



Written by on December 16, 2010

## Senate to Consider START Arms Control Treaty

ABC News reported on December 16 that with the bill extending the Bush-era tax cuts having been passed by the Senate and headed to the House, Senators are now set to consider ratification of the START treaty, as well as passage of the omnibus spending bill to fund the government for the next year.

The report noted that debate on the arms treaty would officially start on Thursday morning. As with all treaties, it requires a two-thirds vote of the Senate, or 67 votes, for ratification. President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev signed the agreement in April.



A report about the START treaty in the [New York Times](#) on December 15 noted that the Senate had voted to bring the treaty to the floor in a procedural vote that fell one short of the 67 required for ratification. However, noted the *Times*:

But a procedural vote does not commit a senator to a final vote, and Republican opponents are preparing a series of amendments and delaying tactics that could still throw off track the president's campaign to win approval of the treaty. If Mr. Obama cannot push it through in the next two weeks before the Senate adjourns, he faces starting over with a new Senate that takes office in January with five more Republican members.

Still, the White House and Senate Democrats interpreted the initial vote as a show of strength and vowed to stay through the holidays if necessary to approve the treaty, known as New Start. The treaty would limit the United States and Russia to deploying no more than 1,550 strategic warheads and 700 launchers and would resume mutual on-site inspections that lapsed last year.

The report quoted Massachusetts Senator John Kerry, who predicted: "Yes, I believe we will have the votes." Kerry also countered Republican statements that there was not enough time to deliberate the treaty in this Congress with a completely unrelated comparison that U.S. troops in Afghanistan and Iraq do not take the holidays off, pontificating: "Surely, we in the United States Senate can't ask any less of ourselves as we sit in a warm chamber and talk about this treaty."

The *Times* also quoted Arizona Republican Senator John Kyl, who favors postponing a vote on the treaty until the 112th Congress convenes in January:

I think you can detect in my demeanor here a great frustration and disappointment with the fact that notwithstanding our effort to try to work constructively, we're going to get stiffed now. And I don't like that, and I don't think it's good for the country.

Among the nine Republicans who voted to allow debate on the bill was Kyl's Arizona colleague and former "conservative" Republican presidential candidate John McCain.



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A report in the [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) on December 15 quoted Georgia's Republican Senator Saxby Chambliss, who voiced criticism of Majority Leader Harry Reid's plans to push START through the Senate: "He's trying to jam through a ... treaty he knows needs to have at least 10 days to two weeks from a legislative standpoint. That is amateurish at best, and it is poor leadership on his part."

The *Journal-Constitution* noted that White House and "military leaders" (presumably those of the internationalist stripe like ISAF Commander General David H. Petraeus, a member of the Council on Foreign Relations) have urged ratification of the treaty as soon as possible, claiming that "every day it's not passed is a day that the United States can't inspect or verify Russia's nuclear weapons cache."

Such an assertion presumes that a piece of paper would guarantee the cooperation needed on the part of Russia's political and military leaders to ensure accurate verification.

As we noted in our previous report, "[Obama and Clinton Push START Nuclear Treaty](#)," on November 17:

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:

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 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



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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: Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.) accompanied by Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) gestures during a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2010, to discuss the ratification of the New Start Treaty: AP Images*



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