

The background of the entire slide features a close-up of a globe showing the continents of Africa and Europe. In the foreground, on the left, is a large, light-colored wooden chess piece, likely a king or queen. Other chess pieces are visible in the background, slightly out of focus.

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CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIC ANALYSES

The End of the INF Treaty

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Research Paper No. 45

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1. Introduction

The work aims to characterize and evaluate the INF treaty. Moreover, the provisions of the treaty will be described, as well as the reasons for departing from it. The subject of the attitude of the rest of countries to the decision of Donald Trump will also be discussed. Finally, I will consider the decision to depart from the treaty, as well as the possible forecasts that will result from the end of the INF treaty.

2. Historical background of the Intermediate- Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty

During the Cold War, both the United States and the USSR were among the superpowers and thus they rivalled with each other. Both sides were aware of the threat of a nuclear war. However, weakened by the consequences of the Second World War, no country could afford another armed conflict. As security against unforeseeable actions by the other side, the two countries decided to protect themselves¹. NATO's first fears of Soviet arms expansion arose in 1976 when Moscow began to exchange SS-4 and SS-5 for SS-20 ballistic missile. Thanks to this innovation, the Soviet Union could triple the number of warheads deployed and, what is more, it could obtain a bargaining chip in the event of war². NATO's response was the deployment of two new INF missiles - namely Pershing II and GLCM in five different NATO countries in 1979. Thanks to this

¹ Krepon M, *Danger Lies Ahead After Trump And Putin Kill The INF Treaty*, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/michaelkrepon/2019/08/05/the-treaty-killers-trump-and-putin-win-freedom-from-arms-control-and-greater-danger-for-all/> 07.10.2019

² Thielmann G., Meier O., Mizin V., *INF Treaty Compliance: Path to Renewal or the End of the Road?*, http://deepcuts.org/files/pdf/Deep_Cuts_Issue_Brief_8-INF_Treaty_Compliance.pdf 07.10.2019

treatment, the USA gained an advantage allowing it to enter into negotiations with the Soviet side³.

During the Cold War, both United States and Soviet Union were looking for common consensus. The reciprocal goal was to avoid the situations that could possibly jeopardize the fragile peace at that time. In 1972, the first treaty was signed to guarantee the avoidance of future armed conflicts. The main objective of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM Treaty) was to prevent the deployment of the anti-ballistic systems defined in the Treaty by the number of land-based rocket systems and radar systems deployed on the Earth. However, it did not ultimately provide protection against nuclear attacks between the two powers⁴. The negotiations between two countries started in November 1981. In “*The Treaty on Intermediate-range nuclear Forces: history and lessons learned*” the authors characterized four biggest issues intertwined with the negotiations⁵.

The Intermediate- Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) was the first sign of hope for the end of the Cold War, because of it’s permanency and adaptability⁶. The main reason for signing the INF Treaty was to counteract the threat of medium range missiles. Namely, because of their short flight at a fast pace, the above missiles would be able to

³ Bohlen A., Burns W., Pifer S., Woodworth J., <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/30-arms-control-pifer-paper.pdf> 07.10.2019

⁴ Boese W., *U.S. Withdraws From ABM Treaty; Global Response Muted*, <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2002-07/news/us-withdraws-abm-treaty-global-response-muted> 10.10.2019

⁵ Bohlen A., Burns W., Pifer S., Woodworth J., <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/30-arms-control-pifer-paper.pdf> 07.10.2019

⁶ U. Kuhn, A. Peczeli, Russia, NATO, and the INF Treaty, p. 66

plant huge destructions. Moreover, the reaction of the other side would also be very quick⁷.

3. Content of the INF Treaty

The INF treaty consists seventeen articles, which were prepared in two languages – English and Russian. The second article presents basically definitions of terms, that were contained in the INF Treaty. The goal of this procedure was to avoid eventual misunderstandings. However, the types of missiles were specified in the third article. Namely, it applied to intermediate- range missiles and shorter- range missiles.

