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TLAM-N and SLCM-N: Lessons for Extended Deterrence and Assuring Allies

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Introduction

The United States counts over 30 other states around the world as its allies, all of which have unique threat perceptions, assurance requirements, capabilities and vulnerabilities. Some amount of friction in these alliance relationships is inevitable owing to competing priorities and limited resources, but the United States has generally worked diligently to maintain good relations with its allies—seeking allies’ cooperation rather than grudging obedience. To help secure and maintain these alliances, the United States has extended deterrence threats against common adversaries on behalf of its allies. A parallel and closely related goal is to assure allies that they can rely on the United States to contribute to their security in return for helping the United States advance and defend common interests.

Allied confidence in the United States, however, is not static and shifts in reaction to changes in allies’ domestic politics, the broader security environment, or dissatisfaction with U.S. policies. The latter variable is most within U.S. control since Washington is able to consult



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with allied leaderships regularly to understand their concerns and adjust its policies. Today, it is readily apparent that some allies are dissatisfied with the way the United States has approached the requirements for extended deterrence and assurance, a dynamic that is most clearly seen in the realm of U.S. nuclear weapons policy and capabilities.

The United States must therefore examine whether, and to what extent, its own policies and actions have contributed to the deterioration in alliance relationships, particularly in the related areas of extended deterrence and assurance. When Washington's policies create unintended problems for extended deterrence and assurance, it is Washington that then must seek to ameliorate those problems it has created for the alliance and itself. This is an unfortunate circle of Washington engendering alliance problems that it must then acknowledge and address.

An illuminating case study in this regard is the U.S. on-again and off-again pursuit of nuclear-armed sea-launched cruise missiles, specifically the Tomahawk Land Attack Missile (TLAM-N) and the Sea-Launched Cruise Missile (SLCM-N). This history illustrates how Washington's policies and actions—mainly stemming from its commitment to reducing the number and role of nuclear weapons—have contributed to allies' increasing doubts regarding the credibility of U.S. extended deterrence, and thus increased the potential for nuclear proliferation. In short, the United States has often created a vicious cycle by causing allies to doubt the credibility of U.S. nuclear deterrence threats and its reliability as a security partner, and subsequently proposing "fixes" that fail to address the underlying nature of allied doubts.

This case study examines the history of TLAM-N and SLCM-N, how their demise has promoted allied doubts regarding the credibility of U.S. extended deterrence and assurance, and how Washington could move in light of the lessons learned from this history.

TLAM-N: History and Allied Views

The United States began research and development of a nuclear-armed sea-launched cruise missile based on the Tomahawk design beginning in the late 1970s, with initial deployment on attack submarines and surface ships in 1983.¹ As Secretary of Defense, Caspar Weinberger explained in his 1986 annual report to Congress, TLAM-Ns, "...which are effective against a wide range of land targets, give us a cost-effective means of increasing hard-target capability at sea in the near term. Because they are distributed among a large number of ships, nuclear SLCMs complicate a potential attacker's planning and improve the overall survivability of the force."² In addition to holding at risk hard targets and complicating Moscow's attack planning, Secretary Weinberger stated that TLAM-N had three other distinct roles: "contributing to our nuclear reserve force; providing a worldwide deterrent presence; and deterring attacks on our naval forces by Soviet nuclear antiship missiles (especially those aboard Backfire and Badger bombers). U.S. sea-based nuclear forces, along with our land-based forces, support our policy of confronting the Soviet leadership with uncertainty and risk should they contemplate a nuclear war at sea."³

TLAM-N from its inception was strongly linked to extended deterrence and assurance missions given its capability to be deployed regionally. In a recently-declassified memorandum



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from Secretary Weinberger to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on TLAM-N, Weinberger notes that the missile had “excellent capabilities” as part of the “Designated Reserve Force” or “a theater support role worldwide – including Europe.”⁴ Later, U.S. officials assured European allies that the United States could eliminate its intermediate-range nuclear weapons under the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty without undermining extended deterrence because it would retain TLAM-N.⁵ Some allies came to see TLAM-N as uniquely relevant to extended deterrence and their assurance.

