



Keynote Address: Sergey Ryabkov 2021 Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference

Tuesday June 22, 2021

James Acton: Welcome back to the virtual Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference. My name is James Acton and I'm co-director of the Nuclear Policy Program. And it's my pleasure to introduce you to the next session. An extremely topical session that about a week or so after President Biden and President Putin met in Geneva, we're going to be considering the US-Russia strategic relationship. I'm going to introduce you to the moderator of our session, Rose Gottemoeller, who's currently the Payne Distinguished Lecturer at Stanford university. Indeed, probably her most well-known contributions to the nuclear policy community are working for the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace including as Director of Carnegie Moscow Center.

However, she has had a second and equally distinguished career in public service. She served in numerous roles in the United States government, including as Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security. After leaving the US government, she went to work at NATO, serving there as the Deputy Secretary General. And since leaving, she's just written a book about her experience as the Chief US Negotiator for the New START Treaty. Rose, thanks very much for joining us today and let me hand over to you to introduce our second keynote.

Rose Gottemoeller: Thank you so very much James, and it's a great pleasure to be with you all today. There's a long history, a long heritage of these conferences and they are always, I think, extraordinarily useful. So, thank you for this timely meeting. And I'm very much looking forward to our conversation today with the Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, Sergey Ryabkov. I of course know Sergey for many, many years. We have worked together in various capacities and I've always known him to be a tough negotiator with a problem-solving skill. As I think about it, we work together very closely on the Syrian Chemical Weapons Project, for example. When we were working with the Syrian government to remove 1200 metric tons of their declared chemical weapons stocks. There were

many problems to solve during the course of that effort and Sergey Ryabkov did his part so efficiently and effectively. I was always in great admiration of his work.

He also showed that problem solving skill in the JCPOA negotiations, in which the Russian Federation has played such an important role. So officially, Sergey Alexeevich Ryabkov is the Deputy Foreign Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation responsible for bilateral relations with North and South America, nonproliferation and arms control, Iran's nuclear program, the JCPOA and Russia's participation in the BRICS association.

Born in 1960, he graduated in 1982 from the Moscow State Institute of International Relations, which we know as MGIMO, under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He's held a number of diplomatic posts both in the foreign ministry and abroad. And in 1999, he came to the United States as senior counselor at the embassy in the USA. Still in the United States in 2002 he was named envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary at the embassy in Washington. Since 2005, he returned to Moscow to become the director of the Department of European Cooperation and was named in August 2008, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. Again, a long and distinguished career. We are delighted to have him with us today and I am very much looking forward to this conversation. So, without further ado, Sergey over to you.

Sergey Ryabkov: Thank you. Thank you, Rose. And I thank Dr. Acton and you for this opportunity and for this very generous introduction. I've never been before with the Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference, but I followed a lot of the proceedings in this format. And I'm really honored to be with you this morning or this evening wherever you are. Let me go through a number of points that are before me. And then I'm hopeful we will be able to engage into a debate, a discussion on where we are and where to go and how to do so.

Let me say at the first instance that almost every presentation on international security issues nowadays starts with a rather grim assessment of the strategic environment that continues to deteriorate as we are facing an endless number of acute problems and troubling circumstances. Many of them with no relation to security issues of nuclear character but still having a very heavy and in my view, unnecessary impact on this situation. We are really witnessing multiple risks undermining global and regional security and strategic stability while relations among nuclear powers are in a very bad shape and many important pillars of the arms control architecture have crumbled already.

One may argue why so and what were the reasons for it. But this is a factual statement on my part. We lost a lot in recent years and it's not

obvious for us, at least in Moscow, how we could recover substantial and essential elements of the arms control both in the nuclear and non-nuclear, which is separate and I'm not going to dwell on this all together. Our judgment is that the current diplomatic situation in this area is largely due to the aspirations for political dominance through strengths and the [inaudible 00:06:39] by an unlimited choice of tools intended for putting pressure on geopolitical opponents and adversaries. Unfortunately, this kind of thinking is very typical for many people in Washington, DC nowadays. Such an approach has predetermined a great amount of discourse and controversies in this strategic sphere. The least of destroyed bedrock elements that were previously ensuring balance and predictability is quite long. As a matter of fact, that the New START Treaty is practically the last and only bulwark standing amid smoking ruins.