4. Root causes of the termination of the INF Treaty

Over the years the both sides of the Treaty have been respecting the regulations which had been established 1987. However, a first crisis had shown up in 2002 when George Bush Junior has announced the withdrawal of the USA from the Antiballistic Missile Treaty. The former US President in his statement said: *“I have concluded the ABM Treaty hinders our government’s ability to develop ways to protect our people from future terrorist or rogue-state missile attacks”*⁸. It was the main argument for the American withdrawal. George Bush Junior referred to Article XV, paragraph 2 of the ABM Treaty⁹. According to that article the treaty would be in force for an unlimited

⁷ https://www.carnegiecouncil.org/publications/journal/22_1/special_report/001
01.11.2019

⁸ <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2002-01/us-withdrawal-abm-treaty-president-bush%E2%80%99s-remarks-us-diplomatic-notes> 15.09.2019

⁹ Treaty Between The United States Of America And The Union Of Soviet Socialist Republics On The Limitation Of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems (ABM Treaty)., https://media.nti.org/documents/abm_treaty.pdf 15.10.2019

duration. Furthermore, it was emphasised that each side has the right to withdraw from the Treaty in extraordinary circumstances. Namely, if the Treaty somehow jeopardised the interest of any side, both Russia and US would have right to decline the agreement¹⁰. 6 months later his promise entered into force. Vladimir Putin assumed an attitude to Bush's decision in 13th of December 2001. He emphasized that both countries are in possession of the missile defence shields¹¹. At that time US and Russia were sole countries in the world, that had this kind of protection system. However, the new treaty was signed at 24th of May in the same year by Bush and Putin. The treaty which, apart from the obvious goal of reducing arms, was intended to convince the world of uninterrupted cooperation, as well as in a stable relationship between the USA and Russia

In 2007, the idea of the Russian side withdrawing from the treaty was first put forward. In his speech, Putin gave an ultimatum - either the rest of the world will join the treaty or Russia will withdraw. According to the guardian newspaper, the main reason for Putin's fear of withdrawal was the continued development of mid-range nuclear arsenals by China, Pakistan and India¹². Moreover, an additional and unofficial pretext for Russia to withdraw from the treaty was the American plans to build a missile defence system in Poland and the Czech Republic¹³. However, the Kremlin finally rejected this idea and in

¹⁰ Treaty Between The United States Of America And The Union Of Soviet Socialist Republics On The Limitation Of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems (ABM TREATY)., https://media.nti.org/documents/abm_treaty.pdf 15.10.2019

¹¹ *Заявление в связи с объявлением США о выходе в одностороннем порядке из Договора по ПРО 1972 года*, <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/21444> 15.10.2019

¹² Harding L., *Putin threatens withdrawal from cold war nuclear treaty*, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2007/oct/12/russia.usa1> 27.10.2019

¹³ Arbatov A., *MISSILE DEFENCE AND THE INTERMEDIATENUCLEAR FORCES TREATY*, http://www.icnnd.org/Documents/Arbatov_INF_Paper.pdf 27.10.2019

2012 the chief of the Russian General Staff confirmed his resignation from the INF Treaty¹⁴.

The violation of the treaty began when it came to light that Russia was developing new missile system during the last few years. A lot of information about this system is still unknown today, because the creation of a new system was kept as secret from the world. American name for this missile system is SSC-8.¹⁵ According to the New York Times, Russia started to test first infringed cruise missile in 2008. However, the first official American concerns about Russian treaty violation, started appearing in 2013. In response to American accusations, the Russians have raised the subject in their counterargument about plans of installing the Aegis¹⁶ in Romania by Americans. They stated in their defence that this missile system would not necessarily serve as a defence against missiles, but also as an offensive tool¹⁷. According to military-today, the system uses 9M728 and 9M729 long-range cruise missiles with nuclear warheads. US reported the first Russian breach of the conditions of the INF Treaty on July 2014¹⁸. However,

¹⁴ Bohlen A., Burns W., Pifer S., Woodworth J., <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/30-arms-control-pifer-paper.pdf>, 27.10.2019

¹⁵ http://www.military-today.com/missiles/ssc_x_8.htm 20.10.2019

¹⁶ It is a land-based variant that is used to defend against medium and short-range missiles. One has been located in Romania and has been operating since the end of 2019, while the other will be opened in Poland.