As the Cold War ended, however, the United States decided to remove TLAM-N from its surface combat ships and submarines, keeping the missiles in storage for deployment if needed in time of a crisis.⁶ The Navy also continued to exercise capabilities to return the system to full operational status within 30 days as a hedge to potential deterioration in the security environment.⁷ The Obama Administration’s 2010 *Nuclear Posture Review Report* (NPR), however, codified the decision to retire TLAM-N fully, stating that its “deterrence and assurance roles” were “redundant” in light of the forward-deployable nature of U.S. bombers and dual-capable fighters.⁸ Yet, forward-deployable U.S. bombers and dual-capable aircraft had been available prior to 2010 when great deterrence value had been attributed to TLAM-N. Why, according to Washington, had it become redundant and unnecessary for deterrence and assurance in 2010?

President Barack Obama and the 2010 NPR answered this question by referring to the end of the Cold War and noting that the elimination of TLAM-N was part of a broader effort that, “... recognizes that the greatest threat to U.S. and global security is no longer a nuclear exchange between nations, but nuclear terrorism by violent extremists and nuclear proliferation to an increasing number of states. Moreover, it recognizes that our national security and that of our allies and partners can be increasingly defended by America’s unsurpassed conventional military capabilities and strong missile defenses.”⁹ The NPR elaborated that “for the first time,” and as the “most urgent priority,” Washington placed non-proliferation as a step toward the elimination of nuclear weapons “atop” its agenda:¹⁰ “As a critical element of our effort to move toward a world free of nuclear weapons, the United States will lead expanded international efforts to rebuild and strengthen the global nuclear non-proliferation regime – and for the first time, the 2010 NPR places this priority atop the U.S. nuclear agenda.”¹¹

This was an extraordinary, if little noted, policy development. The 2010 NPR explicitly subordinated deterrence and assurance to other policy goals and priorities, i.e., non-proliferation and movement toward a world free of nuclear weapons.¹² Perhaps most importantly, reducing the “salience,” “role,” and “number” of nuclear weapons was considered key to these highest priority goals.¹³ Washington’s elimination of TLAM-N was a reflection of that perspective and policy prioritization.

It was clear, however, that U.S. allies in Asia, specifically Japan and South Korea, had significant reservations about the retirement of TLAM-N based on the value they attributed to it for extended deterrence, and thus their assurance. The 2009 bipartisan Congressionally-mandated Strategic Posture Commission concluded, “In Asia, extended deterrence relies



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heavily on the deployment of nuclear cruise missiles on some Los Angeles class attack submarines – the Tomahawk Land Attack Missile/Nuclear (TLAM/N)... U.S. allies in Asia are not integrated in the same way into nuclear planning and have not been asked to make commitments to delivery systems. In our work as a Commission it has become clear to us that some U.S. allies in Asia would be very concerned by TLAM/N retirement.”¹⁴ In subsequent testimony before Congress, Dr. John S. Foster Jr., one of the Commissioners, stated that representatives from allied nations that neighbor Russia and China informed the Commission that they were “concerned about whether or not the nuclear umbrella will be credible,” and that the U.S. nuclear force posture characteristics they valued most highly for extended deterrence and assurance included forces that could be “stealthy,” “transparent,” and “prompt,” as needed. Dr. Foster added that allies also said that they would like U.S. nuclear capabilities “that can penetrate hard targets with minimum collateral damage and low yield...”¹⁵ TLAM-N missiles aboard submarines, of course, had these characteristics.

In rollout briefings on the 2010 *Nuclear Posture Review*, Obama Administration officials stressed that there were consultations with allies prior to the decision to retire TLAM-N and that further consultations would continue, with the strong implication that U.S. bombers and dual-capable fighters would take on an increasing role for extended deterrence and assurance in Asia.¹⁶ Despite the occasional bomber overflight, however, the United States does not forward deploy its bombers or dual-capable aircraft in Asia and, in fact, converted multiple nuclear-capable bombers to conventional-only to meet the New START requirements.¹⁷ In addition, the advanced conventional forces and missile defense that the NPR indicated would fulfill extended deterrence requirements in the absence of TLAM-N largely failed to materialize – to allied consternation.

