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Biden State Pick Calls For Extending New START With Russia

By AFP

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Russian Defence Ministry

Antony Blinken, President-elect Joe Biden's nominee for secretary of state, said Tuesday the incoming administration would seek to extend New START, the last U.S. arms pact with Russia, which expires February 5.

"I think we're going to seek an extension," Blinken said in response to a question at his Senate confirmation hearing.

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"I know we will be coming to you very quickly, almost immediately, to discuss that," Blinken said of the Senate.

Russian President Vladimir Putin last year proposed a one-year extension on New START,

which caps the number of nuclear warheads between the two powers.

President Donald Trump's administration had unsuccessfully sought to expand the treaty to bring in China, which has a fast-growing military that remains significantly smaller than those of Russia and the United States.

The Trump administration late last year appeared willing to accept an extension but wanted it conditional on Russia halting military advancements in the interim period.

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