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# Conference on Disarmament

19 February 2026

Original: English

**Advance unedited copy**

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## **Note verbale dated 16 February 2026 from the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva to the Secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament**

The Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva has the honor to convey the text of the Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Concerning the Expiration of the Russia-US New START Treaty.

The Permanent Mission would appreciate it if the Secretariat could circulate the aforementioned document among all Member States of the CD as an official document of the Conference.



**Annex to the note verbale dated 16 February 2026 from the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva to the Secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament**

Unofficial English translation

[Original: Russian]

**Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Concerning the Expiration of the Russia-US New START Treaty**

(February 4, 2026)

On February 5, 2026, the life cycle of the Russian-US Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START) finally comes to an end; it was signed by the parties on April 8, 2010, entered into force on February 5, 2011, and was extended for a five-year period in February 2021 on the basis of a relevant one-time option provided for in this agreement.

In February 2023, the Russian Federation suspended the New START Treaty against the backdrop of the unsatisfactory state of affairs with the implementation of certain aspects of the Treaty, as well as due to the absolutely unacceptable steps by the United States running counter to the fundamental principles and understandings of the agreement enshrined in its preamble. It was a compelled measure and an inevitable response of the Russian side to the extremely hostile policy of the Biden administration which resulted in the fundamental change in the security situation, as well as to a number of illegitimate steps taken by Washington in the context of specific provisions of the New START Treaty, which together constituted a material breach incompatible with the Treaty being further implemented in a full-fledged manner.

Among the key negative factors, it is worth to highlight the destabilizing actions of the United States in the field of missile defense, contrary to the inseparable interrelationship between strategic offensive and strategic defensive arms enshrined in the New START Treaty. This contradicted the Treaty's objectives in terms of maintaining the balance of powers, put significant pressure on its viability, and created grounds for Russia to take compensatory measures outside the scope of the New START Treaty in order to maintain strategic equilibrium.

Despite some obvious problematic moments, basically the New START Treaty used to fulfill its key functions. The conclusion of the Treaty and the years of its initially successful implementation helped to discourage the strategic arms race, allowing for significant reductions in the parties' arsenals. At the same time, due to the restrictions applied in this area a sufficient level of predictability was ensured on a long-term basis.

While the destructive steps taken by the United States made counterproductive for the Russian Federation to fully implement the New START Treaty at the final stage of its existence, our country was well aware that the core of the Treaty continued to play a positive role in reducing the risks of further undermining strategic stability. That is why, in parallel to suspending this agreement, the Russian Federation announced the intention to voluntarily maintain its commitment to the central quantitative limits on weapons regulated by the New START until the end of the Treaty's life cycle in February 2026. At that time, the United States followed suit, announcing its readiness to act in a similar manner.

Striving to extend the positive effect of such reciprocal measures in terms of maintaining balance and certainty in the field of strategic offensive arms during the current turbulent period, our country took an additional constructive step. On September 22, 2025, the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin publicly proposed that the parties to the New START Treaty commit to voluntary self-limitations to keep the quantitative ceilings on the relevant weapons specified in the Treaty for at least one year after the termination of the agreement.

However, no formal official response from the United States with regard to the Russian initiative has been received through bilateral channels. Public comments from the US side also give no reason to conclude that Washington is ready to follow the course of action in the field of strategic offensive arms proposed by the Russian Federation. In fact, it means that our ideas have been deliberately left unanswered. This approach seems erroneous and regrettable.

From a practical point of view, our country considers such developments as a fact that must be taken into account when determining further Russian policy in this area.

In the current circumstances, we assume that the parties to the New START are no longer bound by any obligations or symmetrical declarations in the context of the Treaty, including its core provisions, and are in principle free to choose their next steps. In doing so the Russian Federation intends to act responsibly and in a balanced manner, developing its policy in the field of strategic offensive arms on the basis of a thorough analysis of the US military policy and the overall situation in the strategic sphere.

The Russian Federation remains ready to take decisive military-technical measures to counter potential additional threats to the national security. At the same time, our country remains open to seeking politico-diplomatic ways to comprehensively stabilize the strategic situation on the basis of equal and mutually beneficial dialogue solutions, if the appropriate conditions for such cooperation are shaped.

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