Japanese officials apparently were the most vocal in their concerns about the retirement of TLAM-N, specifically requesting an explanation of how Washington would supplement U.S. capabilities to fill the deterrence role with TLAM-N’s retirement.¹⁸ Published commentary and the recollections of U.S. officials agree that U.S. extended deterrence and assurance efforts were damaged significantly.¹⁹ Washington’s zeal to reduce the role of nuclear weapons and lack of mitigating measures to sustain deterrence clearly had the unintended consequence of fanning some allies’ skepticism of U.S. credibility, thus undermining assurance; this is a problem of Washington’s own making that still needs to be addressed.

SLCM-N: History and Allied Views

The 2018 *Nuclear Posture Review* introduced the return of a nuclear-armed sea-launched cruise missile, now called SLCM-N. The report stated that it would “provide a needed non-strategic regional presence, an assured response capability, and an INF-Treaty compliant response to Russia’s continuing Treaty violation.”²⁰ Additionally, in recognition of increasing allied unease regarding U.S. extended deterrence, the 2018 NPR explicitly connected SLCM-N with the “increasing need for flexible and low-yield options to strengthen deterrence and assurance,” – signaling SLCM-N’s importance for extended deterrence commitments.²¹ While U.S. allies did



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not explicitly comment publicly on the missile, there was broad support for the 2018 *Nuclear Posture Review* overall, including Japan's expressed enthusiasm.²² Senior U.S. civilian and military leaders also endorsed SLCM-N as important for extended deterrence and assurance.²³

While the Analysis of Alternatives for SLCM-N dragged on through the end of the Trump Administration, the Biden Administration used its 2022 *Nuclear Posture Review* to announce the program's termination. It stated that, "SLCM-N was no longer necessary given the deterrence contribution of the W76-2 [strategic nuclear warhead], uncertainty regarding whether SLCM-N on its own would provide leverage to negotiate arms control limits on Russia's NSNW [non-strategic nuclear weapons], and the estimated cost of SLCM-N in light of other nuclear modernization programs and defense priorities."²⁴ The Biden Administration's 2022 NPR did not comment on the expected reaction of allies to this development, but the administration reportedly solicited allied opinions ahead of time.²⁵ The stated justifications for cancelling the SLCM-N program appeared shallow on their own terms and were unresponsive to allies' expressed concerns about extended deterrence.

Rather than address allied concerns, it seems that the Biden Administration, in a repeat of the Obama Administration's decision making regarding TLAM-N, decided to cancel SLCM-N as part of its broader effort to signal arms control virtue and lowered U.S. reliance on nuclear weapons in U.S. strategy.²⁶ Indeed, the Biden Administration's 2022 NPR continued to promote the goal of "reducing the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. strategy," and asserted that arms control, *not deterrence*, is the most effective way to prevent nuclear war.²⁷

While U.S. allies have not commented publicly on SLCM-N's cancellation, there is an abundance of evidence that they are profoundly dissatisfied with the credibility of U.S. extended deterrence, and are seeking assurance in the form of public displays of U.S. nuclear capabilities. South Korean President Yoon has openly entertained the idea of South Korea developing its own nuclear arsenal or asking the United States to bring non-strategic nuclear weapons back to the peninsula as a forward-deployed asset.²⁸ After making these declarations and meeting with President Biden, South Korea agreed to the "Washington Declaration," which focuses almost exclusively on U.S. nuclear weapons and deterrence. Specifically, it states, "Going forward, the United States will further enhance the regular visibility of strategic assets to the Korean Peninsula, as evidenced by the upcoming visit of a U.S. nuclear ballistic missile submarine to the ROK, and will expand and deepen coordination between our militaries."²⁹ This rare port visit by a U.S. SSBN was recently supplemented by a flyover and landing of a nuclear-capable B-52H bomber.³⁰ While these visits undoubtedly are helpful, they do not satisfy the force characteristics allies have identified as critical for extended deterrence and their assurance—and South Korea's interest in a more credible basis for extended nuclear deterrence appears to be unabated.³¹

