THE BILATERAL IMPACT OF NUCLEAR AGREEMENTS BETWEEN
THE UNITED STATES AND RUSSIAN

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ABSTRACT

Kristal Bird: The Bilateral Impact of Nuclear Agreements Between the United States and Russia
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The dyadic relationship between the United States and Russia is complicated due to differing political and economic ideologies, especially after World War II. The arms race through the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, exaggerated their differences. However, the procurement of nuclear weapons from both states forced them into an unlikely partnership. How did nuclear technology impact their bilateral relationship besides arms control issues? In this paper, I argue that the policies created within this partnership went beyond discussions of armament and would not have been possible without two near-equal powers. First, I review the literature regarding their bilateral partnership and decision-making. Secondly, I address three nuclear policy case studies followed by a subsequent analysis of patterns and observations. The paper concludes with an assessment of how nuclear technology enabled the two states to create non-nuclear policies.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

GDP    gross domestic product
PPP    purchasing power parity
US     United States
USSR   Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
NPT    Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NTI    nuclear threat initiative
SALT   Strategic Arms Limitation Talks
START  Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
SORT   Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty
NATO   North Atlantic Treaty Organization
ABM    anti-ballistic missile
ICBM   intercontinental ballistic missile
SLBM   submarine-launched ballistic missile
WTO    World Trade Organization
CSCE   Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Senator Lindsey Graham of the Armed Services Committee, declared in July 2014 that Russia and Italy have a similar sized economy.\(^1\) Comparing the GDP of Russia and Italy in 2015, Russia had a estimated GDP of $1.268 trillion and Italy had an estimated GDP of $1.852 trillion. Russia’s GDP per capita (PPP) was estimated at $26,100, $26,300, and $27,300 in 2016, 2015, and 2014, respectively. While Italy’s GDP per capita (PPP) was estimated at $36,300, $36,300, $36,000 in 2016, 2015, and 2014, respectively. Despite the comparison of Russia’s economy to Italy’s, the United States does not negotiate with Italy as they do with Russia. This is in large part due to Russia’s nuclear capability. Additionally, Russia remains at the forefront of the United States foreign policy security issues because of their historically aggressive political behavior and military tactics. In conjunction to their known erratic actions, Russia is the only state that can compete and currently exceeds the size of the United States nuclear arsenal. Not only does Russia have nuclear capabilities, but combined with the United States, they possess more than 90% of the world’s nuclear warheads, according to US Department of Defense, Arms Control Association as of January 2017.\(^2\) Russia establishment and stockpile of nuclear weapons has led to the two states to negotiate nuclear policies since the early 1960s. Both the United States and Russia have the aligned interest of reducing the number of nuclear weapons throughout the world and limiting the development of new nuclear powers.

At the end of World War II, although the Soviet Union suffered massive devastation, which included the death of millions of people, destroyed infrastructure, and crippled their economy, they were still considered a global superpower. The arms race which started in the

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\(^1\) Lauren Carroll, *Graham: Russia 'has an economy the size of Italy'*; (DC, Politifact, 2014).  
1940s exaggerated their differences\(^3\) and in 1949 the Soviet Union became the second country to
develop nuclear capabilities. This led to extreme global tension, prompting the Cold War.
Additionally, the differing political, economic, and military strategies of the Soviet Union and
the United States created extreme competition. After the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1968, it became
apparent that the Soviet Union was a nuclear superpower and a significant national security
threat to the United States. If the Soviet Union had not possessed the nuclear weapons
necessary to threaten the United States from Cuba, their negotiating power would have been
limited.

The Cuban Missile Crisis led to the negotiation of The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of
Nuclear Weapons (NPT)\(^4\), which is the gateway, multilateral international treaty leading the
world towards preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, nuclear technology, and nuclear
capabilities. The Treaty, which opened for signatures in 1968 and entered into force in 1970,
represents a recognition for the global need for nuclear disarmament.\(^5\) Signed by 191 states,
more than any other treaty, the NPT paved the way for future negotiations and treaties between
nuclear-weapon states. “The United States and Russia have a special responsibility to work
together,” states Andrew Bieniawski, vice president for material security and minimization at
the Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI), a nonprofit based in Washington, D.C., that promotes
nonproliferation.\(^6\) When the two states met, nuclear non-proliferation treaties were at the
forefront of discussions, however, other significant policies were created as a direct result of the
summits. Researching the summits regarding nuclear weapons non-proliferation that took place
involving the former Soviet Union, later Russia, and the United States it is important to
understand how these summits and agreements affected their relationship. It is essential to look

\(^4\) Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) – UNODA.” (DC, United Nations, 1968).
\(^5\) Ibid.
at the impact these treaties had on nuclear arms control, such as reducing nuclear weapons, combatting nuclear terrorism, securing the Iran Nuclear deal, addressing the North Korean threat, and eliminating chemical weapons in Syria. However, the negotiations expanded past nuclear issues and throughout the years led to discussions and agreements regarding human rights, protection of the environment, economic growth, business partnerships, joint space exploration, and increased freedom of travel. These additional agreements led to greater stability and growing friendly relations.

