



# Richard G. Lugar



United States Senator for Indiana

Press Release of Senator Lugar

Lugar: Romney Misinformed on New START Treaty

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*U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar (R-IN), the former Chairman and now Ranking Member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, today issued the following statement:*

Governor Mitt Romney's hyperbolic attack on the New START Treaty in the July 6 edition of *The Washington Post* repeats discredited objections and appears unaware of arms control history and context. In advancing these arguments, he rejects the Treaty's unequivocal endorsement by the Defense Department led by Secretary Robert Gates and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He also distances himself from prominent Republican national security leaders, including Jim Schlesinger, Henry Kissinger, James Baker, and Brent Scowcroft, who have backed the Treaty after thoughtful analysis.

Much of Governor Romney's opposition is based on the supposed harm the Treaty could do to U.S. missile defense plans. But his own list of U.S. "concessions" underscores just how unsuccessful the Russians were in including provisions that constrain U.S. missile defense. He cites non-binding preambular language that requires no restriction on missile defense and cannot be used to enforce an obligation under the Treaty. He also complains about a prohibition on converting ICBM silos to missile defense purposes, but fails to acknowledge that such a conversion is not part of our plans. Lt. General Patrick O'Reilly, Director of the Missile Defense Agency, testified that converting silos would be "a major setback to the development of our missile defenses" given the high cost of redesigning existing interceptors and associated systems.

Governor Romney worries that the Russian ability to withdraw from the New START Treaty (we have the same right) will cause some future administration to abandon missile defense. But nothing in the Treaty changes the bottom line that we control our own missile defense destiny, not Russia. Clearly the Russians don't like U.S. missile defense, but it is wrong to suggest that our defense establishment is unprepared for Russian opposition. As Secretary Gates bluntly testified: "The Russians have hated missile defense ever since the strategic arms talks began, in 1969....because we can afford it and they can't. And we're going to be able to build a good one....and they probably aren't. And they don't want to devote the resources to it, so they try and stop us from doing it... This treaty doesn't accomplish that for them. There are no limits on us."

Governor Romney offers additional treaty misreadings and myths that have been refuted explicitly in Congressional hearings. The Bilateral Consultative Commission has no power to "amend the treaty with specific reference to missile defense," as

he contends. In fact, the Commission cannot change anything in treaty text or make changes that “affect substantive rights or obligations under this Treaty.” He asserts that missiles on rail cars constitute a loophole in the Treaty. But the last Russian rail-based missiles were deactivated in 2008. If Russia decided to build new ones, they would count under the overall limits on ICBM’s and their launchers. He also bemoans that New START does not “apply the MIRV limits that were part of the prior START treaty.” But there were no MIRV limits in START I, and START II never entered into force. He objects to New START’s counting of bombers as just a single weapon, even though they can carry multiple warheads. But this provision favors the U.S, given our bomber advantage, and reflects the position of Ronald Reagan, who originally proposed not counting bombers at all in START I.

Governor Romney also cites Russia’s stockpile of tactical nuclear weapons as a reason to oppose New START. Russia does have more tactical weapons than we do, but he distorts their value by implying that they constitute a serious missile threat to Europe. In fact, most of Russia’s tactical nuclear weapons either have very short ranges, are used for homeland air defense, are devoted to the Chinese border, or are in storage. He also ignores that our NATO allies have endorsed the New START Treaty. A Russian attack on NATO countries is effectively deterred by NATO conventional superiority, our own tactical nuclear forces, French and British nuclear arsenals, and U.S. strategic forces. An agreement with Russia that reduced, accounted for, and improved security around tactical nuclear arsenals is in the interest of both nations. But these weapons do not compromise our strategic deterrent.

Rejecting the Treaty would guarantee that no agreement on tactical nukes would occur. It also would mean giving up our human verification presence in Russia that has contributed greatly to strategic stability under the expired START I Treaty. Having inspectors on the ground in Russia has meant that we have not had to wonder about the make-up of Russian strategic forces. New START would strengthen our non-proliferation diplomacy worldwide, limit potential arms competition, and help us focus our defense resources effectively. It offers concrete national security benefits that will make the American people safer, and it should be ratified.

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