



Written by on November 17, 2010

Obama and Clinton Push START Nuclear Treaty

AP reported on November 17 that Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, speaking to reporters after a 90-minute breakfast meeting with members of Congress, was exerting pressure on the Senate to vote on a new U.S.-Russian nuclear weapons treaty. Clinton asserted that postponing the vote until the next session of Congress would undermine national security.



The report quoted Clinton's statement that "this is not an issue that can afford to be postponed."

The Secretary of State said that the administration "will do whatever it takes" in working with supporters of the treaty to bring the pact to a vote during the current lame-duck session.

The new treaty with the present Russian government would replace START (the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty), which was signed between the United States and the old Soviet government on July 31, 1991 and entered into effect on December 5, 1994. That treaty expired on December 5, 2009. A report in [Wikipedia](#) notes: "On 8 April 2010, the new START Treaty was signed in Prague by U.S. President Obama and Russian President Medvedev. It will enter into force after its ratification through the parliaments of both countries."

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Obama's assurances to Medvedev that putting the new START treaty into force was a "top priority" failed to take into account the residual spirit of national sovereignty that remained back home, even in a Congress controlled by Democrats. Though the President's party will still retain control of the Senate in the 112th Congress, Republican gains in the midterm elections mean the GOP now has the numbers to maintain a vote-delaying filibuster, should it come to that. Obviously, the administration's prospects of obtaining ratification of START would be better in the present Congress than the next, which explains why some Republicans in the Senate are as eager to delay the vote as Secretary Clinton is to hold it as soon as possible.

A November 14 [ABC News](#) report quoted President Obama's statement from the sidelines of the summit of the Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in Yokohama, Japan, in which the President assured Russian President Dmitry Medvedev that getting the Senate to ratify the START nuclear weapons treaty is a "top priority" of his administration. Obama said that during talks with Medvedev at the summit, "I reiterated my commitment to getting the START treaty done during the lame-duck session."

The [Los Angeles Times reported](#) on November 17 that Arizona Senator Jon Kyl, described as the "Republican point man on nuclear arms issues," had announced the previous day that he will not support a speedy vote on START. As the *Times* noted:



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Kyl said he told Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) that he did not think a vote on the treaty could be supported “given the combination of other work Congress must do and the complex and unresolved issues related to START and modernization” of U.S. nuclear weapons systems.

A number of other Republicans, including Sen. Minority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, say they would follow Kyl’s lead.

Registering apparent disagreement, Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.) Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, responded:

We have to deal with this; our relationship with Russia is at stake.

If we don’t have time to deal with the security of our country, something is really wrong with the Senate.

The Chinese [People’s Daily](#) online article “Moscow hopes U.S. will ratify START treaty by year end” quoted Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov, who said on November 17: “We expect that there is enough time for discussing a ratification package for the new START treaty and that voting will take place during the current session.”

The Chinese publication was well aware of Senator Kyl’s opposition to such a timetable, however, which made the Russian’s hopes seem unrealistic.

Defenders of a strong U.S. national defense might think that Senator Kerry’s complaint that delaying a vote on the new START treaty was an indication of something “really wrong” in the Senate — because the treaty had an impact on our nation’s security — is more an indication of something wrong with the Massachusetts Senator rather than more prudent Senators such as Kyl. Since the treaty would reduce the parties’ total number of nuclear weapons by one-third and halve the number of strategic missiles, our national defense capability would be reduced by an equivalent amount, subject only to the good will of the Russians.

As for today’s Russians being more trustworthy than their Soviet predecessors, we should keep in mind that since the supposed collapse of the Soviet Union, all of the key centers of power — political, economic, military, intelligence — have remained in the hands of lifelong communists. Current President Dmitry Medvedev’s mentor, Vladimir Putin, joined the Communist Party of the Soviet Union when he was a law student at Leningrad State University. He joined the KGB while young and served the Soviet spy agency until 1991. In 1998, President Boris Yeltsin appointed Putin head of the FSB (one of the successor agencies to the KGB). In 1999, Yeltsin appointed Putin acting Prime Minister of the Government of the Russian Federation. Putin was elected President in 2000 and was reelected in 2004. Unable to serve for a third term, Putin was replaced by his hand-picked successor, Dmitry Medvedev, who subsequently appointed Putin Prime Minister of Russia.

Beyond whether today’s Russian leaders are trustworthy enough to keep their part of the bargain, is the fact that though the new START is promoted as a “bilateral” treaty, it fits neatly into a long-standing plan to place the world’s nuclear arsenal under the control of the United Nations

In fact, START’s impact on national sovereignty is reflected by its concluding language: “This Treaty shall be registered pursuant to Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations.”

For a better understanding of what UN control over the world’s nuclear would mean, however, we must travel back in time several decades. As we noted in our April 14 article, [“Obama Nuclear Summit Closes,”](#) written shortly after the President signed the new START agreement with Medvedev:



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U.S.-led overtures to achieve a “nuclear-free world” have always been aimed at empowering the United Nations and rendering the individual UN member states powerless to resist the collective world body.??The first and most blatant example of this move to surrender U.S. sovereignty to the UN occurred on on September 25, 1961, when President John F. Kennedy presented to the 16th General Assembly of the United Nations a disarmament proposal entitled, Freedom from War: The United States Program for General and Complete Disarmament in a Peaceful World (State Department Publication 7277).?? Excerpts from the document include:

- “Disarmament shall take place as rapidly as possible until it is completed in [a program of three] stages containing balanced, phased and safeguarded measures, with each measure and stage to be carried out in an agreed period of time.”
- “As states relinquish their arms, the United Nations shall be progressively strengthened in order to improve its capacity to assure international security and the peaceful settlement of differences as well as to facilitate the development of international cooperation in common tasks for the benefit of mankind.”
- “By the time Stage II [of the three-stage disarmament program] has been completed, the confidence produced through a verified disarmament program, the acceptance of rules of peaceful international behavior, and the development of strengthened international peace-keeping processes within the framework of the U.N. should have reached a point where the states of the world can move forward to Stage III. *In Stage III progressive controlled disarmament and continuously developing principles and procedures of international law would proceed to a point where no state would have the military power to challenge the progressively strengthened U.N. Peace Force* and all international disputes would be settled according to the agreed principles of international conduct.” [Emphasis added.]

When it comes to maintaining our nation’s security — and sovereignty — the best response to sovereignty-destroying treaties such as START, is to *STOP*.

Photo of Hillary Clinton: AP Images



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