There are scholars, such as Carter and Stent, who argue that nuclear capabilities and negotiations did not provide a strategic advantage, the creation of a successful relationship, and did not aid in policy discussions even when it comes to common goals. I counter this argument and make the claim that nuclear capabilities provided the balance and platform necessary for two disagreeing superpowers to negotiate and form a partnership. However, there has been a lot written on the process of negotiation between U.S. and the former Soviet Union on arms control, such as Joseph Pilat, stating that bilateral arms control efforts over the past decades have provided usefulness to the challenges of U.S.-Russian engagement in Europe and future multilateral arms control efforts. On a similar note, Adler and Pouliot argue that deterrence and arms control strategy allowed the Soviet Union and the United States to share expectations of proper action. This led both adversaries to rationally weigh policy options according to common knowledge of the situation. While this line of rational is the beginning of what my paper argues, I take the argument even further to state that not only did the negotiations of nuclear arms controls between U.S. and the Soviet Union advance their relationship but it also moved discussions beyond disarmament and into other regional and global issues. The literature regarding whether or not arms control talks fueled more arm controls talks and the effect it had on their bilateral relationship is plentiful, however, the literature is lacking in whether arms


negotiation had a significant impact on policies outside of nuclear weapons. In this paper, I argue that the nuclear powers played a significant role in other forming other policies.

This paper is divided into five chapters, an introduction, a literature review, case studies, an analysis, and a conclusion. In the second chapter I will summarize the literature on foreign policy decision-making as well as the partnership and history between the United States and Russia. The third chapter will address three significant case studies of nuclear policies: the SALT I, START I, and SORT agreements, followed by a fourth chapter that will provide an analysis of the implications that these cases have had on the evolution of bilateral diplomatic relations. Finally, the paper will conclude in chapter five with insight into how these summits created the platform to discuss other issues, including, the Helsinki Final Act, the Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection, and the creation of a NATO-Russia Council. While cooperation between two nuclear super-powers is essential to disarmament and non-proliferation, this paper demonstrates the significance that this cooperation has had on issues that might not have otherwise been addressed.

Section 1.2 Methodology

Research Question: Other than nuclear-nonproliferation, how did strategic arms talks between the United States and Russia impact other issues including their bilateral relationship?

In order to answer this question, I will look at case studies of three nuclear agreements that involve Russia and the United States. The first case study, SALT I, was signed in 1972, the second case study, START I, was signed in 1991 and went into effect in 1994, the third case study, SORT, was signed in 2003. These three case studies established a cohesive and linear relationship of non-proliferation between the two states since the onset of the NPT in 1970. While the NPT is a multilateral, international treaty, it significantly paved the way for the two nuclear super-powers to work together bilaterally, in an effort to limit and reduce their respective nuclear capabilities. While there are other nuclear agreements and treaties that have been made since the start of the NPT, through an analysis of three case studies, including the years leading up to and the years after each agreement, a consistent timeline between 1970 and
today is established providing an overall idea of the bilateral relationship. Additionally, these agreements provide the framework for additional non-proliferation agreements shown through the attempt to ratify new treaties, such as SALT II and START II, neither of which were entered into force. The New START treaty entered into force in February of 2011, however it is not one of the case studies in this paper. An analysis of the New Start treaty would provide uncertain results and a speculation of the impact due the newness of the treaty. Documents and records that are still currently classified would be necessary to review in order to comprehend the impact that the treaty has had or will have on topics other than the reduction of nuclear weapons. Additionally, the New Start treaty is still in effect, which makes discussions of the impact it may or may not have had just speculation. The three case studies that are highlighted in this paper, have all expired and/or have been replaced by the New Start treaty.

The research strategy for this paper is a qualitative method of research using policy reports, treaty documents, senate hearings, and presidential speeches through sources such as the United Nations and the US State department. This information was obtained through historical, declassified presidential meeting notes between the presidents of the United States and Russia. Records of the Russian Duma and the United States Senate was also researched to determine facts about each case study. Full treaty documents can be assessed through bibliographic annotations. A qualitative analysis is the best way to answer the research question and understand the impact nuclear non-proliferation agreements have had in areas other than nuclear weapons.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review will first focus on what has been published about arms control negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States, it will provide a overall of the relationship of the two states starting from the Cold War period. Second, it will focus on theories of foreign-policy decision making to provide an understanding of how global leaders discuss and create successful policies. This literature review will provide a basic level of knowledge in the topic of the United States and the Soviet Union regarding arms control negotiation and policy decision-making.

Section 2.1 US-Russia Relations

After the end of WWII, four countries were known as the primary victors of the war, they were recognized as the “Big Four” by the United Nations in 1942 and controlled allied policies, these countries were the United States, United Kingdom, Soviet Union, and the Republic of China. William T.R. Fox, a Columbia University professor of American foreign coined the term “superpower” in 1944, and classified only the United States, United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union as global superpowers. However, because of the devastation that WWII left in the United Kingdom, the United States and the Soviet Union were the only countries that were still able to be classified as superpowers by Fox’s definition. They each had the intelligence, economic, military, and technological capabilities to influence and shape the world. The United States and the Soviet Union had differing views of how the world should be, the outreaching influences of each state created competition between spreading United States values of

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democracy and capitalism, versus Soviet Union values of communism and Marxism throughout the globe.

The signing of the Warsaw Pact drastically polarized Europe, and made a very clear divide between the West and the East, the polarization included key clashes of values such as democracy and communism. Both states’ foreign policy was heavily expansionist during this time and each side believed that their way of life needed to be far reaching and shown to the world. The Soviet Union had the desire to spread communism and social justice throughout the world, while the United States believed that free markets and liberal democracy was the only answer. Both sides could make appealing arguments, the Soviet Union in the context of social justice and the United States in the context of prosperity and freedom. In reality, each state had their own downfalls; whether it be the lack of freedom in the Soviet Union or the racial, gender, and religious injustices that existed in the United States. It was nearly impossible for either side to see the negative elements in their own way of life or the benefits of the other sides.

