

Lavrov Urges U.S. to Match Russia's Offer of New START Extension

November 11, 2025



A Russian Yars intercontinental ballistic missile launcher. **Russian Defense Ministry**

Russia is ready to continue observing numerical limits outlined in the New START nuclear arms reduction treaty for another year if the United States does the same, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov [said](#) Tuesday.

Set to expire in February 2026, the New START Treaty was largely thought to be abandoned after Russia [suspended](#) participation without withdrawing from it in 2023.

President Vladimir Putin [announced](#) in September that he was [prepared](#) to adhere to the treaty's caps of 1,550 deployed nuclear warheads and 800 delivery systems for an additional year.

“We’ve repeatedly said that this proposal is our unilateral gesture of goodwill. For the U.S. to support our approach, no negotiations or consultations are necessary,” Lavrov told media outlets in an interview.

“All that’s required is for Washington to simply state that it won’t increase the quantitative levels set by [New START] for one year,” he said in comments that were also published on the Foreign Ministry website.

Russia’s top diplomat suggested that Washington could announce a decision at any time before New START’s expiration on Feb. 5. However, he also warned that Moscow would resume nuclear testing if another nuclear power did so first.

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At the same time, Lavrov dismissed American claims of “suspicious underground activities” at Russian test sites, but said Moscow was open to discussing the allegations.

U.S. President Donald Trump has accused Russia and China of testing nuclear weapons and said he had ordered the Pentagon to resume nuclear weapons testing “on an equal basis” with other nuclear-armed states. Trump’s remarks followed Putin’s announcement that Russia had carried out tests of its nuclear-powered, nuclear-capable weapons systems.

Lavrov denied Trump’s claims and said Washington could check whether Russia tested a nuclear warhead via the global seismic monitoring system.

“Other tests, both subcritical, or those without a chain nuclear reaction, and carrier tests, have never been prohibited,” he said.

Lavrov called on the world’s two largest nuclear nations to “cool off, analyze the situation and look at the responsibility of the great powers toward global security and the prevention of nuclear war.”

His remarks followed days of media speculation that he had “fallen out of favor” with Putin after Trump suspended a planned summit with the Russian leader in Budapest last month.

Kremlin spokesman [dismissed](#) the claims as “untrue” on Friday.

Lavrov confirmed in Tuesday’s interview that Russia remains open to preparing a proposed U.S.-Russia summit in Budapest.

AFP contributed reporting.

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