

# INTRODUCTION

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Russia-U.S. relations are at their lowest point since the end of the Cold War. Since 2014 such statements have been made every year with less and less optimism. The fabric of the bilateral dialogue has unraveled: currently, the official dialogue leaves much to be desired. Pessimism has permeated any discussion of the future of bilateral relations: most of the time it is hard to expect that the two countries will stabilize their tensions, let alone cooperate.

Yet, there is an acute need for such cooperation – especially on nuclear issues, where Moscow and Washington are by virtue of being two biggest nuclear powers have a special role and special responsibility. The New START extension is an example of such cooperation. In the past, there has been plenty of cooperation-game cases, the most spectacular one being the negotiating the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). This landmark international agreement has crucial importance in averting the dangers of further encroachment of nuclear weapons.

Now that the NPT is being eroded, great power cooperation is desperately needed. Regrettably, in the recent years, the NPT diplomacy has been moving away from this concept. The 2018 and 2019 PrepComs, in particular, resembled the good old days of the Cold War in terms of the rhetoric used but not in terms of mutual respect the two superpowers had for each other at that time.

The purpose of this book is to remind of the cases where savvy diplomacy managed to reconcile the stances of Russia (the Soviet Union) and the United States on the crucial issues of nuclear nonproliferation. Constructive, mutually respectful interaction between the two countries has never been easy to achieve and sustain. Yet, doing so has neither been impossible, to which the monograph is a testament.

The monograph crowns a five-years-long dialogue effort by PIR Center and James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies (CNS), which was launched in the wake of the failed 2015 NPT Review Conference. The objective of this Track 2.5 dialogue involving government officials, expert community, and the next generation of nuclear policy professionals was two-fold. On the one hand, our ambition was to look backward and try to distill the lessons learned from the fifty years of nonproliferation-related exchanges between Moscow and Washington. On the other, the two think tanks aspired to look forward and provide recommendations that would be useful to restart the bilateral dialogue – at least on the matters of mutual concern and interest. NPT is certainly one of such areas.

The monograph the esteemed readers have in their hands was designed to cover both parts of this equation. By analyzing a variety of cases of bilateral interaction ranging from arms control to peaceful uses of nuclear energy on nuclear security, the authors try to distill the lessons learned from those experiences. That does not mean that those lessons should be treated as an absolute truth with the past cooperation being romanticized as some Golden Age. The cases discussed in this book are the children of their epoch and were conditioned by concrete historical realities. All of the exchanges discussed in this monograph were not exempt from errors, and it is the hope of the editors that learning on those errors will be helpful for the future generations of U.S. and Russian diplomats working in the nuclear field.

The experience of such dialogue between Russian and American experts shows that U.S.-Russian dialogue is not dead as many are tempted to believe. The bilateral relationship still has some promise, which, of course, is not unlimited and which deserves to be explored.

As the objective both PIR Center and CNS had in mind was to ensure a future for the bilateral dialogue, it was a natural choice to fuse the expertise of long-time nuclear nonproliferation professionals and the zeal of those who are only making first steps in their respective careers. The unique dual-degree MA program in WMD nonproliferation and nuclear policy jointly organized by MGIMO-University, Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, and PIR Center has been an incredible source of talents to this end.

The monograph consists of five parts and fifteen chapters dedicated to a certain issue in the Soviet/Russia-U.S. dialogue on nuclear nonproliferation. **Part I** focuses on Soviet/Russia-U.S. dialogue on

NPT negotiations and extension. This part of the monograph is inaugurated by three chapters on how the Soviet Union (Russia) and the United States negotiated Articles I, II, and X of the NPT and prepared for and participated in the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference.

**Chapter 1 by Daria Selezneva** explores the history of bilateral negotiations on the core articles of NPT – Articles I, II as well as on discussions pertaining to the concept of NATO MLF as the main obstacle for the conclusion of the Treaty. Although the NPT was struck in 1968, the discussion of those negotiations has not lost policy relevance since the debate on whether NATO nuclear sharing arrangements are in line with NPT obligations is ongoing between Russia and the United States.

**Chapter 2 by Daria Selezneva** continues the analysis of the NPT negotiations, focusing on the “technical” article of the Treaty – Article X – governing the procedures on withdrawal from the Treaty. The North Korean withdrawal from NPT in 2003 incentivized the debates on whether the Article should be reinforced by additional provisions, with the relevant policy discussion being reflected in the Chapter.