Competition drove both states after WWII and throughout the Cold War. The most notable competition was the nuclear arms race through the 1950s and 1960s. However, after the 1960s, the Bay of Pigs in 1968, and the signing of the INF in 1970, the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union changed. Although they were still in the middle of the Cold War, it became apparent to both sides that neither was going anywhere and that they would have to come to terms with working together on certain issues, such as arms control.

April Carter discusses the negotiations of arms control between the United States and the Soviet Union, and analyzes case studies including the test ban talks in 1955, SALT I and II, the INF, and START in her book *Success and Failure in Arms Control Negotiations*. Her main argument concludes that neither superpower has pursued arms control with the objective of actually reducing their nuclear stockpiles. Rather, both states have gone into negotiations with the intention of gaining a diplomatic advantage over the other. The arms race fuels nuclear technology and weapon development, which can lead to the blocking of significant arms
reduction treaties by lobbyist, military, and corporations.\textsuperscript{11} She also argues that the excessive number of nuclear weapons does not provide a strategic advantage or provide a reduction in the likelihood of war. Additionally, she calls for a radical reduction in nuclear armaments.\textsuperscript{12} Stent argues in her book, \textit{The Limits of Partnership: U.S.-Russian Relations in the Twenty-First Century}, that the partnership between the United States and Russia consists of reoccurring cycles of progress followed by backsliding.\textsuperscript{13} She states that the differences between the two states derail successful relations, even when it comes to working together on common goals, such as arms control or counter-terrorism. Her book provides an overview of US-Russia relations starting in 1992 until 2013. She states the reoccurring challenge that the post-Soviet states and European security play in the bilateral relationship.\textsuperscript{14} Conradi writes, ‘It is difficult to pinpoint the precise moment at which relations between Russia and the West went wrong, it may be that there was never a moment at which they were going right.’\textsuperscript{15} He also states that the relationship between Russia and the West has had perpetual successes and failures, although they have at times been able to work together towards a common goal, the partnership is fleeting. Legvold continues on this same train of thought claiming that the differences between the two states has ruined cooperation on a multitude of issues, including nuclear arms reduction and non-proliferation. According to Legvold, the differences threaten to ‘cripble efforts to come to grips with the 21st century’s new challenges’, including climate change, terrorism, and cyber crimes.\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid. 129-143.
Section 2.2 Foreign Policy Decision Making

This next section will provide a brief highlight of three foreign policy decision-making theories, understanding the complexities of foreign policy decision-making will provide an overall understanding of the process of policy making. The leading decision-making theory in foreign policy is the rational actor model, having been recognized in the foreign policy field for decades. Another influential theory is the cybernetic model, accounting for complexities and organizational decision-making in foreign policy. The poliheuristic model, although the newest model, has emerged as a leading theory in understanding foreign policy decision-making. This theory has revolutionized the analysis of foreign policy decisions. The factors that affect foreign policy decisions vary greatly, but include economics, type of government, military capabilities, beliefs, values, and geopolitics. These theories take into account, in varying degrees, the impact that these factors have on a foreign policy decision. The case study illustrates how each of the three theories accounts for domestic, international, economic, and psychological factors.

The rational actor model assesses a decision based on a cost and benefit analysis that analyzes all alternatives. The goal of the model is to maximize profits and minimize costs, the model assumes that the decision-maker has full access to all influential factors and is able to calculate the best option with the highest gain.\textsuperscript{17} While this is the most well-known model, it requires an exhaustive search and analysis of all possible outcomes, alternatives, and consequences. The cybernetic model accounts and controls for uncertainties through the use of highly complex programmed responses. Decision-makers in this model do not assess alternate outcomes, or pursue their own objectives. At the collective level, the organizational is most often hierarchical, and the decision-making process is segmented but determined by established procedures.\textsuperscript{18} A major concern with this model in regards to foreign policy decision-making analysis is how critical constraints can be established in complex, unprecedented situations.


\textsuperscript{18} John Steinbruner, \textit{The cybernetic theory of decision: new dimensions of political analysis}, (Princeton, University Press, 1974), 79.
The poliheuristic model was developed in order to understand foreign policy decision-making in a better and more efficient way than previous models allowed. This model is a two-stage decision-making process that combines the cognitive and rationalist schools of thought. During the first stage the cognitive school of thought on decision-making is used. This allows the actor to approach the options available systematically and enables the actor to come to a decision faster, while understanding that the decision may contain biases. This process quickly eliminates options that are unacceptable to the decision-maker, without requiring him to do a complete cost and benefit analysis on each available option. During the second stage, the rationalist school of thought is used. The actor analyzes the remaining options and chooses the option that has the highest utility value. The field of foreign policy decision-making is a thriving and interesting subfield of international relations. While there is not necessarily a correct way to analyze foreign policy decision-making in order to understand the impact of the specific policy, this review highlights three specific models. It is important to have background theoretical information in order to understand how political leaders discuss and negotiate policy decisions. The following sections of this paper will offer a theory on the benefits arms control negotiations and policies have had in the bilateral relationship between the United States and Russia.

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20 Alex Mintz, *Understanding foreign policy decision making*, (Cambridge, University Press, 2010).
CHAPTER 3: CASE STUDIES

Section 3.1 Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT 1)

The SALT 1 led to the agreements which limited both Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) defensive systems and strategic nuclear offensive systems. The agreement limited the existing levels of land-based intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) launchers, as well as the number of submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBM). It was also agreed upon to not to begin construction of new launchers upon the signing of the treaty, although there were provisions allowing each party to modernize or replace strategic office ballistic missiles.\(^{21}\) The Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty was an agreement that restricted each state to two ABM deployment areas as to prevent one state from having an impenetrable region or defense zone. In essence, the ABM Treaty limited strategic missile defenses to 100 interceptors and 100 launchers each and allowed each side to construct two missile defense sites, one to protect the national capital, the other to protect one ICBM field, although they had to be at least 1,300 kilometers apart.\(^{22}\) This agreement wasn’t about the abolition of nuclear weapons, but rather the limitations of both sides offensive and defensive strategic systems.

