



Fact Sheet
Continuing to Verify the Moscow Treaty through START
April 2007

The Moscow Treaty pledges the United States and Russia to limit their deployed strategic nuclear warheads to 2200 each by 2012.

The Moscow Treaty contains no verification provisions. As Russia and the United States remove warheads from deployment, the process has been verified by the verification provisions and inspections delineated in the START I treaty.

Although the START I treaty has achieved its goals of reducing the numbers of nuclear weapons, its verification provisions are valuable for verifying reductions under the Moscow Treaty.

The term of START I ends in 2009, while reductions under the Moscow Treaty are planned to continue until 2012. If START I lapses and no verification provisions are in place for the Moscow Treaty, there is no way for the United States to legally assure that Russia is abiding by the treaty, nor will Russia have similar assurances.

Russia has been asking for negotiations, but the United States has balked.

It is possible to extend START I for five years beyond 2009 by agreement between the parties. This action would avoid some of the sticky points that could be involved in negotiating an entirely new verification agreement for the Moscow Treaty, buying time to work out those issues.

Even a relatively simple action like extending START I would entail some negotiations between Russia and the United States and would require some time, probably at least six months. So action should begin as soon as possible.

Given that the time between now and the end of START I's term is relatively short, the Steering Committee of the Los Alamos Committee recommend that you write your senator asking that the Senate pass a nonbinding resolution proposing that START I be extended for five years in order to provide verification for the Moscow Treaty through its target date of 2012.