The experience of the 1995 NPTREC, described in **Chapter 3 by Daria Selezneva**, is particularly illustrative of the U.S.-Russian cooperation potential. The author posits that the concerted approach of the United States and Russia was instrumental in reaching the indefinite extension of the NPT. Together with other P5 nations, Moscow and Washington managed to bring as many NNWS as possible to their side through persuasion, pressure, and, at times, even blackmail.

Part I is concluded with **Chapter 4 by Aleksandr Kolbin** taking a deep dive into the dynamics of Soviet/Russian leadership to the cooperation with the United States on nuclear nonproliferation. Relying upon the available archival documents and literature, Aleksandr Kolbin examines three layers of Soviet/Russian motivation to cooperate with the United States on the issues of nuclear nonproliferation. According to the author, interaction on equal footing, where each party has an important contribution to make, is the essential component of successful engagement between Moscow and Washington.

The bilateral exchanges on the regional challenges to the nuclear nonproliferation regime are discussed in **Part II**. The chapters

by Adlan Margoev, Petr Topychkanov, and Natalia Artemenkova provide case studies of the Iranian nuclear program, WMDFZ in the Middle East, and nuclear proliferation in South Asia. Evidently, the list of regional cases is longer, and the history of bilateral interaction on the prospects for nuclear proliferation in Latin America in 1970–1980s, Iraq, DPRK are still waiting for their researchers.

In **Chapter 5 Petr Topychkanov** considers the Soviet/Russia-U.S. dialogue on nuclear development in South Asia up until the nuclear tests that India and Pakistan conducted in 1998. The author argues that despite some differences in strategic positions and a crisis in bilateral relations, Moscow and Washington managed to establish a permanent channel for exchanging views on the nuclear programs of India and Pakistan. The chapter examines the approaches of the American and Soviet leadership towards the creation of a nuclear-free zone in Asia, as well as the constant mutual monitoring of the nuclear potential in the region, the American and Soviet-Russian voting protocols at the UN, which emphasize the strategic interests of both players in the region.

**Chapter 6 by Adlan Margoev** discusses the phases of the Russia-U.S. dialogue on the Iranian nuclear program. The author traces the roots of Russian-American disagreements and identifies four stages of bilateral cooperation between Moscow and Washington on the issue ranging from the U.S. attempts to adjust the Russian policy vis-à-vis Iran to Russia's role in facilitating the dialogue on the Iranian nuclear program. He concludes that Russia would be an essential player in facilitating Washington's diplomatic engagement with Tehran in the future.

**Chapter 7 by Natalia Artemenkova** analyzes Russia-U.S. dialogue on the potential establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction (WMDFZ) in the Middle East. The chapter provides comprehensive coverage of Russia-U.S. engagement from the moment of the Soviet initiative to create a WMDFZ in the Middle East in 1958 until 2020 and analyzes key factors driving Moscow's and Washington's stances on the issue.

**Part III** focuses on the disarmament pillar of bilateral cooperation within the NPT. The part is inaugurated by **Chapter 8 written by Amb. Yuri Nazarkin**, the head of the Soviet delegation at START I negotiations. Amb. Nazarkin discusses such challenges to the negotiation process as the USSR's insistence on linking offensive and defensive weapons, the desire of both parties to use differences

in strategic forces to their advantage, and domestic opposition to negotiations. Based on his first-hand experience, he describes the negotiations of various provisions of the Treaty and the military logic underlying their inclusion into the text.

**In Chapter 9 Vladislav Chernavskikh** examines Soviet and American official approaches to nuclear disarmament and the idea of global zero. The author identifies the most fruitful periods of bilateral cooperation on the issue, including the campaign for international control over nuclear weapons in the late 1940s, the disarmament discourse of the 1960s leading to the inclusion of Article VI in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Gorbachev period marked by abolitionist beliefs.

**Chapter 10 by Vladislav Chernavskikh** continues the discussion of Russian and American approaches to global zero. The author explores the evolution of nuclear disarmament discourse within the NPT Review Process and discusses arms control negotiations throughout the post-Soviet era.

**Chapter 11 by Collin McDowell** analyzes the factors that impact the interpretation of strategic stability by the Russian Federation and the United States of America and how these factors have evolved over the time period of 2010–2020. This chapter achieves this through the analysis of certain doctrinal documents, including various iterations of the Russian Military Doctrine and the 2020 Basic Principles of State Policy of the Russian Federation on Nuclear Deterrence, as well as the American Nuclear Posture Reviews of 2010 and 2018. The aim of this chapter is to delineate areas of difference and commonality between the two countries' interpretations of strategic stability in the hopes that areas of common understanding can be found.