Section 3.1.1 History Before Agreement

The strategic arms limitation talks started in 1967 between US President Johnson and Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin, however, the formal SALT meetings began at the end of 1969 in Helsinki and the agreement was finalized and signed in May 1972 by US President Nixon and Soviet General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev. After the Cuban Missile Crisis, beginning in the late 1960s there was a détente and the Cold War was seemingly starting to thaw. Both sides were economically drained due to military expenses from the nuclear arms race. Nixon announced in

\(^{21}\) Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT I), (DC, NTI, 2011).

1971 his New Economic Policy, signifying the end of the Bretton Woods system that was created after the end of World War II. America’s involvement in the war in Vietnam was coming to an end and Nixon had hopes of creating an economic policy that could “create a new prosperity without war.” The Vietnam War was not the only conflict that was occurring in Asia, additionally, there was a war between India and Pakistan, which not only led to the secession of East Pakistan and the independent state of Bangladesh, but also led to a decline of US power in South Asia, and an increase in the relationship between India and the Soviet Union.

There was a battle between communism and democracy throughout the world since the end of World War II, but there was a hard fought battle specifically in Latin America during this time period. Chile was one of the greatest recipients of US aid, including foreign aid and covert operations. However after ‘the Pinochet coup’, a military coup in 1970, which had implications of US involvement, Pinochet was named President of Chile. Unfortunately, for the United States, he dismantled congress and announced that there would no longer be elections in the country. This not only ended democracy in Chile, but had greater implications in the communist-democratic battle that was being fought throughout Latin America and globally between the Soviet Union and the United States.

Section 3.1.2 History After Agreement

At the Moscow Summit of 1972, Brezhnev and Nixon agreed on other accords apart from the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty and the ABM treaty, including the US-Soviet Incidents at Sea agreement, the Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection, and agreements on future joint space operations to include Apollo-Soyuz Test Project.

The Washington Summit of 1973, Brezhnev and Nixon signed historical policy agreements, including the Basic Principles of Negotiations on the Further Limitation of Strategic

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Offensive Arms\textsuperscript{26} and the Agreement Between the US and the USSR on the Prevention of Nuclear War\textsuperscript{27}, which were signed on June 21st and 22nd, respectively. The Moscow Summit of 1974 set the background for the signing of the Threshold Test Ban Treaty, which prohibited nuclear tests which produced more than 150 kilotons of explosive force.\textsuperscript{28} The Helsinki Final Act signed in 1975, may be the most significant diplomatic agreement to come after the signing of the SALT 1 in 1972, and unrelated to nuclear weapons. At this time, in August 1975, the United States and the Soviet Union had been working successfully together diplomatically to create effective policies. The Helsinki Accords were signed at the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe after a two years of negotiations by all of the countries of Europe, except Albania, the Soviet Union, the United States, and Canada. Although the accords were initially brought forward to eliminate tensions between Western Europe and the Soviet Bloc, every nation that signed it agreed to respect human rights and guaranteed certain freedoms.\textsuperscript{29} SALT II negotiations began in November 1972 with the intension to replace the short-term agreement of SALT 1 with a long-term comprehensive treaty. In November 1974, President Ford and General Secretary Brezhnev reached an agreement on the basic elements for the framework of the treaty. In Geneva at the beginning of 1975, a Joint Draft Text was prepared although there were still disagreements on major issues. After years of negotiations and proposals, in Vienna on June 18, 1979, the completed SALT 2 agreement was signed by President Carter and General Secretary Brezhnev.\textsuperscript{30} The treaty was never ratified by the United States Congress, due to Carter requesting Senate majority leader to postpone consideration after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan on December 24, 1979.

\textsuperscript{26} Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents (vol. 9, p. 812).

\textsuperscript{27} Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents (vol. 9, p. 892).

\textsuperscript{28} US Congress. Senate, Threshold Test Ban and Peaceful Nuclear Explosions treaties, (US Congress, 2002).

\textsuperscript{29} The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica, Helsinki Accords, (Chicago, Britannica, 2012).

Section 3.1.3 Declining Relationship

In the simplest of terms, the friendly relationship that was developing in spite of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union ended due to Soviet aggression. The invasion of Afghanistan was the only time that the USSR invaded a country outside of the Eastern Bloc during the Cold War and it was immediately condemned almost globally. Afghanistan has a rich history, which includes a British invasion and rule twice in the mid-1800s, the Soviet invasion in the 1979 and the implementation of a Soviet communist government until 1989, and lastly the US-led invasion that started in 2001, although US forces are currently still in Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{31} The events leading to the Soviet invasion, while important aren’t necessary to understand the effects the invasion had on the developing diplomatic relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union. During President Carter’s State of the Union address, he denounced power by states that is “used to initiate a threat to the security of any nation”.\textsuperscript{32} Additionally Carter stated,

“And in the 1970’s three American Presidents negotiated with the Soviet leaders in attempts to halt the growth of the nuclear arms race. We sought to establish rules of behavior that would reduce the risks of conflict, and we searched for areas of cooperation that could make our relations reciprocal and productive, not only for the sake of our two nations but for the security and peace of the entire world.”\textsuperscript{33}

President Carter announced that the United States imposed economic sanctions on the Soviet Union and asked American allies and friends to join. He reached out to the Olympic Committee and informed them that the United States would not send an Olympic team to Moscow, calling for a boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics. He condemned the Soviet Union

\textsuperscript{31} "A Historical Timeline of Afghanistan." PBS. May 4, 2011.