And it was just very refreshing and very heartening that the Biden administration was able within very few days upon its arrival to come into agreement with us on how to proceed on New START and what needs to be done to extend this treaty for full five years as set forth in the treaty itself. Looking for Rose sitting before me on this screen, I just want to congratulate you once again for your extraordinary achievement when you led the US negotiating team back 11, 12 years ago. Your product withstands several tests. I give you all the merit on how you were able to together with currently our ambassador in Washington, to find a very fine tune, the very delicate balance that is still a very stable one that serves our two nations and others in the international community, strengthening this architecture.

On a more positive side again, after many dramatic turns and twists, we have now this administration being able to agree with the Russian side on admissibility of a nuclear war. I'm sure everyone in this audience is very aware of the fact that President Putin and President Biden while seeing each other in Geneva agreed formally in form of a written statement, joint statement, to reconfirm a well-known formula that dates back 35 years from now and that supports the idea that a nuclear war can never be won. In my personal view, this is only second decision of this magnitude which the Biden administration was able to take since its inauguration, January 20th this year. These steps create a much-needed foundation for further bilateral efforts. In particular, in the very near future our two countries will embark on a new round of integrated, deliberate and robust bilateral strategic dialogue to use the wording from the very same bilateral statement that I just quoted.

As it was set forth by people who try to do so in the run up to the meeting, we have exactly the intention to engage into this dialogue without any intervals, very energetically and in a very focused manner. This is the core of the understandings reached at the bilateral signing in Geneva. I am hopeful that negotiating teams will see each other shortly and they will

have a debate on what and when to deliver. On our part, we are absolutely positive that our two countries being stewards of the world's largest nuclear arsenals, their unique responsibility for international security. This means that we have to address jointly a broad spectrum of issues on strategic agenda. For this purpose, we have already proposed to our US colleagues to undertake as a first step, a joint review of each other's security concerns. And the next steps in our view would be to try to outline possible ways how to address these concerns on an equal footing and mutually acceptable basis, including through arms control solutions.

For that end as we see it, both countries should agree on a framework that would help and direct our interaction. This will be instrumental for further engagement in actual negotiations on eventual, practical agreements and arrangements. The underlying idea of our vision is to jointly develop a new security equation as we call it. It would comprise, in a holistic manner key factors, that affect strategic stability. We consider it to be very important to embrace the entire spectrum of both nuclear and non-nuclear offensive and defensive arms that have a strategic capability. Our point of view shared by many is that in the modern world, this strategic paradigm goes beyond the weapons recovered by the New START. And it also goes beyond nuclear weapons in general. As for offensive arms, we need to pay particular attention to nuclear and conventional systems that could be used to counterforce strike against the territory of the other side, with the view to drastically weaken or even neutralize its deterrent.

That said, we consider it fully justified to maintain a focus on delivery vehicles and the associated platforms. As for warheads, we favor concentrating on the deployed part of the arsenals which pose direct operational threat. Talking about missiles, I cannot but refer to an obvious and immediate problem associated with the post INF dynamics. We are convinced that the issue of land base intermediate and shorter range missiles, whether nuclear or conventional requires a priority attention. Russia has proposed an initiative aimed at maintenance, predictability and restraint in this area including through reciprocal verification and confidence building measures. The essential pillar of our initiative as a reciprocal moratorium on deployment of INF range ground-based missiles, starting with Europe. That would include agreed verification measures. Moreover, as a gesture of goodwill, we will include in our moratorium, the 9M729 missile that has a range below the INF limit. We strongly reject NATO claims that this missile fell into scope of the INF Treaty. This is not the case.

One could easily see it at the briefing and exhibition that our ministry of defense conducted two years ago. But our American colleagues and majority of their NATO allies have chosen to snap this event and to continue groundless accusations that led to the INF Treaty demise. We reaffirm that Russia didn't have and doesn't have intermediate, and

shorter, ranged ground-based missiles. To claim otherwise means to create a deliberately false picture and cover up the actions of those who bear the actual responsibility for the current situation. Let me also state it again. We have proposed to develop verification and confidence building regime for a mutual moratorium on ground-based INF missile deployment. This is an honest effort. We will still be prepared to discuss the urgent matter of restraint on missiles on the basis of mutual respect for each other's concerns. We hope that our potential counterparts will choose wisely and act in responsible manner. But while the implementation of the corresponding US military programs accelerates, the space for diplomacy is rapidly shrinking.

Returning to this strategic equation once again, when we mentioned strategically capable defensive systems, we're referring to missile defense assets. We see no reasons to give up the principle of inseparable interrelationship between strategic offensive and strategic defensive arms. That remains the linchpin of the very concept of strategic stability. For instance, it is enshrined in the New START Treaty. This is why addressing the issue of missile defense has no alternative for us. It is also important to work our common approaches to preventing an arms race in outer space and ensuring security of space activities. Obviously, including all these elements into a single treaty would be, to put it mildly, a very challenging task. Our thinking is that the parties may decide to adopt a package of interrelated arrangements and/or agreements that might have different status if necessary.

Moreover, it might be possible to design some elements in a way to make the room for others to join. Our hope is that as it was with the New START extension, the pragmatic approach will prevail and the US will engage with Russia in good faith with the view to jointly search for practical and balanced solutions. To make this happen, interaction should be based on strict parity and reciprocity. We are not going to walk down the one way street. There could be no unilateral concessions on our part in this sensitive area. Russia has its legitimate security interests and we will stick to them. Colleagues in Washington shouldn't take it for granted if political will is strong enough on both sides to respect the balance of interests, then agreements may ensue, making the world a much safer and hopefully also a better place. I stop here. And I thank you for your attention.

Rose Gottemoeller: Thank you so very much Sergey, a very, very rich intervention, a lot of interesting ideas put on the table. I cannot agree with you more the point you made that putting all of these very complex and difficult issues and trying to come to resolution about them in a single treaty document would be impossible. So I welcome very much the notion that we would have a package of interrelated documents that may have different status and that we should be able to make room for others to join in future. I welcome that very much. I think that's a very good idea. I have a couple of questions

prepared for you, but I wanted to pick up immediately if I may, on something that caught my ear as you were talking about the post INF dynamics.

You mentioned that the offer of the reciprocal moratorium. Again, I welcome the as I think of it, the refreshed offer that President Putin made in October when he noted that the 9M729 would be on the table without in any way acknowledging the US and the NATO position that it is a violation of the INF Treaty. But he did say, as you said today, that it would be included as a gesture of goodwill. That's very welcome, but also the notion of a verification regime in all of Europe Russia associated with that kind of approach. You also noted today though, let's talk about reciprocal moratorium starting with Europe. Can you talk about how you think about constraints on INF in other settings, and particularly in Asia, as we all recognize that the Chinese have a good number of intermediate range, ground launched, air, and sea launch systems in both nuclear and conventional capabilities. So if you would talk a bit about how you would flesh out that notion of starting with Europe, where next when we're talking about the post INF dynamics and how we address them?

Sergey Ryabkov: Thank you, Rose. Let me say at first instance that there is a referral to possible expansion of the scope of this conceivable moratorium into Asia-Pacific. In the very statement, which was produced by President Putin as you rightly said last Fall, when these ideas were introduced. In fact, it would be illustrative in a way to think of this proposal by Russia as being a three stage proposal. The first stage would cover Kaliningrad area which was chosen to be specifically mentioned, as I understand, not least because of concerns that were mostly explicitly made by a number of your allies in Europe. Reciprocity is a condition, cynic one on here though. We would never agree to any particular verification regime covering only Kaliningrad. We should be able to check for ourselves that for example, facilities in Romania and Poland that is being developed as missile defense facilities, do not contain any ground to ground class strike weapons that is, particularly cruise missiles of a ground-based character.

There might be other areas of interest for us. And I suspect also for NATO allies would be very ready to discuss those potentially moving beyond this very limited arrangement to cover what in the conventional arms control in Europe is believed to be a European area of application of such arrangements. Well, particular limits for this area is of course something that should be debated and eventually negotiated. I am not going to kind of offer any loose sorts of my own what it might be, but the point of a political character and the very core of the political message which was sent by the Russian side the moment when this initiative was introduced was "please come and see for yourselves that there is no such things as intermediate range capabilities of ground-based character in this whole vast area." Provided that we also get access to agreed sites and areas on the

NATO side of Europe to see that there is no such things as intermediate range capabilities. Again, with no difference for us whether those are nuclear armed or non-nuclear armed.