**Chapter 12 by Nikita Degtyarev and Sergey Semenov**, continues the discussion of NATO nuclear sharing arrangements from a different angle. While conventionally these arrangements are described as an abridged version of the MLF concept, available archival documents suggest that nuclear sharing in its current form was forming in parallel with the discussion of the MLF concept. The authors compare the U.S. and Soviet approaches to the deployment of nuclear weapons outside of national territories to see if the Soviet Union indeed adopted the same interpretation of Articles I, II as the United States as well as analyze the reasons that prompted Russia to raise the issue publicly in 2014.

**Part IV** focuses on the issue of peaceful uses of nuclear energy and nuclear security. This area gained prominence in bilateral relations only in the 1990s, when the concerns about the security of the former Soviet nuclear arsenal prompted the United States to provide assistance to Russia.

**In Chapter 13 Alexey Polyakov** examines the experience of bilateral cooperation to secure the Russian nuclear arsenal within the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program (also known as Nunn-Lugar program), G8 Global Partnership, and the Global Initiative to Combat Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT). The author provides a detailed overview of each of these programs and distills the lessons to be learned from cooperation in this area.

The end of the Cold War also made possible commercial nuclear projects between the two former foes. Based on the documents from the Clinton archive as well as interviews with former decision-makers in the nuclear field, **Veronika Bedenko in Chapter 14** analyzes the patterns of cooperation within the HEU-LEU agreement and the Plutonium Managements and Disposition Agreement (PMDA). The author posits that the two projects literally allowed to turn the megatons of former weapons stockpiles into megawatts and that the potential of bilateral engagement in the area of peaceful uses is not exhausted.

Finally, **Part V** focuses on the overview of the patterns of the Russia-U.S. nonproliferation and arms control dialogue under various U.S. administrations, from Clinton to Trump.

**Chapter 15 by Evgenii Kholodnov** is aimed to study the Russia-U.S. dialogue on arms control under Presidents Yeltsin and Clinton by analyzing declassified transcripts of phone calls and personal meetings between Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin. This chapter presents Russian-American cooperation on the nuclear weapons removal from the territory of Ukraine, Iran nuclear and missile programs, the HEU-LEU agreement, and the Nunn-Lugar program. The author provides key insights into the Clinton archives in order to determine whether the Yeltsin-Clinton dialogue on strategic stability is a benchmark for future Russia-U.S. cooperation.

**Chapter 16 by Anastasia Ponamareva and Sergey Ponamarev** explores the patterns in the U.S. policy under George Bush Jr. and Barack Obama. The authors argue that there is more continuity than change in the U.S. policy vis-à-vis nuclear issues. According to them, the so-called "operational code" in the Russia-U.S. coopera-

tion between the military and political establishment in the nuclear sphere.

**Chapter 17 by Sergey Semenov** deals with the bilateral exchanges on nuclear nonproliferation (or, rather, the lack thereof) under the Trump administration. By analyzing the two countries' stances in the 2017–2021 NPT Review Cycle, the author tries to discern the reasons for the increasing bilateral confrontation on nuclear nonproliferation, especially given that on several occasions have underpinned that this area is of shared interest for both Moscow and Washington. This author seeks to determine whether the current lack of Russia-U.S. cooperation is an aberration or the new normal.

**The Conclusions** attempt at bringing the multifaceted chapters of the book to a common denominator. Based on the previous chapter, **Vladimir Orlov and Sergey Semenov** discuss the periodization of the bilateral dialogue on nuclear nonproliferation and the traits of the dialogue Moscow and Washington see as desirable in the future interaction. While the previous patterns of cooperation were the children of their time and cannot be replicated in their original form, the editors posit that learning the previous lessons is essential to define the future role of bilateral engagement in solidifying the nuclear nonproliferation regime.

Finally, the **Reflections** provide initial reactions to this volume or to the major issues raised in this monograph by top Russian practitioners dealing with nuclear nonproliferation and arms control whom the editors briefed on this project and with whom shared the manuscript. The section includes pieces authored by Gen. Evgeny Maslin, former head of the 12<sup>th</sup> Main Directorate of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, Hon. Sergey Ryabkov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, and Amb. Anatoly Antonov, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the United States.