\textsuperscript{33} Ibid.
for trying to centralize their power in an region with two-thirds of the world’s exportable oil, which creates a threat to the free movement of Middle East oil.\(^\text{34}\)

**Section 3.2 Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START I)**

The START I Treaty started in 1982, but were discontinued in 1983 only to begin again at the end of 1987 after the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty was signed. The START treaty provided the environment and regulations required to significantly lower the number of nuclear weapons. Under the START I Treaty, each party had to reduce their nuclear arsenal to a limit of 1,600 ballistic missiles and 6,000 warheads.\(^\text{35}\) Additionally, the Treaty set three sub-limits: 4,900 warheads for ICBMs and SLBMs, 154 heavy ICBMs, and 1,100 warheads for mobile ICBMs.\(^\text{36}\) The START I treaty was signed on July 31, 1991 but because of the fall of the Soviet Union it was signed again at the Lisbon Protocol in May 1992.\(^\text{37}\) The treaty needed to include language recognizing four-post Soviet states as parties to the treaty, but only recognizing Russia as a nuclear weapon state. It then took three years for the treaty to enter into force due to the arrangements that needed to be made because of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, officially entering into force on December 5, 1994.

**Section 3.2.1 History Before Agreement**

The meaningful discussion for the START Treaty started just before the fall of communism in Eastern Europe, in 1989 and the agreement was signed mere months before the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. In 1989, Berliners took to the streets and destroyed the physical representation of the Iron Curtain, the Berlin Wall. Gorbachev decided to allow multi-party election and move to a more market oriented economy, beginning the process of democratization and ending Communist control. The Red Army withdrew from East Germany, and a reunited Germany joined NATO. With Gorbachev’s concessions promoting Western

\(^{34}\) Ibid.


\(^{36}\) *Treaty between the US and the USSR on Strategic Offensive Reductions*, (DC, NTI, 2011).

interests, Bush continued with the plan to continue with the START agreement. Hard-liner Communists executed an unsuccessful coup against Gorbachev in August 1991, this intensified democratic forces in the Soviet Union, Yeltsin came to power and banned party activities. Shortly after the coup, the Baltic States, Ukraine and Belarus declared independence and sought international recognition. As the Soviet Union was dissolved, and the United States recognized twelve independent republics, of the utmost importance was securing the nuclear weapons of the former Soviet Union.

Section 3.2.2 History After Agreement

The Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation was approved on May 16, 1997 by the North Atlantic Council. It highlights the new environment within Europe and establishes a security partnership between NATO and Russia, ensuring the commitment to create a lasting peace in the Euro-Atlantic area. The United States, Russia, Governments of Member States of the European Space Agency, Japan, and Canada came to an agreement in 1998 on a joint international space station, with the United States and Russia taking the lead due to their extensive knowledge in human space flight. Provisions in this agreement stated that all partners would work together to ensure adequate management and ownership of equipment. Clinton and Putin met at the G-8 Summit in July 2000 and discussed peace initiatives in the Middle East, the Iranian nuclear program, and Chechnya.

Section 3.2.3 Declining Relationship

The START II treaty started and was signed in January of 1993, before the START I was even in force. The START II Treaty had problems with ratification by both the United States Senate as well as the Russian Duma. However, in 1998, the Duma postpones the vote in response to US and British military strikes against Iraq. In 1999, the Duma again postpones the

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vote due to the NATO bombing against Yugoslavia. Finally, the Duma ratified START II in April 2000. After 2000, United States President George W. Bush and President of the Russian Federation Vladimir V. Putin begin working together, mainly on more discussions of offensive and defensive weapons systems. However, this relationship was significantly changed after the United States suffered from the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.

**Section 3.3 SORT Agreement**

Each party agreed that their respective number of nuclear warheads would not exceed 1,700-2,200 by December 31, 2012. The START I Treaty would remain in force. The parties would meet twice a year to discuss treaty progression. On 6 March, 2003 the United States Senate unanimously ratified SORT, however, the Duma postponed ratification of the treaty on March 18th, citing disagreement with the United States over the decision to invade Iraq. On May 14, 2003, the Duma approved the Federal Law on Ratification for the Treaty.

**Section 3.3.1 History Before Agreement**

Terrorist attacks seemed to pose an immediate danger, binding both states together in a fight against terrorism. On September 11, 2001 the United States was under attack through commercial airplanes controlled by terrorist, the first two planes hit both towers of the World Trade Center, the third plane struck the Pentagon, the fourth plane crashed into a Pennsylvania field. The terrorist attack on the United States killed 2,977 people. On October 23, 2002 a Moscow theatre was taken under the control of Chechen rebels and 700 people were held captive inside for three days. In November 2001, Putin visited the United States and they declared their determination in creating a partnership to fight against terrorism, rebuild Afghanistan, and promote peace in the Middle East.

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41 *Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty*, (DC, NTI, 2011).


