[United States with drawl from the INF Treaty: What’s next for International Security?]

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# United States with drawl from the INF Treaty: What’s next for International Security?

# Introduction

The United States with drawl from the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (known as the INF treaty) is the recent big decision by the Oval Office. The White House has officially confirmed on February 1st in 2019 that the United States will no longer be a party to the treaty. Many in the present administration has claimed tis treaty as the ageing treaty, which they believe constrains the U.S in many ways. Some also claims that Russians have never complied themselves with the provisions of the INF treaty. This treaty was signed back in 1987, between the then Soviet Union and the U.S, just to curb the nuclear race between the arch rivals of that time(Reif 2019).

The present administration in Washington consider China as a looming threat and believes that China is on the receiving edge, if the U.S keeps on its commitments with the INF provisions. This shows that at present the U.S considers China as a more prominent threat as compare to Russia. This with- drawl has swerve repercussions on the global nuclear order and as well contradicts with the NATO’s security assessment of the European continent(Kühn 2019). The experts of the International security opines that since Europe would be at the loosing edge, therefor the administrations there should work on framing a new and a more sophisticated Nuclear constrain pact. They also opine that the stake holder both in the Europe and in Russia must work on agreeing towards stabilization measures, as the INF with- drawl seriously threatens the peace and security of the U.S, Europe and Russia(Reif 2019).

*Origins of the INF:*The INF treaty has its origins in the Russian deployment of its missile known as the SS-20. With its deployment, U.S considered it a massive threat to its security, as it was capable of carrying three nuclear weapons with a very less delivery time. To this move of the Russia, the U.S responded by deploying its missile the Cruise and Pershing II that were based in Europe. To come over with this threat, the U.S administration led by then President Ronald Reagan and the administration of Mikhail S. Gorbachev remained in a continuous set of negotiations. These diplomatic efforts resulted in the signing of the INF treaty in the year 1987(Sargana 2019).

 The prominent threat emanating from the crisis of that time was the deployment of intermediate- range missiles that were just on the hair trigger alert. Their flight range was less than ten minutes that raised the threats in the U.S, in Europe and in the Soviet Union too. The security analysts that have a command on the security matters between the U.S and Russia opines that Russia was on the losing edge as it could have been destroyed like the bolt from the blue. To overcome this threat, the reports of that time suggests that the Soviet administration allowed the lower defense command to retaliate without the prior order from the leadership(Sokov 2019). In the international security context it is known as the Dead hand. The dead hand mainly works on the radar guidance and involves less human interference. The INF treaty is specific about the land based missiles, it scope does not covers the sea based variants or the air based variants of the missile technologies(Richter 2019).

*Problem Statement:* Since the scope of this essay is concerned about the future of International security in context of with- drawl from the INF treaty, this essay will analyze the development of new formations of weapons deployment considering the abandonment of the INF treaty and the future of international alliances.

The following research will be divided into three sections. The first section will include the theoretical understanding of the subject in context of the Barry Buzan’s Regional Security Complex theory. The section will include the debate about the possible impacts on the U.S after withdrawing from the INF treaty. The research problem will also be sorted out in this section under a separate heading titled *New Formations and Future Alliances.* The third section of this research will answer the question as to what is next for the International security. A thorough conclusion will also be the part of this section.

# Theoretical posture supporting the Context

The International Relations discourse always is set on the discourse of the security. Security in context of the people’s welfare, in context of the state’s sovereignty and in context of the regional stability remains the primary contours of in every discourse. The scholars have many time put the States in the center and has debated on what next can be achieved for maximizing the security of the state. The realist school which remains dominant consider security as a synonym of power(Buzan 2008). Much is the power, more is the state safe. Many argues that the security as the synonym of power was relevant in the World Wars context. The cold war and the many other inventions in the weaponry resulted in widening of the concept of the Security. Some adds to this that environmental protection, the protection from the domestic threats and the maximization of measures in each context for state also comes in the traditional notion of the state security(Buzan et al. 2003). There is a bunch of data available about the security paradigm and how it is evolving, also many scholars has worked to explore what could new be added to it.

Since the topic been discussed in this research essay is related to the regional security mechanism, therefor Barry Buzan’s regional security complex theory will be used as a guiding tool to narrow the scope of this research. Barry Buzan opines that security is still very narrowly discussed(Buzan 2008). He has offered in his writing a very broad context of security, which is in a regional sense. In his this theory he has considered new paradigms of state security, which were not previously discussed. While remaining too holistic in his approach towards security, he has incorporated the societal and environmental aspect to the level of regions. He considers each aspect of individual state security on the level of region(Buzan 2008). Since the topic being discussed includes the American region, the East European region and to some aspects the Asian region, therefore this theory will be used as a guiding tool to sort out the regional security mechanism in this case.