So, the most recent reconfirmation or well-known NATO position in the Brussels Summit Declaration doesn't impress us in any way. We should be able to verify for ourselves that there are no such capabilities on the NATO side. And when you rightly pointed to the fact that through the presidential decision 9M729, which was never tested to an intermediate range, was put into the category that is covered by this moratorium. So if we agree, please come and see for yourself that there is no 9M729 in the whole of European part of Russia. And to see a difference between for instance, 9M728 and 9M729, the only thing you would need would be to be present at the exhibition at the Patriot Park, of so-called Patriot Park, of the Russian foreign ministry and take photos and measurements of launch containers and everything in association with this specific iteration of Iskander system. So that was a missed opportunity for NATO or for most of NATO to put it exactly. And one of the political blows to the European security which we regret. I probably stop here again.

Rose Gottemoeller: I can see phase one and phase two. So is phase three Asia? Is that your thinking?

Sergey Ryabkov: Exactly, you are very right Rose. We are flexible in terms of what might be a conceivable arrangement for Asia. I think, as it stands for now, we stick fully and completely to the unilateral moratorium by the Russia side on no deployment of such capabilities anywhere until and unless similar systems of US production are deployed somewhere. But contrary to what we have in terms of vast and extensive experience between Russia and NATO, we do not have similar experience in the east and much will depend in this case on how others will refer to it and what might be the choices.

I would recall the moment when at that time, national security advisor of President Trump was in Moscow, and he was John Bolton at that moment. And he spelled out very explicitly to all of us who were present at his meetings with different senior officials in Moscow that it was not the decision of the US to withdraw from INF Treaty, it was not about Russia but about growing concerns with the Chinese capabilities. So without our open-minded approach to all this, we keep this door open. But to be very frank, this concept of verification in case of moratorium in Asia-Pacific is being agreed upon, is far less developed and far less mature so to say compared to what we have to the West from Moscow.

Rose Gottemoeller: Very good and thank you very much for that response. I see we already have questions building up in the chat so I don't want to hold the floor for too long. But I did have a question that interested me very much and that is, I know for many years, the Russian Federation has been very concerned

about the development of US missile defenses. I know that this was a theme you discussed many times when your counterpart was Ellen Tauscher, the then Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security in the US Department of State. She has since left us; God rest her soul.

But at that time, the topic of missile defenses truly dominated our strategic stability discussions. In the United States more recently, we have been watching as the Russian Federation has developed evermore capable missile defenses beginning with short range systems such as the S-400, a very capable system technologically and now moving to capabilities that have Intercontinental range of potential. The S-500 is an example of that. A very good example, very capable system. It seems to me to be a good time to have a bilateral conversation about our mutual missile defense goals. What would be your comment on that Sergey?

Sergey Ryabkov: Thank you. Two things probably on this. Number one, we were never able to agree to the US propositions over years, since George W. Bush time and beyond, that it was not about Russia and it was very limited and only covered some potential threats from well-known eventual adversaries of the US in the Middle East and elsewhere in the Middle and Far East. And it has no relation whatsoever to the Russian strategic deterrent. We were guided by the idea that sooner or later the US would develop a multilayered global missile defense system that would have full range of capabilities, several overlapping, I would say, technological and military technical solutions that might create a very different environment for us to operate in. And this is something that gradually begins to happen. Already intact with the very changing perception of Russia in the US in general, and also among those who develop doctrines and concepts for the US Defense and US Military in general.

With full respect of all the expertise that is being invested into American thinking and the American development of such systems, I would say there is no such thing as a watertight guarantee for national security, with or without possession of this missile defense capabilities. Even our most sophisticated characters. So, my first element of responding to your question would be that we would prefer that we somehow find a solution of this potential problem through possible limitations. And I make no secret of our idea to transform the conceptual inseparable link between strategic offensive and strategic defensive arms into formal limitations of these systems.

On second part of your questions, what is going on in Russia and what Russia develops? Yeah, we are very ready to discuss and debate all possible concerns that the US side might have and explain why so and for what purpose. But even when we would start talking on possible arrangements in different areas, then we would need to exactly find a right balance of

assets and limits on those on security interests, and the interests of concluding an arms control deal with a counterpart that regards yourself to be an adversary. So very little place for trust and confidence. A very huge requirement for verification and transparency.

And it would be very hard to end up with this security equation that comprises of so many unknowns for the moment being. We will start though this exercise, this quest for an answer on this equation with eyes wide open with no illusions, but bearing in mind all the extensive experience we have behind. So no taboos on our part but also please be advised that we will ask for considerable steps towards Russia position if we're serious about finding a solution in the area of true and real arms control.

Rose Gottemoeller: Thank you, very interesting. I'm sure we could have a lot of discussion about that. And there are some other questions on this theme. But I wanted to turn now to a question that Hiroki Nakanishi asks, "How about the impact of China's rapid development of nuclear forces on the US-Russia strategic stability and predictability equation? How was this point discussed in the Geneva Summit? How can Russia and the United States incentivize China to join together on nuclear arms control talks and specifically rebuilding a post INF Treaty framework?" We discussed that a bit already. But in general, the notion of reducing nuclear risks and the role of nuclear weapons that would include China as part of the discussion. So, I'm interested in what Mr. Nakanishi is asking also.

Sergey Ryabkov: Thank you. I truly believe that we should not miss, we- Russia and the US- should not miss an opportunity to try to agree on something bilaterally. We have gone through, I wouldn't say, not just nonproductive but rather counterproductive discussions on the issue of Chinese eventual participation in this effort while the previous administration, the previous US administration, the Trump administration firmly insisted on this. It didn't work. Our basic position, which we would follow, is that we should be able to do more in this area bilaterally with the US. not least because others at P5, and I make no secret when I say our major interest is on UK and France as close US allies and their capabilities, their national capabilities, should be factored into this future security equations. But in absence of the explicit voluntary consent, voluntary agreement of those countries to join, we would never be able to move forward multilaterally which is a preferable way for us to go.

So, then the second-best option in our view would be to go further down this road together with the US on a bilateral basis for which we are prepared. And then if and when situation changed to the better, others may reconsider, we would welcome this, but we would never be able to join US in its effort to whatever, pressurize? It goes without saying that we could never be part of such an effort. Others nor to persuade the others

just because people think now it's time to turn from a bilateral into trilateral or whatever format. Pentalateral format which was debated earlier and even broader than that format with your personal involvement Rose.

Again, I remember your time when such informal meetings took place in Geneva, was a quite interesting one for sure of thought-provoking and producing now and then some palpable results, but those results were not equal to any formal arrangements in the area of arms control in a classic sense of the word. So let's be realistic. Let's stay firmer on the ground. And we have abundant agenda before us. And the time is running so fast. We have already four, almost five months passed since extension of New START and still we are at the very preliminary stage. We should engage bilaterally and then see what will happen with others.

Rose Gottemoeller: Thank you, thank you. That makes a lot of sense, I think. Although I do hope we can nevertheless have some good substantive discussions and perhaps in an informal or second track way with Chinese colleagues to talk to them about where their interests may lie as well. I know that you had Helga Schmid as Secretary General or Director General rather of the OSCE in Moscow in the last days. I have a question from Mikhail Kupriyanov who asks, "What is the state of cooperation between Russia and OSCE member states? And what role can OSCE play in arms control and reduction of nuclear risk?" He also throws in my favor question about the fate of the NATO-Russia council. So, if you'd like to comment on the NATO Russia council I would be very glad. But in the wake of Helga Schmid's visit to Moscow, if you could comment about where Russia stands on the OSCE at the moment.

Sergey Ryabkov: We welcome the fact that the Secretary General OSCE, Miss Helga Schmid, visited Moscow. She had extensive talks yesterday with Minister Lavrov. She continues her meetings here and she will, I believe, attend one way or another a Moscow Security conference which is due for the next two days. We do think that OSCE continues to play a visible role, including in the area of European security. That has always been the area of priority interest for this organization, this assembly of countries. Unfortunately, in recent years, we saw a very steep and fast deterioration of the situation in the area of military security in Europe, not least due to several steps undertaken by the NATO alliance that built up both infrastructure and training activities along the border with the Russian Federation and also in other areas adjacent to Russia. We made on several occasions the point that to begin improvement in this particular segment of hard security, we should start with de-escalation, de-escalation measures, de-escalations efforts and our particular proposals to descend are still very valid ones.

Unfortunately, Europe becomes a region where yet another important building block of an arms control architecture suffers a blow. And I'm

talking on Open Skies Treaty which, despite all our efforts, moves into a phase where not just the US but also Russia will be no more party to this treaty. We fought for the survival of the treaty for more than one year. And every single day we made efforts, supplied efforts to reverse this situation with no fortune, with no success. That was very disappointing and very regrettable especially in light of the fact that many senior officials in the current Obama administration, sorry in the current Biden administration, spoke before Joe Biden won elections in favor of retaining the Open Skies Treaty. And in favor of US return into this treaty, but it didn't work this way. In fact, we received an unexplainable set of arguments as a background for the US decision not to revise the choice made by the previous administration.

And it happened days before conclusion of our own domestic procedures. So, what will come next? I think we will be following the existing arrangements as reflected in the so-called Vienna 2011 Document. We see no reason why should we improve "these documents" since there is no wish, no desire, on the part of NATO to move an inch forward towards our security interests. So, situation is quite troubling and OSCE should focus on those issues as a matter of priority. And as a matter of major concern. Well bearing in mind, of course, other well-known baskets of its responsibility, including economic and environmental issues and the humanitarian issues. And also, cross dimensional issues like countering terrorism and things like this. We believe that the OSCE will still play a role, and it depends on participating states, how they would prioritize their own function and their own participation in what OSCE before we know what might be the fate of this organization.

Rose Gottemoeller: Thank you very much Sergey for that comprehensive answer. I do think it is a good thing that Helga Schmid is in Moscow these days and I'm glad she's been having some good conversations with your foreign minister and with others. Let's move to the Non-Proliferation Treaty review conference coming up. Alain Blancas asks, "On the road toward the NPT review conference, which actions will be presented by the Russian Federation as part of its obligations under article VI?" And William Potter asks, "Russia joined the consensus final document at the 2010 NPT review conference. Does it still regard the document's twenty-two action items on disarmament as politically binding?" So two questions on the NPT review conference coming up.

Sergey Ryabkov: Thanks. The chairman of the conference designee, that is Argentinian Ambassador, Mr. Zlauvinen is currently busily conducting consultations with regional groups on both the exact timing for this important event. And also on some practical arrangements associated with it. Most probably the conference will take place second half January 2022. Many countries around argue for no more extension. And I think it will stay this way given the visible improvement of the pandemic situation around.

Hopefully we will be able to see each other personally at face-to-face meeting because this conference is not just about coming up to the microphone and speaking out for the positions of principle but it's, to a greater extent, a platform where delegations and people meet in corridors and at coffee breaks and try to figure out how to progress and not just to score rhetorical points through these speeches that are quite predictable ones.

So, I do think that what we have done since the last review conference could easily be summarized the way that Russia did while producing a comprehensive national report that is available at the UN, translated into all official languages of the universal organization. Whether we would be able to deliver more in connection with our obligations according to article VI, to which we are attached as ever depends on how we progress with others on several issues of relevance. And remember NPT is not just about disarmament, it's equally about nonproliferation and peaceful uses. In all these areas we wish we would deliver in an impressive way. At P5 we are working on several issues that are highly relevant to this conference, including how to interrelate our policies as nuclear powers to the Nuclear Weapon Prohibition Treaty, a ban treaty which came into force and which also will be a framework for countries, signatory countries, to meet early next year I believe.

And those two events will go kind of in parallel with one another. We see the ban treaty as being in contradiction with the NPT and we have good reasons to say so both legally and politically, it was a very bad idea. And given this fact, we have an opportunity to go an extra mile with our American colleagues, with our colleagues at P5 in general, to reinforce our message how important it would be to approach the issue of nuclear disarmament exactly the way how it is spelled out by founding fathers of NPT in article VI, no more but no less than that. We would hopefully be able, by the time when the next NPT review conference convenes, hopefully would be able to report on at least any initial progress with the US on a post-START and post-INF arrangements.

Russia will do her utmost to find ways forward to this end. On action plan of 2010, yes, we do believe that those elements of this action plan that are not implemented as of now are still valid. Some of those require undoubtedly some fine tuning. Others are okay as they are. We are not departing from those and I think the meeting in New York early next year would be an excellent opportunity to review the progress and have an in-depth exchange why were we were not able to jointly, collectively, and/or individually as some of the protagonists, major actors been able to fully implement this action plan that dates back to 2010.

Rose Gottemoeller: I have a host of interesting questions for you Sergey and I'm afraid to say we are going to run out of time in 10 minutes. So just bear in mind that

I have at least two really meaty questions. So if you can bear in mind we have 10 minutes left. At some I'm combining a number of questions, but you've also touched on a number of issues that people are really interested in. William Alberque is asking about the way in which NATO is watching what Russia has done in recent years by deploying very capable, shorter range systems. Of course, you have mentioned 9M729 and that is part of President Putin's moratorium offer. But shorter-range systems, a 0 to 500-kilometer range in the Iskander family for example, that are dual capable, nuclear and conventional, cruise and ballistic missiles. They are in Kaliningrad indeed and in the Eastern part in range of the Eastern part of the NATO Alliance.