43 *US Relations with Russia: After the Cold War*, (DC, Office of the Historian, 2009).
Section 3.3.2 History After Agreement

Apart from the United States withdrawal from the 1972 ABM Treaty in June 2002 and Russia’s “retaliation” by Putin’s announcement in 2004 stating that they would have arms capable of surpassing current ABM systems in the soon future, the relationship between the United States and Russia flourished after the SORT agreement.\textsuperscript{44} In May of 2002, the heads of state for NATO and President Putin agreed on the creation of a NATO-Russia Council. The council would work on projects such as non-proliferation, evaluation of the terrorist threat and military operations and reforms. In October 2002, formal talks on global energy issues took place at the first US-Russia Commercial Energy Summit\textsuperscript{45}. A Business Dialogue Report outlined US trade-law of Russia as a market economy, simplified Russian currency controls and addressed Russia’s accession to the World Trade Center. In September 2003, a second US-Russia Commercial Energy Summit was held, in which further energy areas of cooperation were discussed. Russia and Belarus completed their first Open Skies Treaty observation mission over the territory of the United States in June 2004. At the Bratislava Summit in February 2005, Presidents Bush and Putin issued statements addressing joint nuclear security, the promotion of Russia into the World Trade Organization (WTO), and increased commitment to the US-Russia Commercial Energy Dialogue. The two Presidents announced the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism on July 2006.\textsuperscript{46} The diplomatic relationship between the United States and the Federation of Russia was growing stronger with each summit, agreement, and joint statement. The relationship was friendly and moving toward the direction of becoming allies. However, there was still fundamental political discord between the two states, this became prevalent in 2008.

\textsuperscript{44} Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty, (DC, NTI, 2011).

\textsuperscript{45} Baker Institute for Public Policy, US-Russia Commercial Energy Summit, (TX, Rice University, 2002).

\textsuperscript{46} US Relations with Russia: After the Cold War, (DC, Office of the Historian, 2009).
Section 3.3.3 Declining Relationship

In 2008, the Republic of Georgia and Ukraine were both seeking admittance into NATO. The Federation of Russia was fundamentally against this membership, partly due to the location, the Soviet Union ruled these regions for most of the two centuries prior to the dissolution of the USSR. Additionally, Russia perceived their eagerness to join NATO as a Western attempt to weaken Russian control in the region. At an April 2008 summit, NATO members deferred the decision of admittance for both Georgia and Ukraine until December 2008. Two regions of Georgia, Abkhazia and South Ossetian, at this time had Russian and Georgian peacekeepers, who were trying to keep the peace between separatists and nationalists. After the deferment of NATO admittance, Russia begins advancement into Abkhazia and South Ossetian, but by August 2008 the volatility in the regions have escalated. After South Ossetian separations attacked Georgian peacekeepers, Georgian President Saakachvili sent troops in, which led to Russia moving troops to the border and conducting air strikes in South Ossetian. On August 10, 2008 Russia moved its tanks and soldiers through South Ossetia advancing toward the city of Gori.\footnote{Reuters, 1,500 dead as Georgia conflict escalates, (UK, The Independent, 2008).}
CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS

In this section of the paper, I will evaluate each case study in its entirety next to the additional case studies. I look for patterns and repeating behaviors by both the United States and Russia throughout the given years of these agreements. Each summit, in which these treaties were discussed, provided the platform for these two states to discuss other issues that were not related to nuclear non-proliferation. Since the start of the Cold War, the relationship has had periods of friendly relations only to be derailed by the actions of one state. This has caused the relationship between the two to wax and wane depending on the actions of the other side. Additionally, both sides, throughout the history of these cases, have resorted to reactionary measures. Often these tactics use the nuclear treaties as leverage and in response to something that occurred outside of the nuclear non-proliferation realm. Despite the brevity of friendly relations, the willingness of both sides to cooperate and work together on matters of nuclear weapons has led to a mutually beneficial relationship overall. It has given both the United States and Russia the opportunity to transcend past Cold War tendencies and work together in global matters.

Section 4.1 Platform for Dialogue

After signing the NPT in 1968, the United States and the former Soviet Union had an obligation to work together in an effort to limit, reduce, and regulate nuclear arsenals globally. Realistically, this involved the two states coming to agreements in order to limit their own nuclear capabilities, as they are and have been the two largest nuclear powers. The treaties highlighted by the case studies took place at Moscow summits throughout the years and provided two heads of states with the tools necessary to discuss global issues including and apart from nuclear non-proliferation. For example the Moscow Summit of 1972, which was the background for the SALT I agreement, provided the environment for both states to sign the
Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection. The agreement stated that both parties agreed to develop cooperation in regards to air, water, marine, and environmental pollution among other environmental considerations.  

It is improbable to consider that this type of agreement would have been reached at this point in time had it not been for the Moscow Summit, which was held to discuss nuclear non-proliferation. Negotiations leading to the signing of SALT I started in Helsinki, Finland in 1969 and concluded at the Moscow Summit in May 1972. Discussion of a European security group made substantial progress in November 1972 in Espoo, Finland. The Council on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) met for the first time in Helsinki, Finland in July 1973 and after two years of talks and negotiations the Helsinki Final Act  was signed by the 35 member states of the CSCE.

I am not arguing that the we would not have collaboration on environmental policies, or that the CSCE would not have been created and that the Helsinki Accords would not have been signed had it not been for nuclear non-proliferation treaties. Rather, I’m stating that the nuclear capabilities of the United States and the Soviet Union have enabled the two states to evolve past their differing ideologies and work together, despite the Cold War, on issues separate from nuclear weapons. While the successful signing of each nuclear policy led to the discussions and signing of more policies, the collaboration provided the backdrop to initiate discussions regarding issues unrelated to nuclear technology both of which improved the bilateral relationship. For instance, following along in the direction of friendly relations, the Washington Summit of 1973 led to a few historical nuclear policies mentioned in the case study, the CSCE was established in 1973, the Threshold Test Ban Treaty was signed at the Moscow Summit of 1974, and Helsinki Final Act was signed in 1975.

