



NWIP FACT SHEET

Russia

Russia is estimated to have about 4,850 strategic nuclear warheads and 3,400 tactical nuclear weapons, but estimates of the tactical Russian arsenals vary widely. The Russian nuclear program is a triad of sea-, air-, and land-based missiles.

Russia has made dramatic reductions in its nuclear arsenals since the Cold War but a limiting factor is the lack of funding for dismantlement. US intelligence estimates that Russian nuclear arsenals will be reduced to less than 2,000 warheads by the year 2015 due to economic reasons.

Russia continues to test launch its intercontinental ballistic missiles and continues to replace some of its missiles. The Russian submarine fleet has been dramatically reduced and it only has a few bombers left with a nuclear mission.

Russia has now assured control of all nuclear weapons stationed in different parts of the former Soviet Union including weapons in Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus.

According to the Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty (SORT) that was ratified by the Russian Duma in 2003, Russia shall reduce their strategic nuclear arsenals to between 1,500 and 2,200 warheads. The Treaty does not restrict tactical weapons and Russia is believed to maintain 3,000 tactical nuclear weapons.

The Soviet Union detonated its first atomic bomb in August 1949 as a response to the start of the Cold War. Since the 1970s the United States and Russia have been engaged in disarmament talks and have signed a number of bilateral disarmament agreements. Including the Ant-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM) that limits the building of missile defences, which the US withdrew from shortly after George W. Bush was elected president. Russia has an out-dated missile defence system protecting the capital, but has no capacity to match a US National Missile Defence System and the Russian reaction to such a system would most likely be to up-grade their weapon systems so that they would ensure continued deterrence capacity.

One of the main issues regarding Russian nuclear arsenals is the safeguarding of fissile material and nuclear arsenals. Russian nuclear weapon systems have fallen into disrepair and the security at nuclear sites is under all critique. Currently there is estimated to be 20 tons of surplus plutonium and 500 tons of surplus highly enriched uranium in the former Soviet Union and it is unclear whether all small nuclear suitcase bombs are all accounted for. There is therefore a serious risk that fissile material will or already has fallen into unauthorized hands. The US has recently invested 10 billion \$ in safeguarding Russian arsenals and NATO has pledged a similar amount of money.

The military and political power of Russia has decreased tremendously since the Cold War and the Russian economy is worse than ever. Russia face huge public health challenges like a spreading HIV/AIDS epidemic and adult literacy rates have been falling over the last years. In the long run Russia cannot obtain a reasonable level of development as long as military budgets stay high because of the need to maintain nuclear weapon programs. On the other hand there is so little left of the former Soviet super power status that it is unlikely that Russia will abandon its weapons programs unless it is part of a global disarmament regime.

Russia has signed and ratified the CTBT and is a signatory to the NPT as one of the five official nuclear weapon states.

Key indicators of development

- * Life expectancy at birth: 66.6 years
- * Adult literacy rate: 99.6%
- * GDP per capita: 7,100\$
- * 53 % of the population live on under 4\$ a day
- * Public health expenditure is 3.7 % of the GDP
- * Under-five mortality rate is 18 per 1000 live births