

## CONCLUSIONS

As the thirteenth round of negotiations moved laboriously towards the conclusion of a draft START treaty, the size and structure of strategic nuclear offensive forces into the twenty-first century came into clear focus. First, while START promised significant cuts in strategic warheads, both sides were likely to possess many more deployed warheads than the 6,000 'ceiling' provided for in the agreement. The counting rule on ALCMs, the exclusion of SLCMs, and the generous allowance for gravity bombs meant, for example, that the United States total warhead arsenal was likely to be closer to 9,000 rather than 6,000. For both sides, moreover, the agreement legitimized modernization, so that in a post-START environment both could build an entirely new, more deadly nuclear offense.

This outcome reflected, therefore, less concern with reducing nuclear arsenals as such, and more concern with creating a stable, predictable nuclear relationship. As Richard Burt argued in presenting the US position to the Conference on Disarmament, the purpose was to produce greater stability through reducing force vulnerability, enhancing transparency, and reducing uncertainties about the future evolution of national strategic forces.

In turn, this approach raised important questions about the future of strategic arms negotiations. In late 1989 the United States invited the Soviet Union to outline the issues that might be dealt with in a START II negotiation. It was not clear from the US invitation whether or not the Bush Administration envisaged the objective of a second round as deeper cuts in strategic arsenals, or as further refinements in stability, transparency and predictability.

For Canada, the START formula continues to pose questions about the impact of future offensive force deployments. The deployment of nuclear SLCMs increases the strategic significance of the maritime approaches to Canada. The relative increase in the importance of ALCMs, and the prospect that successive ALCM models will have longer ranges, suggests that the northern approaches to Canadian airspace will increase in importance and be more difficult to monitor. For states which are affected by the post-START force structures, therefore, the US invitation to initiate discussions on START II might be construed more broadly. Canada, perhaps in cooperation with other states, might wish to seize an early opportunity to define its national interests in the evolution of strategic offensive forces.

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