uses, but can also be a positive force for sustainable and predictable development of the region. To further these objectives, the United States and Russia could consider:
  - Creation of international nuclear fuel banks providing LEU.
  
  - Creation of joint monitoring and management measures, and commitments not to use force against civilian nuclear installations in the region.
  
  - Creation of international centers for management of spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste and a framework for facilitating cradle-to-grave fuel supply services.

- ***Progress Toward a Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East.*** The United States and Russia should take an active role in facilitating the success of the 2012 Conference on establishing a Weapons of Mass Destruction-Free Zone in the Middle East by taking, together with the United Kingdom, concrete actions toward conference preparation. No delay on this front can be justified. The objectives and universal safeguards of the IAEA could be reinforced by the implementation of the Additional Protocol by all states of the region. Additionally, as a confidence-building measure, some SuPR Group members advocated for pressing Israel for greater transparency – particularly regarding the Dimona reactor as well as regarding other Israeli nuclear infrastructure.
  
- ***Assessing regional nuclear and missile threats.*** SuPR Group members disagreed on the threat assessment coming from nuclear and missile programs in the region. While some believed that the most immediate threat in the Middle East is Iran’s clandestine nuclear program others insisted that it is Israel and its nuclear-weapons program should be addressed first, as Israel remains the only state in the Middle East to be outside the NPT and to possess nuclear weapons. The situation with Iran and its intentions, on the other hand, remains unclear. SuPR Group members agreed that while the challenges coming from Iran’s nuclear and missile programs should not be exaggerated, they also cannot be ignored. Evidence suggests that Iran’s ballistic missiles will not be able to strike Western Europe before 2014 or the United States before 2020 – at the earliest. Group members agreed that the joint assessment of regional nuclear and missile threats between Russia and the United States as well as between Russia and U.S. scholars should be accelerated to address this issue.
  
- ***Iranian Nuclear Program.*** SuPR Group members agree that any military strike against Iran – under any pretext – would be dangerous and counterproductive. At the same time, the latent Iranian nuclear program is not going to disappear by itself. Short-term steps that could be taken by Russia and the United States include:

  - Re-energizing and elevating bilateral consultations on the Iranian nuclear issue, with the goal of working toward a common understanding of the risks and a

common list of options. The United States and Russia could make public certain joint conclusions and assessments to demonstrate to Iran that both have the same or similar positions on Iran.

- Consulting on ways to facilitate fuel fabrication for the Tehran Research Reactor by the end of 2011 should negotiations on that issue become more positive.