

WIN WITHOUT WAR



Progressive Foreign Policy Debrief

Intel for Advocacy

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SL: Two Steps Closer to Nuclear War

The Takeaway:

- Donald Trump's decision to withdraw from the Open Skies Treaty and threats to resume nuclear testing are outrageous. They're also a part of a wider pattern. His reckless approach to nuclear weapons endangers us all.
- Trump's actions should be viewed for what they are: attacks on global cooperation, threats to human security, and efforts to undermine decades of progress on nuclear nonproliferation before the potential end of his term.
- Confronting the security threats of the 21st century — from pandemics to nuclear war — means ending these unilateral provocations and putting diplomacy and cooperation first.

Trump's Foreign Policy Invites Nuclear Catastrophe

Apparently when Donald Trump said he would “make America great again” he meant he would return us to a time when nuclear war felt imminent. In the last two weeks, Trump has announced his intention to withdraw from the Open Skies Treaty, threatened to conduct the first U.S. nuclear test in decades, and done nothing to quell concerns that the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) would be next on the chopping block. And these moves are just the latest in Trump's new nuclear arms race.

Blatantly attacking the very things our security demands most — global cooperation, multilateralism, and diplomacy — Donald Trump has managed to reverse decades of progress on nuclear nonproliferation. At each step of the way, he has marched the world ever closer to nuclear disaster.

Closing The Skies

The Open Skies Treaty is an agreement between 35 countries — the United States, Russia, much of Europe, and others — allowing state parties to make unarmed surveillance flights over the others. For nearly two decades, Open Skies has helped reduce the risk of nuclear conflict by promoting transparency, building trust, and preventing misunderstandings between countries. Last week, Trump announced his intention to [withdraw](#) from the pact in direct contravention of widespread support both [at home](#) and [abroad](#). This decision — done in willful violation of the

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congressional mandate to inform legislators before beginning a withdrawal process — does little but raise mistrust and heighten the risk of nuclear war.

The Nuclear Arms Race Starting Gun

To make matters worse, senior officials have [begun](#) talking about restarting nuclear testing, something that no country on earth except North Korea has done this century. A U.S. nuclear test would shatter this ceasefire, [encourage](#) other nuclear powers to restart their programs, and kicking the ongoing nuclear arms race into overdrive. Not only that, a new nuclear test could release devastating nuclear fallout into the local environment, and as Lilly Adams of the Union of Concerned Scientists explains, [would be a slap in the face for the communities](#), often Indigenous, that have long [suffered](#) the [consequences](#) of U.S. nuclear testing.

Gambling With New START

But we might just be at the beginning. The withdrawal from Open Skies, talk of nuclear testing, and the earlier [unilateral withdrawal](#) from the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, have added to long-held [fears](#) that Trump will also pull the United States out of New START, a critical agreement between the United States and Russia limiting stockpiles of nuclear warheads and weapons that can deliver warheads, and establishing joint monitoring mechanisms. New START is set to expire next year, and extension negotiations are planned to begin shortly. But the Trump administration has [insisted](#) it will back out of the treaty unless China is roped in — a straw man argument to duck out of extending New START with Russia. There's no reason why the United States shouldn't pursue arms control with China and other nuclear-armed states, but it needn't do so at the expense of a treaty governing (by far) the world's largest nuclear powers.

A Pattern of Recklessness

These are not isolated incidents. Since he first stepped foot in office, Donald Trump has been unerring from the path to nuclear war. In less than four years, Trump has unilaterally [withdrawn](#) from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the Iran nuclear deal; [shredded](#) the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, the nonproliferation agreement best known for its role in ending the Cold War; taken an [inconsistent](#), self-serving, and often antagonistic approach to negotiations with North Korea, potentially leaving relations [worse off](#) than when he began; and more. Oh yeah, he also [wanted](#) to nuke hurricanes.

