

12 December 2009

Talks between Russia and US on nuclear pact extended



Russia and the US reached an outline arms agreement in July

Talks between the US and Russia in Geneva on forging a new nuclear arms reduction treaty are being extended, the Kremlin has announced.

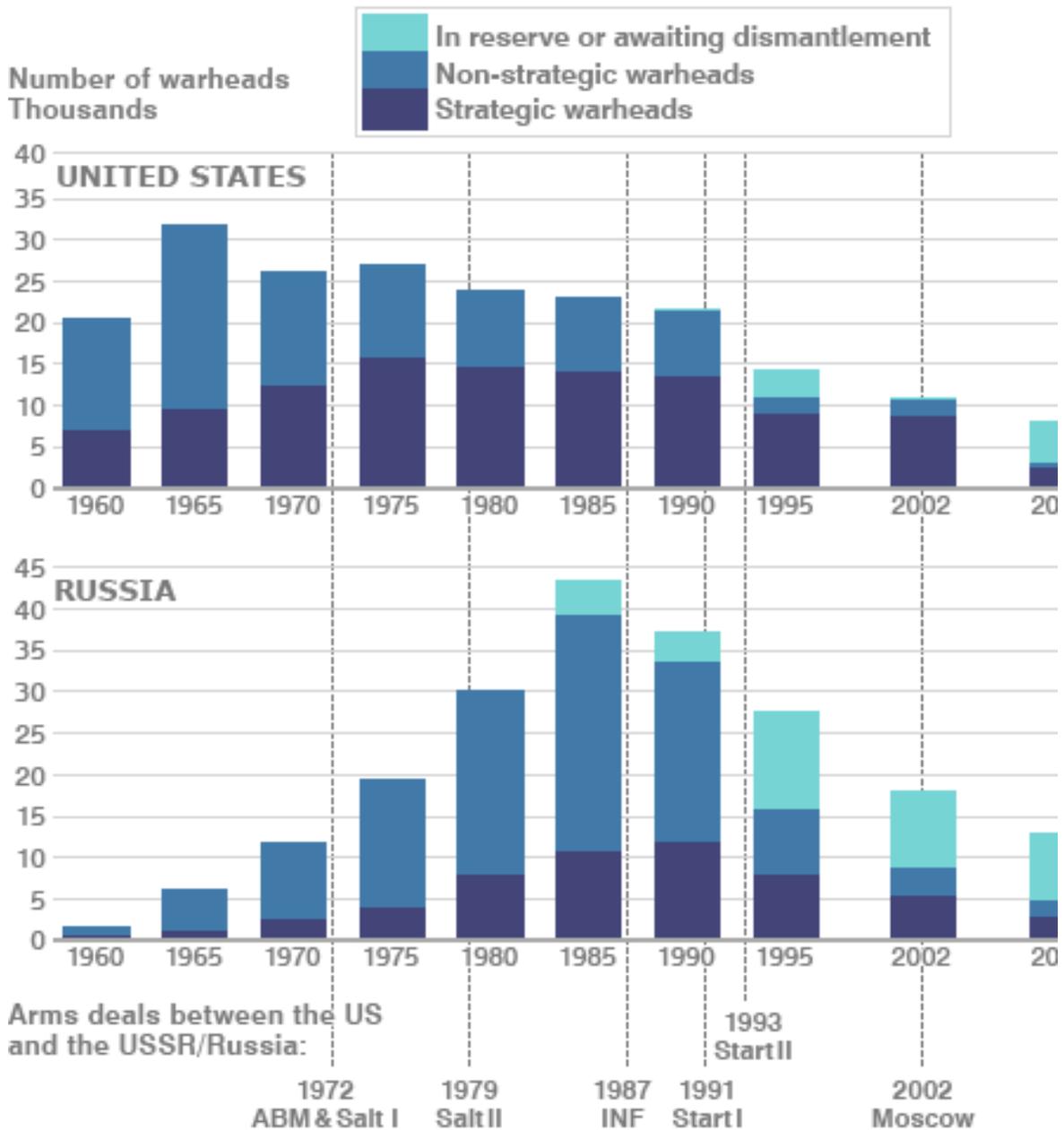
Presidents Barack Obama and Dmitry Medvedev agreed by phone to continue work on finding a successor to the Cold War-era Start I treaty, it said.

Negotiations in Geneva had been "intensive and purposeful", it added.

Start I expired on 5 December but the two countries agreed to continue observing it pending a new agreement.

"The heads of state agreed to give the order to continue active work and not to reduce the high level and tempo of co-operation, with the aim of securing decisive agreements on all issues," the Kremlin said in its statement.

US AND RUSSIA NUCLEAR WEAPONS



SOURCE: Natural Resources Defense Council, Bulletin of the Atomic Sciences

No reasons have been given for the delay but unnamed diplomats quoted by Reuters news agency are talking about finding a deal by the end of the year.

Moscow made no reference to a date in its latest statement.

Start I was signed by Mikhail Gorbachev and George Bush Senior in the final days of the Soviet Union. It led to deep cuts in nuclear arsenals on both sides.

Under a joint understanding signed in July, deployed nuclear warheads should be cut to below 1,700 on each side within seven years of a new treaty - a huge cut on Soviet-era levels.

Nonetheless, between them, the two countries will retain enough firepower to destroy

the world several times over.

4 December 2009

US and Russia pledge nuclear missile treaty soon



Russia and the US reached an outline arms agreement in July

The US and Russia say they want a new nuclear arms treaty to enter force at soon as possible, after failing to agree a successor to the Start I pact.

