

Soviet missile bases had been dismantled. Both sides used their full complement of twenty short-notice, on-site inspections during the year. The Soviet Union had conducted ninety-six routine elimination inspections while the US had conducted 224 of these inspections.¹ The differences in the numbers are due to the larger number of missiles and facilities the Soviet Union possessed when the Treaty went into force.

Compliance

Some minor compliance issues have arisen during the first year of the Treaty. For the most part, they have been associated with errors in following the detailed procedures correctly. For example, some treaty-limited items were found outside designated locations in the Soviet Union. This was because of problems with the site diagrams. The site diagrams were changed, as permitted by the Treaty, to include the storage facilities and the issue was resolved.

Some questions relating to the data exchange also arose. The Soviet Union wanted the US to reveal the location of twenty-one older Pershing 1A missiles, owned by West Germany, but stored in the US. The US maintained that the missiles were owned by West Germany and should be dealt with outside of the Treaty. In the end, after consultation with West Germany, the US agreed to inform the Soviet Union of their location.

Other questions of implementation, such as specifics about equipment use and other details not specified in the Treaty, are being dealt with at the Special Verification Commission.

Aftermath

The total number of missiles and launchers to be destroyed under the INF Treaty represents only four to five percent of the total nuclear arsenals of the two superpowers. In the immediate aftermath of the signing of the Treaty, a debate developed about whether and how the US and the Soviet Union would offset the loss of the missiles. For example, more aircraft could be deployed in the area, or the number of missile-carrying submarines in the region could be increased. Critics argued that such actions would infringe on the spirit of the Treaty and possibly threaten whatever political stability was to be gained by the elimination of the missiles.

It must be remembered that the INF Treaty came about during a relative vacuum in the arms control scene. At the time of its signing, there were no enforceable limits on strategic nuclear forces. Since the INF Treaty exists in isolation, the threat it removes is covered, intentionally or otherwise, by the existence of a large number of strategic nuclear weapons. The success of the INF Treaty in reduction of numbers is therefore minimized. This will be

true until the INF Treaty is followed up by reductions in strategic nuclear weapons.

IMPORTANCE OF THE INF TREATY FOR OTHER NEGOTIATIONS

What's New in the INF Treaty?

The successful elimination of an entire class of nuclear missiles is clearly an important achievement for arms control. This is especially so after the end of US adherence to the strategic arms limitation treaties (SALT) and difficulties over the interpretation of the anti-ballistic missile treaty.

The precedent set by this Treaty was made even more striking by the willingness of the Soviet Union to accept the principle of asymmetric cuts in INF forces. When the Treaty was signed, the Soviet Union had a total of 470 deployed INF missiles to the US' 429, and 484 to 214 US deployed launchers. In the shorter-range missile category the Soviet Union undertook to destroy a total of 926 deployed and non-deployed missiles, while the US had a total of only 178 missiles to destroy. Soviet willingness to undertake such asymmetric cuts bodes well for the negotiations on conventional forces, where the Soviet Union enjoys a numerical advantage in certain categories of non-nuclear weaponry as well.

US wariness about intrusive verification is also a precedent. It is not clear to what degree this hesitancy will carry over to affect the US position in other arms control forums. In the INF negotiations an attractive and relatively simple way out was found in the shift to complete elimination of the missiles. However, for all of its attraction, zero in any given category of missiles is not a likely outcome in the START negotiations. The INF Treaty has therefore provided the first step in what will be a lengthy process of determining the balance between how much intrusiveness is necessary to ensure compliance, and how much can be tolerated without threatening state sovereignty and security.

START Verification System

The structure of verification measures established under the INF Treaty — a kind of layered approach — has provided a basis for the verification procedures being discussed at the START negotiations. Under the proposed START treaty, systems will be reduced, not eliminated. Thus, the START framework will require a different degree of intensity and frequency of the various types of verification methods. Repeated verification of production and stockpiles would be required. In particular, the START treaty will have a greater need to use portal monitoring systems. The implementation of the two portal monitoring systems under the INF Treaty has provided useful experience in this regard.