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### **The Politics of US-Russian Arms Control**

The onset of a crisis in US-Russian and global arms control has generated manifold proposals on ways to rejuvenate productive negotiations on weapons cuts and confidence building measures. Yet most of these plans are focused on technical details while failing to capture the central role of politics—both domestic and international—in enabling arms control. More importantly, many observers overlook the fact that historically US-Russian arms control negotiations only yielded concrete results when the sides were clear about their mutual intentions. Those intentions did not need to be cooperative; they could well be adversarial (as was the case during much of the Cold War), but for arms control to work, they had to remain at a stable, tested and predictable level, which is clearly not the case at the end of the 2010s. To expect US-Russian arms control to regain its lost momentum by itself and salvage the political relationship would be to misunderstand the sources and context of past achievements in bilateral arms control.