Source: <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/romanas-aegis-ashore-now-online-and-can-shoot-down-enemy-missiles-111551>

¹⁷ Gordon M.R., *U.S. Says Russia Tested Cruise Missile, Violating Treaty* <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/29/world/europe/us-says-russia-tested-cruise-missile-in-violation-of-treaty.html> 20.10.2019

¹⁸ *REVIEWNUCLEAR POSTURE REVIEW*, <https://media.defense.gov/2018/Feb/02/2001872886/-1/-1/1/2018-NUCLEAR-POSTURE-REVIEW-FINAL-REPORT.PDF> p.34 20.10.2019

Russia pleaded guilty at the beginning of 2019. Supposedly they were using nuclear missile since 2018¹⁹. The capability of range of the long-range cruise missile system is equal to 1000 km²⁰.

On the 20th of October 2018, Trump announced in his speech the withdrawal of the USA from the INF Treaty. His justification for the announced action was to refer to the actions of Russia and China. Donald Trump told the reporters that “*Russia has not, unfortunately, honoured the agreement, so we're going to terminate the agreement, and we're going to pull out*”²¹.

In response, a Chinese spokeswoman for the Minister of Foreign Affairs asked the United States to reconsider its withdrawal from the Treaty.²² What is more, at the end of 2018, NATO also supported the United States, but this was a move to make Russia comply with the treaty. A month later, Russia hosted a 9M729 - missile system show with a supposed maximum range of 480 km. However, there have been reports that this is false information and that the system has a range of more than 2000 km²³.

Russia rejects the US accusation that it has already developed and deployed a new type of nuclear weapon in Europe - including MK-4, which according to Russians

¹⁹ http://www.military-today.com/missiles/ssc_x_8.htm 20.10.2019

²⁰ Ibidem

²¹ Smith S, Associated Press, *Trump says U.S. will pull out of intermediate range nuke pact, citing Russian violations*, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/trump-says-u%20-s%20-will-pull-out-intermediate-range-nuke-n922501> 21.10.2019

²² Stokes J, Policy Analyst, Security and Foreign Affairs, *China's Missile Program and U.S. Withdrawal from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty*, https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/Research/China%20and%20INF_0.pdf 21.10.2019

²³ Audenaert D., *The End of the INF-Treaty: Context and Consequences*, <http://aei.pitt.edu/98648/1/SPB111.pdf> 21.10.2019

violates the INF Treaty's provisions²⁴. Namely, the system had the ability to fire Tomahawks, which range from 1250 to 2500km²⁵. On the other hand, the U.S. government rejected the allegations and they also assured that they had not violated the terms of the contract during the term of the contract²⁶. However, according to official reports of the Pentagon, the first test took place two weeks after the departure from the INF Treaty. More specifically, it happened on San Nicholas Island, California. It was a missile that had a range of over 500 km²⁷. The Kremlin's position on Trump's decision was unanimous: if the US withdraws from the treaty, the consequences will be felt. Putin announced that not only would he take the same actions as the US, but he also pointed out that all Washington allies who agreed to deploy missiles on their territories would also be targeted²⁸.

On 2nd of February 2019 the United States officially announced the withdrawing from the INF Treaty. In his statement Mike Pompeo explained this decision as a result of the continued violation of the Treaty by Russia ²⁹.

