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Executive Summary

The Future of New START and the Prospects of Global Strategic Stability



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*This article is written based on the author's personal opinions
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Executive Summary

- Soon-to-expire New START between the United States and the Russian Federation and the Emergence of the China Variable

- The international community is paying attention to the future of New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty 2010 (New START) between the U.S. and Russia, which is set to expire on February 5, 2021. The U.S. and Russian strategic weapon stockpile has drawn down by more than 85% from its Cold War high through START-1 (1991) and New START (2010).
- Now, as of September 2020, an absence of negotiations on the future of New START challenges the global strategic stability. The “U.S.-China hegemony competition,” which was difficult to assume in 1991 and 2010 but became a newly important variable in global strategic stability, is feeding this challenge. The U.S. is not making a rash decision.

- Trump Administration’s Reluctance to Further Negotiate on Reduction and the Test of the Global Strategic Stability

- The U.S.-Russia-led nuclear arms race since the Cold War remains unchanged. In light of political realism in international relations, the Trump administration seems to no longer want a START-style arms control after New START expires on February 5, 2021 under the new international strategic environment. There is an option to extend the treaty for another five years. The Trump administration’s *2018 Nuclear Posture Review* and Joe Biden, the Democratic presidential candidate, support the extension. However, for the first time since 1991, the U.S. and Russia could make own decisions to reduce or increase their strategic armaments in line with changes in circumstances

and judgments over the next five months. An expiration of New START is the end of the last bilateral strategic arms control treaty signed between the U.S. and Russia during the Cold War, as the ABM Treaty (1972) expired in 2002 and the INF Treaty (1987) expired in 2019.

□ Prospects for the U.S.-Russia Strategic Relations and the Global Strategic Stability After the Expiration of New START

- This paper suggests difficulties in creating a new comprehensive, verifiable strategic arms reduction treaty between the U.S. and Russia in the form of START (1991, 2010) after the expiration of New START (February 5, 2021), and presents three alternative scenarios: (i) Agree to extend New START for another five years; (ii) permanently end the Cold War-based strategic arms control between the U.S. and Russia; (iii) adopt a loose and simple, SORT(Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty, 2002)-style nuclear warheads reduction treaty. The current and future global strategic stability will differ under each of these scenarios. In addition, amid the U.S. persistent concerns over the development of the “Chinese” strategic weapons, this paper proposes the possibility that the U.S., Russia, and China may negotiate a new 3-party arms control treaty of the 21st century.

□ Policy Implications for South Korea

- In light of the uncertain future of New START and the global competition drawn by the U.S., Russia, and China, South Korea needs to adopt alternative policies regarding its foreign affairs, national security, and national defense.♣

※ Translator's note: This is a summarized unofficial translation of the original paper which was written in Korean. All references should be made to the original paper.