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THE START-1 TREATY

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The first Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START-1) Treaty was signed by US President George Bush and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev on 31 July 1991. But on 25 December 1991 the Soviet Union ceased to exist. Soviet strategic nuclear weapons were then located in four of the successor states: Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus.

On 23 May 1992 these four states, now members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), signed an agreement with the US in which all five become parties to the START-1 Treaty. That protocol provides that:

- ! The four new CIS states will decide among themselves how to implement their responsibilities under START-1.
- ! Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus committed themselves to joining the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) as non-nuclear states, thus giving up their nuclear weapons.
- ! Russia remains a nuclear state party to the NPT.

A. TERMS OF THE START-1 TREATY.

When the legislatures of all five parties approved START-1, instruments of ratification were exchanged and the treaty went into effect. Reductions are to be completed in three phases over a period of seven years. The treaty is of 15 years duration unless abrogated earlier, and may be renewed in five year increments.

In general, START-1 covers "deployed" strategic nuclear delivery vehicles (SNDVs) and warheads. It does not mandate destruction. SNDVs and warheads can be removed from deployment by removing the launchers. The basic START-1 limits are:

- 1600 SNDVs which carry no more than
- 6000 "accountable" nuclear warheads,
 - of which only 4900 can be on ballistic missiles.
 - 1540 maximum on heavy ICBMs (SS-18s).
 - 1100 maximum on mobile ICBMs.

A major obstacle during negotiations was how to count nuclear sea-launched cruise missiles (SLCMs), which the US insists are tactical weapons, not long-range strategic weapons. This was solved by a political statement (a gentlemen's agreement) that neither country will build more than 880. The US only planned on 750 anyway. But this agreement is separate from START and does not count against the SNDV and warhead ceilings.

Another stumbling block was how to count warheads on bombers. This led to a formula for "accountable" nuclear warheads. Each bomber carrying only gravity bombs or short-range attack missiles (SRAMs) will be counted as one SNDV with only one warhead, regardless of the number of bombs and SRAMs it can carry. For bombers carrying air-launched cruise missiles (ALCMs), the first 150 of such US bombers are counted as carrying only ten warheads each, although they can carry twenty. The first 210 of such Soviet bombers are counted as having eight warheads each, although they can carry up to twelve. Above these numbers (150 and 210) the actual number of warheads on each bomber are counted. So, although there are only 6000 "accountable" warheads allowed under START, the actual number of strategic warheads could be as follows:

	US	USSR
	=====	=====
On SLBMs	3456	1872
On ICBMs	1444	3028
Bombs/SRAMs	2720	960
ALCMs	1860	1300
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Total W/Hs on 1600 SNDVs	9480	7160
Total W/Hs with 880 SLCMs	10360	8040

B. STATUS OF THE START-1 TREATY.

By a vote of 93-6 the US Senate on 1 October 1992 ratified the START-1 Treaty. Kazakhstan had already ratified START-1 and Russia followed suit on 4 November 1992. Belarus ratified on 4 February 1993 and Ukraine completed the ratification process in December 1994. START-1 is now in effect and dismantling to comply with its limits must be completed by 2001. Although silo destruction seems to be lagging, mainly due to financial constraints, all nuclear warheads -- both strategic and tactical -- have now been moved to Russia. Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus are now nuclear-free states.

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GLOSSARY.

ALCM	Air-Launched Cruise Missile.
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States.
ICBM	Inter Continental Ballistic Missile.
NPT	[Nuclear] Non-Proliferation Treaty.
SLCM	Sea-Launched Cruise Missile.
SNDV	Strategic Nuclear Delivery Vehicle.
SRAM	Short-Range Attack Missile.
SS-18	A Russian heavy ICBM with multiple warheads.
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Talks.
US	United States.
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.
W/H	Warhead.