The nations uphold the "spirit" of the 1991 Cold War-era treaty despite its end, the US and Russian presidents said in a joint statement.

Talks on a new accord are expected to continue after the treaty expires. at midnight on Friday.

Russia's foreign ministry said "intense efforts" were ongoing on a new treaty.

US President Barack Obama and his Russian counterpart, Dmitry Medvedev, agreed in July that a new treaty should bring deep cuts in nuclear warheads.

“ It is confusing that Start and Sort run concurrently ”

Paul Reynolds
World affairs correspondent
[New Start treaty likely](#)

Washington has indicated it would like an interim agreement to come into force until a new treaty is negotiated.

The Start I agreement was signed by Mikhail Gorbachev and George Bush senior in the final days of the Soviet Union. It led to deep cuts in nuclear arsenals on both sides.

The BBC's Tom Esslemont, in Moscow, says that in spite of frenetic diplomatic activity and the "reset" of relations between the two sides it was always going to be difficult for a replacement arms control treaty to come into force before Friday's deadline.

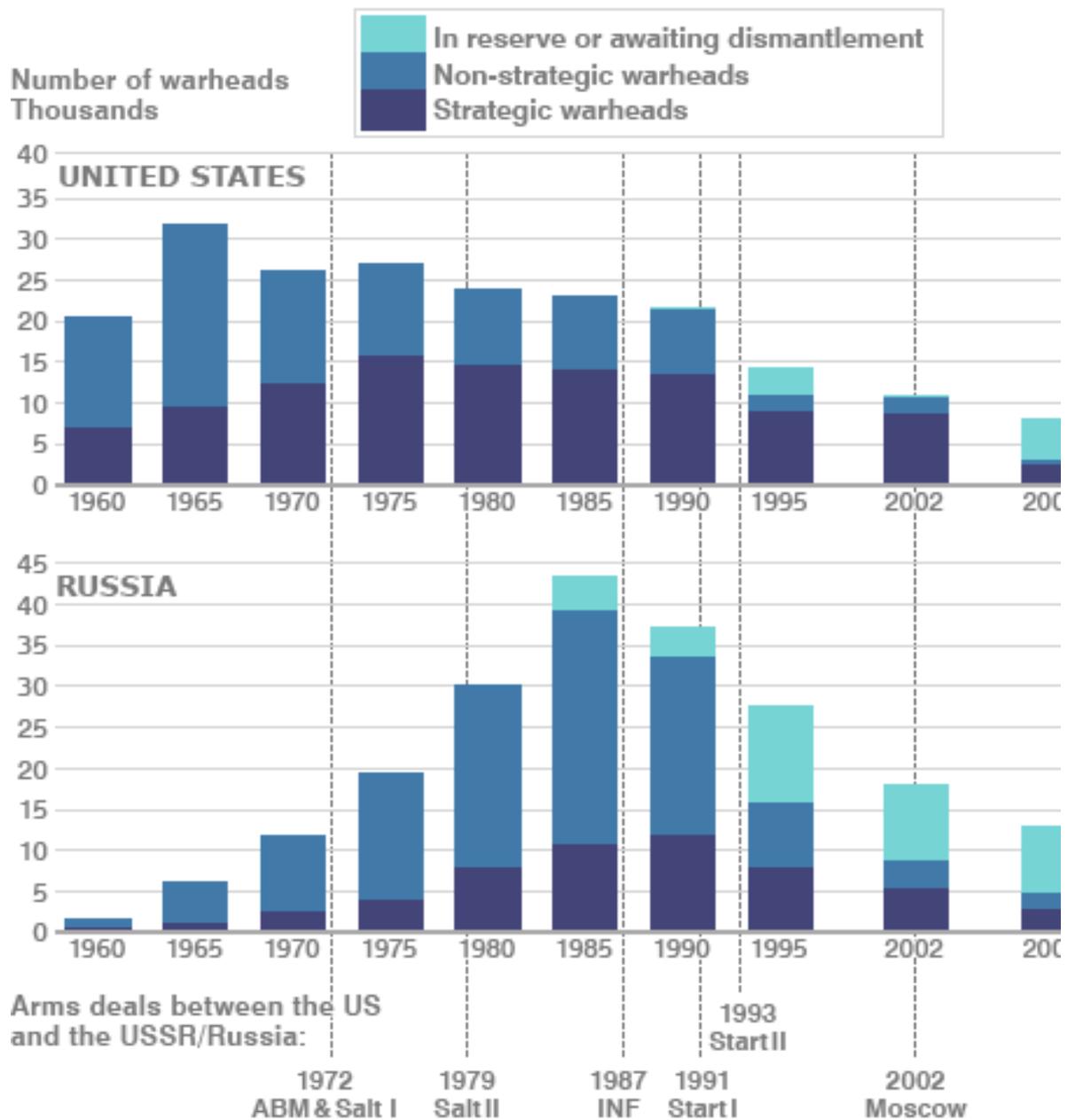
Kremlin sources appear optimistic that something can be agreed while President Obama is in Europe next week to receive his Nobel Peace Prize.

But the details of the new, complex agreement have not been finalised. It will also need to be ratified in both parliaments, and that could take months, our correspondent says.

Under the joint understanding signed in July, deployed nuclear warheads will be cut to below 1,700 on each side within seven years of a new treaty - a huge cut on Soviet-era levels.

In a joint statement, the US and Russian presidents said on Friday: "We express our commitment, as a matter of principle, to continue to work together in the spirit of the Start treaty following its expiration, as well as our firm intention to ensure that a new treaty on strategic arms enter into force at the earliest possible date."

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SOURCE: Natural Resources Defense Council, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists