

## Statement by the Deep Cuts Commission

### Turning the tide: NATO, the United States and Russia need to agree on an ambitious arms control agenda

Two summits in June 2021 will set the course for discussions on nuclear arms control.

After a series of arms control setbacks in recent years, the upcoming NATO summit and meeting of the leaders of the United States and Russia can and should pave the way for meaningful talks designed to reduce the risk of nuclear conflict, lead to reductions in the role and number of nuclear weapons, and avoid a new nuclear and conventional arms race in Europe.

With the New START Treaty extended by five years, NATO members and Russia have an opportunity to re-calibrate their arms control ambitions and take crucial decisions on the format, scope, and goals of future talks on nuclear weapons reductions.

The Deep Cuts Commission regrets that Russia and the United States have failed to resolve disputes over the Open Skies Treaty, a crucial instrument for improving predictability and trust in the Euro-Atlantic area and are on course to withdraw from the agreement. This comes less than two years after the demise of the INF Treaty. The resulting loss of transparency will make it even more important for Russia, the United States and NATO allies to reinvigorate arms control in Europe.

As NATO Heads of State and Government gather on 14 June in Brussels to initiate the process leading to a new Alliance Strategic Concept, the Deep Cuts Commission recommends that they agree to:

- elevate arms control, non-proliferation, and disarmament as a central element of their strategy, and make arms control a central element in discussions on NATO's future deterrence and defence posture;
- support the Biden administration's call for reducing the role of nuclear weapons by declaring that the sole purpose of nuclear weapons is the deterrence of nuclear attacks;

- reaffirm that NATO has no intention to deploy new land-based nuclear missiles in Europe and state its readiness to engage in discussions with Russia on preventing any such deployments in the Euro region;
- support the inclusion of nuclear weapons of all types in bilateral arms control and disarmament talks between Moscow and Washington and reaffirm their willingness to increase transparency and cooperative verification efforts; and
- launch an open and inclusive process on NATO's new Strategic Concept, including by informing and consulting with the expert community and with parliamentarians on progress made, and also on obstacles encountered in the realm of both nuclear and conventional arms control.

On 16 June, Russian President Vladimir Putin and US President Joe Biden will meet in Geneva and discuss how to restore predictability and stability in Russian-US relations, including through new bilateral strategic stability talks. At the summit, the two Presidents should:

- agree on a regular and intensive series of strategic stability talks to address military imbalances and practices that increase the risk of miscalculation and conflict, including new types of nuclear weapons, missile defences, and destabilizing means of delivery, such as hypersonic weapons;
- announce they will soon launch new bilateral nuclear arms control and disarmament negotiations aimed at securing a follow-on agreement or agreements before New START expires in 2026 that achieve deeper cuts in the nuclear arsenals of both sides;
- declare a moratorium on the development of new nuclear weapons capabilities;
- encourage other nuclear weapon states to declare a freeze on deployed nuclear warhead numbers, as long as Russia and the United States negotiate a New START follow-on agreement,
- invite the other nuclear weapon states to join such a dialogue and declare their readiness to brief non-nuclear weapon state parties to the nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) on progress made; and
- jointly state that “a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.”

If managed well, discussions on NATO's new Strategic Concept and US-Russian strategic stability talks can reinforce each other, ensure Europeans that the bilateral talks will not have adverse impacts on their security and give Europeans an opportunity to push the two largest nuclear weapon possessors towards bold steps. This opportunity to turn the tide back toward nuclear arms control, disarmament and nuclear risk reduction must not be lost.

The following Deep Cuts Commission members support the statement:

**Andrey Baklitskiy**

Senior Research Fellow and  
Consultant  
Center for the Euro-Atlantic  
Security, Institute of the  
International Studies, MGIMO  
University of the Russian  
Foreign Ministry and PIR  
Center

**Sarah Bidgood**

Adjunct Professor  
Middlebury Institute of  
International Studies at  
Monterey

**Steve Fetter**

Professor  
School of Public Policy,  
University of Maryland

**Angela Kane**

Senior Fellow  
Vienna Center for Disarmament  
and Non-Proliferation (VCDNP)

**Daryl Kimball**

Executive Director  
Arms Control Association

**Katarzyna Kubiak**

Senior Policy Fellow  
European Leadership Network

**Ulrich Kühn**

Head of the Research Area,  
Arms Control and Emerging  
Technologies  
Institute for Peace Research and  
Security Policy at the University  
of Hamburg (IFSH)

**Oliver Meier**

Senior Researcher  
Institute for Peace Research and  
Security Policy at the University  
of Hamburg (IFSH)

**Victor Mizin**

Leading Researcher  
Center for Post-Soviet Studies,  
Moscow State Institute of  
International Relations  
(MGIMO) and Primakov  
Institute of World Economy and  
International Relations  
(IMEMO), Russian Academy of  
Sciences

**Götz Neuneck**

Senior Research Fellow  
Institute for Peace Research and  
Security Policy at the University  
of Hamburg (IFSH)

**Olga Olikier**

Adjunct Professor of European  
and Eurasian Studies  
Johns Hopkins School of  
Advanced International Studies

**Steven Pifer**

Non-Residential Senior Fellow  
Brookings Institution

**Sergey Rogov**

Academic Adviser  
Institute for U.S. and Canadian  
Studies, Russian Academy of  
Sciences

**Walter J. Schmid**

Ambassador (ret.)

**Greg Thielmann**

Member of the Board  
Arms Control Association

**Andrei Zagorski**

Head of the Department,  
Disarmament and Conflict  
Resolution  
Center for International Security  
at the Primakov Institute of  
World Economy and

**Wolfgang Zellner**

Senior Research Fellow  
Institute for Peace Research and  
Security Policy at the University  
of Hamburg (IFSH)

Affiliations are provided for identification purposes only.

The Deep Cuts Commission ([deepcuts.org](http://deepcuts.org)) provides decision-makers as well as the interested public with concrete policy options based on realistic analysis and sound research. Since it was established in 2013, the Commission is coordinated in its deliberations by the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg (IFSH), the Arms Control Association (ACA), and the Primakov Institute of World Economy and International Relations, Russian Academy of Sciences (IMEMO, RAN).