Regional security complex theory posits the regional- sub systems as objects of security analysis, therefore the U.S integrated military command with the NATO and the Russian military makeover with its partner states comes at competitions if any security mechanism (the INF in this case) is disturbed. Such regional contours in this case will remain the primary drivers for the situation that will then unfold. The theory also consider the state as *one* unit and the political and military sector as the units collaborating with it(Watson 2009). Therefore, the political and military sections both at the U.S side and at the Russian side must work collaboratively to undo the dangerous situation which then unfolds if they both completely quits themselves from the INF treaty. Since Barry Buzan mentions that insecurity as associated with proximity, but in the case between the U.S and the Russia, it would be taken as the lower flight timings. The last aspect of the theory relevant to this case remains the interdependence on neighbors, since the security fate of Europe and the whole American continent remains attached with the security mechanism of both U.S and Russia therefore this is how the last point of Buzan’s theory conforms to this matrix of security. Since this inter- mingled security patterns both at the part of Russia and the U.S conforms to Buzan’s theory, therefore this theory is much relevant to this research.

# Impact on the National Security

There are differing views as to how the U.S decision of quitting from the INF treaty could impact on the national security. Many of the experts opine that the Russian regime if not has completely violated the INF terms, it so has tried to do that(Buzan 2004). They believe that, that it is why the U.S felt itself compelled to look into the things as what could be done to better the situation. Before the both sides could have sorted the emerging differences, the U.S administration opted to quit form the INF terms. Here comes two perspectives, as to how this decision of the U.S could impact on the national security. One impact could have been generated if the U.S could have coerced the Russia to comply with the terms of the treaty and the other is what has happened- the U.S with- drawl(Sokov 2019). The following paragraphs will now analyze the possible impacts in both the cases as to what could be the impact on the U.S security.

Since as the result of the treaty, both the states dismantled around 2600 ground based missiles in total, which includes the ground based cruise missile also. The U.S allies in the Europe felt the sense of extreme stabilization at the time, and it was thought by many of the International security experts of that time that an unlimited stabilization could now be experienced in the region(Wanis-St John 2019). Taking forward this notion, stability as both the upper and lower level at present exist in Europe(Wanis-St John 2019). But if in the case of total abandonment, the European stability comes again in question with the NATO compliance of deploying missiles in this case. This decision has for this reason made the European allies of the U.S apprehensive of this move. The unilateral decision of the U.S of quitting from the treaty brings for them a new era of instability. As once the U.S formally quits the treaty, it has been mentioned a lot that then it will be difficult to compel Russia to comply with the terms of the treaty(Nichols 2019).

Since the INF treaty does not limits the testing of new weapons, neither it restrains form developing and deploying the air based variants of the missiles and the sea based cruise missiles, therefore considering the massive stockpiles of the weapons it has least impact on the security of the U.S. The one bad aspect for the U.S security remains that this move will surely make Russia to deploy and develop new variants of the cruise missile that will then (to an estimated) range could be threatening for the security of the U.S. As Nicolas mentions that U.S is both at the receiving and the loosing edge under the terms of the INF treaty(Nichols 2019). Since the U.S calculations includes the Chinese cruise missile threat also, and U.S feels itself compelled to gear up against the Chinese threat, therefor some analysts speaks in favor of the Trump’s administration’s decision of quitting from the INF treaty. In short, it is too early to exactly narrow down the impacts of U.S with- drawl from the INF treaty on its security.

# New formations and future of International Alliances:

Once both the states are completely done with the INF treaty and there remains no compulsions over them for developing and deploying the land based cruise missiles, the new formations and the International politico- security conditions will become apparent. The most apparent threat that emanates from the INF with- drawl is the instability in terms of weapons race. Asia and Europe will significantly see a new arms race that will change their political situations and their international alliances structures. Once the U.S decides to deploy the cruise missiles in Europe to ward- off the threat of Russia, it will involve new set of political engagements between the U.S and the European countries. The European partners in this regard will also have analyze from a whole new their relations with China. Considering the mega- economic bunch of arrangements between China and European countries and the Japan, Philippines and the South Korea factor, it appears this time hard for the U.S to create a favorable strategic situation for itself(Kühn 2019).