So, the question is essentially, why does Russia feel the need to deploy such systems when NATO has not followed such a path? And essentially how would Russia feel if NATO suddenly went down that path? Because it is true that NATO is very concerned, once again, about the very capable Russian missile technology that is within range of NATO targets even today. So that's the question and indeed, a lot of interest in that among colleagues. So over to you.

Sergey Ryabkov: There are several ways how to respond to this. One is in our thinking and in our general perception of where we are, the geographic asymmetry plays a very important role. We do think that our deterrent should be both nuclear and non-nuclear in a way that is a very convincing one that truly deters any of potential adversaries from trying their chances, trying their luck in a combat. I would immediately say that we have no intention nor any developed concepts of things like escalation for the de-escalation. I've been to several meetings with counterparts both from the US and more broadly from NATO where I couldn't find an answer to a very simple question, why those who believe that Russia entertains such concepts consider our military planning and our military thinking as being rooted, bound into a very flawed idea of a limited nuclear war?

Contrary to this, I think uncertainty about the limits for escalation lies behind many of the scenarios that were discussed and debated among Russian and the US military planners, both in the past and more recently. So, a full-fledged deterrent requires a whole host of capabilities and the toolbox should be a mixed and a varied one. On the particular aspect how, NATO may feel about this kind of approach on our part, I would say we all remember how US felt about Russian missiles at some point being dispatched to Cuba. But we live in similar circumstance for decades, for decades. How would you believe that we would just disregard what is going on around, that would not care about our own national security?

It would be much better if those who stay close to the border between NATO countries and Russia would advocate for de-escalation measures for the removal of the most destabilizing assets, further away from this area.

And to try to establish arrangements that would require a very different degree of responsibility rather than what we see in recent months of US strategic bombers flying over all sorts of areas, dozens of kilometers from places like St Petersburg, Kaliningrad and many more. We are not making a big fuss about it but it's a reminder for us that our defense should become as ever, a strongest one as ever in our recent history because this is the only insurance policy that we may have.

Rose Gottemoeller: Well, there are many issues that I'm sure we shall continue to debate over time but this has been a fascinating discussion today Sergey. We are right at one o'clock. In a moment I would like to hand over to James Acton to wrap up our session with apologies to all those who asked such excellent questions. We simply couldn't get to them. We needed to keep the Deputy Foreign Minister for another hour at least, I think. But you're probably relieved Sergey. In any event, a big thank you from me. So grateful to have you with us today. And if you would like to say a word or two, before I turn the floor over to James, I will be very happy to hear it.

Sergey Ryabkov: Thank you, Rose. I think what we have discussed today is just an excellent illustration, a reminder rather, of how multifaceted these concerns are. And reasons for those, in my view, some of those are better grounded in actual developments of technologies and military thinking. Others are illusions and political, I would say, considerations, thoughts that are quite loose. And the more we talk on those issues as openly, as candidly as possible, the higher would be chances that we finally find cores of the problem rather than elements of rhetoric that are quite unnecessary in this very serious set of issues. I wrote down not just questions, but several points that were made by the audience. And thank you for providing me with these questions. They will be integrated into our thinking. I will definitely have further opportunities to exchange on those with you and with colleagues around. I thank you for this excellent opportunity. It was very useful and thought-provoking. Thank you.

Rose Gottemoeller: Again, it's a great pleasure to be online with you today. I agree with you, it's much better to be in a physical venue where you can have a coffee break afterwards, but a big thank you from me personally. And now over to James Acton for a final word on behalf of the Carnegie Endowment.

James Acton: Well thank you so much. And let me extend Carnegie's thanks both to the Deputy Foreign Minister and also to Rose Gottemoeller both for taking times out of their schedule. Rose has worked with us at Carnegie for many years and we look forward to continuing that relationship and also hopefully again for hosting Deputy Foreign Minister Ryabkov as we continue this critically important conversation. And for what was an insightful and dense and deep session. So, thank you both for that. You now have an opportunity to grab some food, at least if you're on the East Coast time, it's a good time to do that. We will reconvene at two o'clock



Eastern time. That's in about 57 minutes for the final session of the day which will focus on equity and anti-racism in nuclear policy making. Thanks for your attention.