The START I discussion started in 1982, however, they were discontinued after a year and only began again in 1987. The Soviet Union wouldn’t discuss the START I proposal until after an agreement on intermediate-range missiles was reached, the NPT. The NPT cleared the

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way for the United States and the Soviet Union to continue START I discussions, which was a proposal to dramatically reduce strategic forces. The START I was signed in July 1991 and the Soviet Union lowered the Soviet flag in the Kremlin for the last time in December of 1991. The dissolution of the Soviet Union could have caused significant problems in the field of nuclear technology, however, with a signed agreement reducing nuclear strategic capabilities of the Soviet Union just some language change was necessary in the agreement. The agreement was resigned in 1992 and went into effect in 1994. Belarus, Kazakstan, and Ukraine transferred the nuclear weapons they had to Russia or disposed of them. While it might be a stretch to argue that the 1997 Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation, and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation, an act committing to lasting peace in Euro-Atlantic area, has a direct correlation to START I, it seems reasonable to assert that the continually progressing relationship between the United States and Russia aided in the dialogue for the agreement.

Only a few months after the May 2002 talks for SORT, the first US-Russia Commercial Energy Summit took place, the second meeting took place shortly after SORT was signed. At these energy summits, Russia and the United States identified barriers to trade and investment of the energy sector while discussing the commercial climate and business partnership opportunities. The two energy summits took place just a few months after the meeting for SORT and a few months after the signing of SORT, which seems to fall in line with the idea that the nuclear non-proliferation agreements provide a platform for discussions to occur that are unrelated to nuclear capabilities. Unfortunately, the relationship between the United States and Russia isn’t on a constant trajectory towards friendly, allied relations. Rather, the diplomatic relationship has historically shown an increase and decrease in diplomatic ties and agreements across the years.

**Section 4.2 Waxing and Waning**

The relationship between Russia and the United States has gone through periods of growth and sustainment as well as periods of diminishing diplomatic ties. This is evident through the case studies involving nuclear agreements, because even when the relationship
between the two states is strained, summits and meetings discussing nuclear capabilities still occur. However, when the partnership is growing there are a lot more agreements reached and signed. After the NPT was signed in 1968, it seems as if there was a thawing of the Cold War tactics. Throughout the 1970s it seem as though a healthy, successful partnership was reached between the Soviet Union and the United States. They have come to multiple nuclear policies, including: SALT I and II, Basic Principles of Negotiations on the Further Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, Agreement Between the US and the USSR on the Prevention of Nuclear War, and the Threshold Test Ban Treaty. Additionally, the two had also agreed on non-nuclear policies: the Helsinki Accords, the Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection, and the establishment of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Unfortunately, this relationship was soon to fall into a period of decreasing diplomatic relations. In 1979, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, a show of power that the United States couldn’t ignore. The United States denounced the Soviet Union globally, as well as imposed economic sanctions and boycotted the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow. This led to limited negotiations and discussions throughout the 1980s, one of the few agreements making it out of that decade being the INF Treaty of 1987. Even though the reduction of nuclear arsenals was still a major topic of contention between the two states, the evolution of their diplomatic relationship was halted.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the diplomatic relationship between the United States and Russia began to improve. START I went into force in 1994, a security partnership was created in 1997 between US-led NATO and Russia, and an agreement was reached on an international space station in 1998. It seemed as if the bilateral relationship was moving in a beneficial direction for both states. However, in the late 90s the Duma postponed the vote to ratify START II, which was initially signed in 1993. The first postponement was in 1998 due to the United States’ involvement in the military strikes against Iraq, the second postponement was in 1999, due to the US-led NATO bombing in former Yugoslavia. It seemed as though the partnership between the United States and Russia may have entered into another period of
decline, however, the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 drastically changed Russia’s and the United States’ relationship. Bush and Putin begin almost immediately collaborating on anti-terrorism policies, creating the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. In addition to security policies such as SORT and the creation of the NATO-Russia Council, the two presidents issued joint statements and worked together to promote the economy through business. This collaboration and increasingly beneficial partnership lasted until 2008, at which point Russia led troops and conducted air strikes into Georgia. Although not as drastic as the discord caused by the Russian invasion of Afghanistan, it caused a rift in the relationship. The action and reaction tactics of Russia and the United States has created a unstable diplomatic relationship. In spite of this, overall, nuclear technologies have established a diplomatic bond between the United States and Russia.

**Section 4.3 Discussion**

Some may assert that it would be better and more beneficial to not have nuclear weapons at all, or at least for Russia to not have nuclear capabilities. While I would be inclined to agree that a world without nuclear technology would be a safer environment, the competition and race for nuclear technology after World War II made that an impossible reality. However different the two states’ ideologies have been, they have continuously come together to discuss policies regarding arms control and often those summits have led to discussions regarding various political, economic, and humanitarian topics. In spite of the Cold War and often tension filled relationship, nuclear capabilities have provided the platform for communication to continue.