²⁴ ‘Destructive U.S.’: Russia Reacts to INF Treaty Withdrawal, <https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/08/02/destructive-us-russia-reacts-to-inf-treaty-withdrawal-a66680> 21.20.2019

²⁵ <https://missilethreat.csis.org/missile/tomahawk/> 21.20.2019

²⁶ Congressional Research Service, *U.S. Withdrawal from the INF Treaty: What’s Next?* <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/nuke/IF11051.pdf> 21.20.2019

²⁷ Ali I., *U.S. tests first ground-launched cruise missile after INF treaty exit*, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-pentagon-missiles-russia/after-inf-treaty-exit-u-s-tests-ground-launched-cruise-missile-idUSKCN1V91IV> 21.20.2019

²⁸ Congressional Research Service, *U.S. Withdrawal from the INF Treaty: What’s Next?* <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/nuke/IF11051.pdf> 21.20.2019

²⁹ *U.S. Withdrawal from the INF Treaty on August 2, 2019*, <https://www.state.gov/u-s-withdrawal-from-the-inf-treaty-on-august-2-2019/> 12.10.2019

Shortly after Mark Esper's³⁰ announcement³¹ about American plans of placing missiles in Asia, China gave the statement – namely Fu Cong³² said that in case of deploying intermediate-range ground-based, they will not hesitate to use appropriate preventive measures³³.

On 15th of July there was a meeting between Trump and Putin in Geneva. However, during the meeting, no agreement was reached, which moreover Putin announced that if the US withdraws from the treaty, it will not extend the START treaty, which expires in 2021³⁴.

³⁰ Dr. Mark T. Esper, was the Army Secretary in the years 2017-2019, after which he was sworn in as Secretary of Defense in the United States July 23, 2019.

Source: <https://www.defense.gov/Our-Story/Biographies/Biography/Article/1378166/dr-mark-t-esper/>

³¹ Idrees A., “U.S. Defense Secretary says he favors placing missiles in Asia”

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-asia-inf/u-s-defense-secretary-says-he-favors-placing-missiles-in-asia-idUSKCN1UT098>

³² Director of the Weapons Control Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in China.

Source: https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjb_663304/zzjg_663340/jks_665232/

³³ China Warns U.S. Against Sending Missiles to Asia Amid Fears of an Arms Race Yuhas A., <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/06/world/asia/china-us-nuclear-missiles.html> 15.10.2019

³⁴ *US official: ‘disappointing’ Geneva nuclear arms talks with Russia*, https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/inf-treaty_us-official---disappointing--geneva-nuclear-arms-talks-with-russia/44682974 15.10.2019

At the same time, with the development of the Russian missile system, China also began to develop intermediate-range nuclear missiles³⁵. Meanwhile, when the United States and Russia had limited missile capabilities, China has seized the opportunity. For 32 years they were involved in the creation of missiles with a range equal to that which was forbidden by the INF Treaty³⁶. According to some experts, the withdrawal of the United States from the INF Treaty was not directly related to the sinister activities of Russia. Namely, for 32 two years of the treaty's existence, China has significantly benefited from the Treaty³⁷. In this time Asian superpower.

While both the United States and Russia were blocked from participating in the arms race, China invested in the development of anti-missile systems with a range equal to that of the Treaty³⁸.

5. The reasons for the US withdrawal from the treaty

Pranay Vaddi in his article “*Leaving the INF Treaty Won’t Help Trump Counter China*” described three factors, that were recognized as the main reasons for US

³⁵ *The end of the INF Treaty? A pillar of European security architecture at risk*
[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/633175/EPRS_BRI\(2019\)633175_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/633175/EPRS_BRI(2019)633175_EN.pdf) 20.10.2019

³⁶ Erickson A.S. *Good Riddance to the INF Treaty Washington Shouldn’t Tie Its Own Hands in Asia*, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2019-08-29/good-riddance-inf-treaty> 20.10.2019

³⁷ Ibidem

³⁸ Stokes J, Policy Analyst, Security and Foreign Affairs, *China’s Missile Program and U.S. Withdrawal from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty*, https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/Research/China%20and%20INF_0.pdf 15.10.2019

withdrawal for the Treaty. First of all, there is the economical aspect, namely these prohibited missile systems are much cheaper than the regular platforms (as sea or air ones). The other thing is that from the defence point of view, US wanted to have leverage over the China (in the form of a deterrent). The last but not least, was the situation that had taken place in August, intermediate-range missile systems which are based on the ground, are more durable than the other kinds³⁹.

