



Russia able to stave off US nuclear threat until 2020

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Following the article published in the American journal *Foreign Affairs*, the US State Department has released data on the balance of nuclear armaments between Russia and the United States. Judging by this data, the USA can only dream of attaining the supremacy which the article reported on in such detail.

According to the State Department data, on the 1st January 2006 Russia had 4399 nuclear warheads, whilst the USA had 5966. However Russia had the upper hand concerning throw weight (the weight of the last stage of the missile's warhead) - 2547.7 metric tons as opposed to 1797.9 metric tons.

The USA has 500 launch installations for Minutemen-III ground based ballistic missiles (1200 missiles in total) and 50 launch installations for Peacekeeper missiles (500 missiles in total). Missile-carrying submarines have 432 launching tubes for Trident-I and Trident-II missiles (3168 warheads in total). In the USA 243 strategic bombers have been deployed (81 B-1 planes, 20 B-2 and 142 B-52) which are armed with 1098 warheads.

Russia has 663 launch installations for CC-18, CC-19, CC-25 and PC-12M missiles which are equipped with 2183 warheads. Russian submarines have 292 launching tubes and 1592 warheads. Russia is also armed with 78 strategic bombers (14 Ty-160 and 64 Ty-95 planes) which are able to carry 624 warheads, reports the site *Washington ProFile*.

It must be added that this data was released as part of the Russian-American treaty "On the reduction of strategic offensive armaments".

In turn the former chief of the General Staff of Russia's strategic missile forces General-Colonel Viktor Esin announced that until 2020 the USA's anti-missile defense systems will not be able to limit the effectiveness of Russian strategic nuclear forces.

He says that most Russian intercontinental ballistic missiles are equipped with powerful complexes for passing through anti-missile defense systems. "Moreover the creation of new missile complexes such as Topol-M, Bulava and others provides for the technical solutions which will render the anti-missile equipment developed by the Americans wholly ineffective," said Esin.

One of these solutions will be nuclear warheads capable of deviating from their flight trajectory and therefore evading the counter missiles.

However, American anti-missile defense systems might have a substantial influence on the effectiveness of Russian nuclear containment. That will happen if the anti-missile defense systems take on a different guise and are moved to within direct proximity of Russia's borders.

"In that situation Russia will have to take additional measures to counteract the anti-missile defense systems, so that their own nuclear potential is not devalued," said Esin.

"The Russian industrial-defense complex has the necessary reserves to counter this threat," *Interfax* quotes the general.

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Translated by James Platt

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