It may appear that the particular leaders of either the United States or Russia, such as Nixon and Brezhnev, have had more of an impact on progressing the relationship than the fact that they each have nuclear capability. While I would agree that certain leaders have created more change and progress towards an allied relationship, the circumstance that each leader was in also played a role in the success of that leader. Additionally, discussions would have been harder to justify had both states not had nuclear technology.
The end of the Cold War played a large role in the changing political environment between the West and the former Soviet Union. There is no arguing that the impact was seen globally. However, it was still important to recognize that even in the midst of the fall of communism in Eastern Europe and the collapse of the Soviet Union, nuclear non-proliferation discussions continued to bring both sides together, if only for negotiations. While external factors play a role in the relationship, the relationship would be more limited if it were not for their nuclear capabilities.
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

While reducing and limiting nuclear weapons should continue to be at the forefront of international policies, there is also the argument to be made that if more states had nuclear capabilities the world would be better balanced. Although there is a gap in literature regarding this specific argument, it is something that should continued to be studied. Just as the United States and the former Soviet Union were able to overcome strategic differences in order to work together, it is possible that other states could follow the same path if they had more power and there was a greater balance of power throughout the globe. Additionally, this argument is in contrast to Clark and Stent, as they argued that nuclear capabilities were not beneficial to the bilateral relationship of the U.S. and Russia, rather just created unproductive competition. However, unlikely partnerships can be formed, as seen with the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union which ultimately create a more stable global environment. Since the destruction that came from the United States bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, it has been believed that we live in a world of mutually assured destruction. However, that viewpoint can be changed to think of nuclear capabilities as enabling an environment of mutually assured stability. If more states were on a level playing field, there would be an increase in dialogue, hopefully creating successful policies, such as was the case between the United States and the Soviet Union.

The nuclear arsenal of both the United States and Russia is enormous, with the two states controlling 90% of the world’s nuclear warheads. It is in the best interest of the international community and international organizations to put pressure on the United States and Russia to continue to create treaties that limit, disarm, and eliminate nuclear warheads. Currently, we live in a world in which nuclear weapons exists and the two states with a history of polarized political and economic ideologies contain the largest arsenal. Historically, both states
have been able to put their differences aside and come to terms throughout the Cold War period as well as in current times in order to restrict the enlargement of nuclear warheads.

The former Soviet Union was able to remain a power player in not only nuclear limitation discussions, but also on the global stage, despite a meniscal economy, the fall of communism in Eastern Europe, and the crippling effects the collapse of the USSR had on the Union. In spite of these factors, the former Soviet Union and later Russia, was able to meet with the United States and other international organizations in order to limit the procurement of nuclear weapons while reducing their own stockpile. The Soviet’s successful procurement of nuclear technology along side of the United States’ success, allowed for openness in communication and helped shape the future of the bilateral relationship. If one state had become a nuclear superpower and the other state fell behind in the race, the hostility of the Cold War would have continued to intensify. The fight for each states respective economic ideology, whether it be Marxist or capitalist or their political ideology, either communism or democracy, would have escalated even further. One common discussion point between the drastically different states, provided the opportunity for the heads of states to come together to negotiate nuclear non-proliferation. A common purpose enabled and encouraged them to host summits in Moscow, Washington, or on neutral territory such as Finland, throughout the Cold War period and after the collapse of the USSR. Luckily, nuclear non-proliferation was not the only topic to be discussed at these summits. These meetings allowed leaders from both sides to discuss other issues such as human rights, environmental concerns, the safety and security of Eastern Europe, the global economy and institutions, space programs and combined efforts against global terrorism.

It is unknown whether these topics would have been addressed at some point, maybe during periods in which Russia and the United States were on friendly terms. Typically, they were on friendly terms at summits in which nuclear non-proliferation was the key topic, this led to the discussing of other world issues. These topics needed to be addressed and as soon as possible in order to create a healthier, safer, and more balanced world. The relationship between
the United States and Russia is nothing if not a complicated, however, the good faith negotiations that have taken place between the two states over the past 50 years, have helped build better communications. Unfortunately, the resilient varying ideologies and often opposite national interests of the United States and Russia continue to play a hindering role in a long-lasting allied type of diplomatic relationship. This can be seen in the increasing and decreasing diplomatic relationship, typically initiated by aggression or strategic power moves, including the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the US-Nato led bombing in former Yugoslavia, and Russia’s involvement in Georgia, Crimea, and Ukraine. Friendly relations are then regained by a common goal, such as limiting nuclear technologies of other states. For instance, Russia played a role in the discussion and negotiations for the Iran Nuclear Deal. Additionally, Russia has wanted to become more involved in international institutions such as the IMF, which it joined in 1992 and the WTO which it joined in 2012.

The more involved that the Russian Federation becomes with international organizations, the more they must abide by a certain set of rules and norms. Russia must respect the terms of each organization long term, even if it puts a constraint on their bargaining strategy or negotiation, and in turn they receive a position in global institutes of security, economics, and arms control. This iterated game can cause distrust and a loss of reputation among the international organizations should either Russia or the United States chose to participate in state behavior that is outside of the regulations and norms of said institution. Unfortunately, we have seen this happen with the former Soviet Union and Russia in circumstances, such as the invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, the invasion of Georgia in 2008, and the annexation of Crimea in 2011, among other examples. The United States has also participated in behavior that has caused a loss of international trust, such as, the US-Nato led bombing in former Yugoslavia, the US involvement of Iraq and Afghanistan. These events have caused distrust and discord not only


between the United States and Russia, leading to sanctions or other actions, but also it has also caused backlash from the international community and international organizations.

Despite the ups and downs of their diplomatic relationship, despite their differing ideological viewpoints, and despite the entirety of the Cold War, these two states routinely come together to discuss matters of nuclear non-proliferation. They agree to meet at yearly summits because of the understanding and importance of nuclear technology. Even though the narrative of nuclear technology has changed, and the arms race competition has become obsolete, the two states formed a framework of security. Generally speaking, the two states have an aligned strategic interest in the topic of nuclear weapons. However, these summits have also provided the platform for the heads of state to approach topics outside of arms control, topics that may not have been addressed without both the United States and Russia maintaining nuclear arsenals. The imminent threat of nuclear war is not at the forefront of the world’s population, the narrative has changed, but the bilateral relationship formed during the Cold War period bounded the United States and Russia together to continue to discuss arms control and security.
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