The main domestic issue connected to the allowance of building intermediate-range missile systems is money. The major inside problem is mutual disagreement between Democrats and Republicans⁴⁰.

If it comes about the allies of US, like Japan, South Korea, Australia or Taiwan, they disagree with Washington's decision. These four countries have tried to work on good relations with China during last few years. The withdrawal from the INF Treaty will cause placing the intermediate-range missile systems on their areas, and this action will have some bad influence on positive relations with China⁴¹.

Alexander Lanoszka in his paper mentions two reasons why the United States withdrew from the Treaty. Both are strictly linked to China. First of all, the US does not want to lead one of their major rivals in the world to outdo them in arms. Therefore, as mentioned earlier in this work, they need a repellent. As the second reason, the author of "The INF Treaty: Pulling out in time" believes that this is a factor that will cause China and Russia to compete more. Lanoszka in his work mentioned that Russia is expressing increasing concern about Chinese weapons. Therefore, in this strategic aspect, the US hope that China's Russian rivalry will result in less focus on China and its allies. Good

³⁹ Vaddi P., *Leaving the INF Treaty Won't Help Trump Counter China*, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/01/31/leaving-inf-treaty-won-t-help-trump-counter-china-pub-78262> 17.10.2019

⁴⁰ Ibidem

⁴¹ Ibidem

relations between Washington's two biggest rivals raise their concerns, which is why their goal is to drive a wedge between them⁴².

In turn according to Pel Maria Denisovna⁴³, comparing the times of the Cold War with the present, the number of players has increased at this time. Namely, before the signing of the INF treaty, both the US and the USSR were the most serious players in the world, having the most weapons. In the meantime other countries started to arm themselves, using in part the treaty, limiting the maneuvering field of Russia and the USA. Now the world has moved on and other countries have started competing against each other in a race from which Russia and the United States have been disqualified. Not only China is involved but also India, Pakistan and North Korea⁴⁴.

6. Conclusions

The INF treaty is another agreement signed during the Cold War from which the United States withdrew. Each time the USA gave a transparent reason for departing from the treaty. Historical treaties were of great importance during tense relations in the 70s, when the international game was played between these two powers. However, the world's system has changed significantly, and Washington's main threat is not just Russia. During the Cold War, the United States was practically a hegemon. In the multipolar world, more and more powers are emerging that strive to be a leader in many aspects, including the armaments. It is difficult to assess whether Washington's decision was good, because on the one hand a response to Putin's arbitrary actions was needed. On the other hand, this can only be seen as an excuse for Trump, who felt threatened by

⁴² A. Lanoszka, "The INF treaty pulling out in time", https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333429707_The_INF_Treaty_Pulling_Out_in_Time 08.05.2020

⁴³ A researcher studying American culture, a member of the Russian scientific community, who also lectures at the School of Young Journalists of the Moscow State Institute. She is also the editor-in-chief of the blog in the Moscow Youth Department of the Russian Society of Political Scientists.

⁴⁴ https://russiancouncil.ru/blogs/mosmolrop/34996/?sphrase_id=36301550 05.05.2020

China, Iran or India, who in recent years have started working on the development of intermediate-range nuclear missiles.

Currently, the only agreement linking the former Soviet Union with the largest country in North America is START, which expires in 2021 and is unlikely to be extended. A lot can happen without the restrictions between Russia and the United States.

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