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by Dave DeCamp

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Arms Control Experts Criticize US for Not Sending Russia Proposal to Curb Nuclear Weapons Deployments

Jake Sullivan suggested last month that the US was ready for talks with Russia 'without preconditions' but never sent the proposal to Moscow

Arms control experts [have criticized the Biden administration](#) for failing to send a proposal to Russia on maintaining limits on nuclear weapons deployments that was publicly floated by National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan last month.

Sullivan said on June 2 that the US was willing to open talks with Russia on a “framework” to preserve curbs on nuclear arms deployments after 2026, the final year of New START, the last nuclear arms control treaty between the two powers.

While Russia has suspended its participation in New START, both sides have said they will continue complying with the treaty’s limits. New START caps the deployment of nuclear warheads for both sides at 1,550 and also restricts the deployment of nuclear bombers, submarines, and intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Sullivan said the US was open to talks on the issue “without preconditions.” But last week, [Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov said](#) Russia had not received any proposals from the US on resuming arms control talks. He added that Moscow has studied what Sullivan said publicly and said Russia was not interested in negotiations until the US changes its “hostile” policies against Russia, referring to the proxy war in Ukraine.

“I would like to say that we are not ready to and will not conduct this dialogue based on what the Americans are now proposing, as they ignore several key points in this entire configuration,” Ryabkov said. “We must first and foremost make sure that the US policy, which is fundamentally hostile toward Russia, is changing for the better for us. That is far from happening now and, I would rather say that the opposite is going on.”

Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association, told *Reuters* that he believes Ryabkov’s statement still leaves open the possibility for eventual negotiations. “My

interpretation is that there is still scope for the US to communicate about what they are interested in,” he said.

Kimball said there is “no excuse that the administration has delayed for nearly two months the formal communication of this proposal to the Kremlin.” He said such negotiations would be “difficult in good times and extraordinarily difficult so long as Russia’s war on Ukraine continues.”

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