

Russia 'Hopeful' After U.S. Senators Urge Weapons Dialogue – Lawmakers

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Konstantin Kosachev, the head of the International Affairs Committee in Federation Council **Stanislav Krasilnikov** / TASS

Russian lawmakers have said they are “hopeful” after U.S. Senators sent a letter to the Secretary of State urging dialogue with Russia over arms control.

Three Democratic senators, joined by independent Senator Bernie Sanders, sent a letter to Secretary of State Rex Tillerson on Thursday calling for U.S.-Russia strategic dialogue. The senators said that arms control had become more urgent following President Putin’s public address on March 1 which [presented](#) Russia’s improved nuclear capabilities.

Related article: [Nuclear Weapons and Economic Woes: The Highlights of Putin’s Federal Assembly Address](#)

Konstantin Kosachev, the chairman of the [Federation Council's](#) foreign affairs committee, said in a Facebook post on Friday that the U.S. initiative for dialogue was a “reasonable reaction to the president's address.”

“We hope that a reasonable modification to U.S. international security policy will follow,” Kosachev added.

In their letter, Senators Markey, Merkley, Feinstein and Sanders called for the U.S. to “urgently engage with Russia to avoid miscalculation and reduce the likelihood of conflict.”

Federation Council deputy Alexei Pushkov hinted that the U.S. had “sobered up” after hearing about Russia's new nuclear weapons.

“U.S. Senators have called for discussions with Russia over nuclear weapons for the first time. Sometimes it's helpful to communicate what weapons you have at your disposal. It sobers [people] up,” he [tweeted](#) on Friday.

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