Compounding Trump's damage to arms control, he has also taken steps to massively expand the U.S.'s own nuclear arsenal. During his presidency, Trump has deployed a new "low-yield" nuclear weapon that his administration believes is [more usable](#) than other weapons in the arsenal, and undertaken a nuclear spending spree, with his most recent budget [increasing spending](#) by 20 percent — while cutting funds for [nuclear clean-up](#), not to mention other major [cuts](#) to the State Department and USAID. Far from making the United States safer, Trump is fueling the nuclear arms race and bringing us all closer to nuclear war.

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With the possibility of an end to his presidency looming on the horizon, Trump is doing everything in his power to blow up these hard-fought nonproliferation victories. All of his disastrous policies stem from the distinctly Trumpian — and dangerously unfounded — worldview that treats any and all cooperation as suspect and sees aggression as the only, zero-sum solution to the world's problems.

In reality, the opposite is true. In the face of the 21st century's true threats to human security — from nuclear war to pandemics to the climate crisis — we are in urgent need of *more* cooperation, not less. As Trump marches the world toward nuclear disaster, it's up to us to stand in his way.

ONE LAST CHANCE: Support Win Without War (Without Paying A Dime)!

Vote in [this poll](#) to help Win Without War win a share of a \$150,000 grant from CREDO. Voting closes May 31 and more votes means more funding for our work to end endless war — *your vote really does count!*

More Organizations Fighting to End the Threat of Nuclear War:

[Arms Control Association](#) · [Beyond the Bomb](#) · [Council for a Livable World](#) · [Friends Committee on National Legislation](#) · [Global Zero](#) · [Nuclear Age Peace Foundation](#) · [Nuclear Watch New Mexico](#) · [Peace Action](#) · [Ploughshares Fund](#) · [Physicians for Social Responsibility](#) · [Tri-Valley CARES](#) · [Union of Concerned Scientists](#) · [Women's Action for a New Direction \(WAND\)](#)

BURIED LEDES

More money for arms dealers? While the newest [coronavirus relief bill](#) does not provide additional funding for the Pentagon, it unfortunately *does allow defense contractors to bill the DoD for things like executives' salaries and marketing expenses.*

A mere two weeks after Trump fired the man investigating, among other things, an \$8 billion Saudi arms sale agreement from 2019, **Trump is looking to sell Saudi Arabia [even more weapons](#).** Nearly 22,000 Win Without War supporters have spoken out against these moves, urging Congress to enact a five-year ban on arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

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The UN Human Rights chief is [urging the U.S.](#) to put an end to police killings of African Americans and to bring the perpetrators to justice.

Call center workers in the Philippines are being forced to sleep on the ground and work without PPE to keep the profits flowing for U.S. companies. But labor unions are [mobilizing](#) in international solidarity to fight these unsafe conditions.

China [passed a law](#) this week **increasing surveillance and limiting rights and freedoms in Hong Kong**, provoking immediate reactions in Washington.

The House [passed a targeted sanctions bill](#) to hold Chinese government officials accountable for putting Uighurs into internment camps and denying them religious freedom since 2018...

...a potentially welcome step in theory, but no doubt **fueled by attempts to fearmonger China, as tensions between the countries [reach](#) dangerous levels.**

...Trump has unsurprisingly taken this terrifying cold war in racist directions, **as he is reportedly considering [denying and revoking the visas](#) of thousands of Chinese students** he believes have ties with the Chinese military. (Florida Senator Rick Scott has gone one step further, [claiming](#) all Chinese citizens are “Communist spies”)

Yet more evidence of Trump’s dangerous approach to nukes: the U.S. [has dismantled](#) another part of the JCPOA, **ending sanctions waivers that allowed countries to work on Iranian nuclear sites to ensure the sites were used for non-weapon purposes.**

And finally, **a mosaic was discovered this week under an Italian vineyard.** Archaeologists have been trying to find the remains of this [centuries-old villa](#) for decades.