There is another factor in making of the new alliances at this part of the World and that is the South China and East China naval crisis of the U.S(Shambaugh 2013). As because of the recent year’s strategic engagements of both the U.S and China at this part of the world remained too stringent, therefore this will remain consequential for the future of Asia. Western Pacific Allies of the U.S which has traditional remained against the deployment of the land-based nuclear weapons, this provides the reasons to the U.S administration if they go towards harnessing their naval capabilities or creating new sea- based weapons. Also Japan seems not likely to carry on new set of difficult relations with China, as it can trigger domestic conflicts and other deployment issues could emerge. Coping this trend, both the Philippines and Australia will not put themselves in a difficult condition with China.

The last remaining in the row is Europe. U.S seems in a position to make the European leaders believed on its words. The reason to this is as the U.S authorities claim that they have briefed the European allies about the Russian violations of the INF treaty back in 2017. To this the European authorities released a statement calling Russia to transparently comply with the terms of the INF treaty. This was added with John Mattis briefings to the Defense Ministers of the NATO countries about the continuance of the Russian violations. Again at this time the NATO called on to the Russian authorities to comply with the terms of the INF treaty but it remained again null and void. This was finally ended with the President’s announcement of with drawl from the INF treaty. Therefor the security experts opine that this must not be considered as a surprise by both the European and the NATO allies.(Taheran 2019) Since Europe remains crucial for both the U.S and China, along with Russia, therefore the Europeans will remain crucial in making of next alliances. It is also believed that the Europeans have the idea of how to tackle with the present crisis and how to unroll the circumstances if a new INF treaty is ought for.

# What’s next for the International Security?

In view of the contemporary developments, it is at present much difficult to precisely analyze that how this situation will unfold. There are some facets for this claim. For example, the U.S withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Actions (JCPOA), erosion of the treaty of conventional armed forces in Europe, the South China and East China Sea crisis, the Afghan end game, the India- Pakistan dogfights, the Syrian Crisis and the much debated the INF withdrawal. The international security situation depends on all such factors to take a shape in any time near future. At part of the U.S, there much negative propaganda about the President Donald Trump, that he is like an imperfect person in the Oval Office. This propaganda is attached to the unpredictability at the U.S part. The other important factor in this domain is of China. China at present dominates all the alliances of the U.S. It is in good economic terms with Russia, with European countries, with many countries of South Asia and many countries in the South Africa. Considering all such aspects the U.S, China, Russia and the European Union are the key players of the upcoming situation. What could be their inputs to this “*Next*”, the following paragraphs will analyze that.

 For the United States, both the China and the Russia are the real threats. To come up with good terms on that, the U.S seems not interested- as it disturbs the status- co image of the U.S. Also if U.S opts in normalizing relations with them, it has to consider cuts in its weapons development, deployments and has to call of her strategic forces from major strategic areas in the world. U.S might not opt to go for this. China on other hand at present is focused on materializing the OBOR dream(Stokes 2019). It therefor will never at any cost try to disturb the strategically calm situation. As the stability can just ensure the proper materialization of the OBOR dream. Then comes Russia. Many experts opines that Russia remains every time aggressive towards the International developments. For Russia, maintaining good relations with China are crucial, and same is the case with its relations with the European world. It will not annoy them, as they remain crucial for its own stability. The last is the European countries. The World Wars episodes and the Cold War episode have taught great lesson to the European World. They are therefore much fast in the Cost- benefit analysis. It must not come to surprise for anybody, if these countries opt to go neutral in any dangerous conditions- if in case develops. Therefor there are many reasons to analyze that the International security environment will remain strategically stable in the years to come- as like the strategic stability and instability paradox suggests. It means there will be stability on the upper level, but at the lower level there will remain instability, and there will remain the factors which will not allow the lower instable factors to take on the upper seat.

# Conclusion

However, considering the developing situations related to the INF withdrawal, it is too early to think that the circumstances will result negative for both sides. There are many options still which suggest that the crisis will not result in the most adverse manner. There still remains the option of re- assessment of the breaches of both sides, this has yet to be exhausted. There is also an opportunity that these crisis be turned as an opportunity for the re- initiating the dialogue on the INF treaty. The situations of the past suggest that whenever such ambiguity has existed the nuclear ambiguity could result in the devastation of any region. The crisis always opens the ways for misjudgments and creates a sense of instability at tall facets. The concern at hand should be the re- evaluation of the INF treaty, as like the stable International strategic environment suggests.

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