Creating Alliance Problems – Lessons Unlearned

This case study illustrates the uncomfortable truth that Washington appears to have undermined some allies' confidence in extended deterrence credibility, and thus their



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assurance, by subordinating extended deterrence and assurance requirements to the U.S. commitment to lower reliance on nuclear weapons. For allies, TLAM-N and SLCM-N were the tangible manifestations of a credible U.S. extended deterrence commitment. For many in Washington, however, they were “low-hanging fruit” easily discarded in pursuit of reducing the role and number of nuclear weapons. In essence, Washington appears to value virtue signaling regarding lowering reliance on nuclear weapons above allied concerns regarding extended deterrence and their assurance. Allies will continue losing confidence in U.S. extended deterrence when Washington appears to lack appreciation for the nuclear capabilities they view as essential for deterrence.

Indeed, the TLAM-N/SLCM-N decisions compound U.S. alliance difficulties because, within a 12-year timespan, the United States has withdrawn or canceled two capabilities with those characteristics valued by allies and *intended* to strengthen extended deterrence and assurance. Most recently, the Biden Administration’s cancellation of SLCM-N comes at a time when allies face an increasingly dangerous threat environment.

Washington’s TLAM-N/SLCM-N decisions have damaged U.S. extended deterrence and assurance efforts in several ways. First, U.S. reversals regarding the value of TLAM-N and SLCM-N, especially when viewed in succession, convey to allies that the United States is an inconsistent, unpredictable security partner that does not prioritize extended deterrence and allied assurance highly. U.S. rhetoric to the contrary ultimately is likely unconvincing – particularly as allied security comes under increasing nuclear pressure by China, Russia, North Korea and, potentially Iran.

Second, the elimination of TLAM-N and SLCM-N came at times of increasing U.S. concerns about opponents’ limited nuclear employment as a coercive tactic to facilitate their expansionist aggression.³² TLAM-N and SLCM-N were both well-suited to support deterrence in that scenario: Deployed regionally they could serve as a visible or covert assurance to allies depending on the requirements at the time. In their absence, with few proportional options (particularly in Asia) to respond to limited adversary nuclear employment, the United States is essentially asking allies to trust that U.S. leaders ultimately will be willing to use intercontinental strategic nuclear weapons on their behalf at a time when the United States itself is highly vulnerable to strategic nuclear attack. The internal contradiction involved in that option is not lost on allies; it is made worse by the relative lack of proportional U.S. regional response options.

Finally, without tangible capabilities that are proportional to threats and readily identifiable to adversaries and allies alike, some allies will continue to be skeptical of U.S. extended deterrence commitments; periodic visits by strategic systems are unlikely to suffice. Allies have grown increasingly fearful as their security environment deteriorates and have thus made more explicit references to gaining their own independent nuclear forces. As the former Commander of Indo-Pacific Command, and Ambassador to South Korea, Harry Harris, stated recently:



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Our allies don't trust the United States enough on extended nuclear deterrence. I think we're better now in the past few years than we were before. And that matters because when they lose that trust, when they believe that we're not going to extend our nuclear deterrence to them, that's when they will proliferate and build their own nuclear weapons. And you can't blame them for that. So I think it's imperative that we continue to underscore our commitment to extended nuclear deterrent of our allies, that we've provided that deterrent too. Japan, and Korea, Australia come to mind.³³

By subordinating allied extended deterrence and assurance requirements to the goal of reducing reliance on nuclear weapons, the United States has not only undermined its extended deterrence and assurance efforts, but its nonproliferation goals as well. Ironically, U.S. rejection of TLAM-N/SLCM-N to advance nonproliferation and nuclear reductions has had the reverse effect of increasing some allied considerations of pursuing independent nuclear capabilities.

This case study illustrates how the United States often hears the concerns of its allies about U.S. capabilities, but those concerns are either dismissed as uninformed or considered easily addressed with robust words. However, just as deterrence works in the mind of the adversary, allies decide whether or not they are assured. What the United States believes is sufficient for assurance is irrelevant, and robust U.S. rhetoric is likely to be disdained by allies as their threat environments worsen.

The United States can gain insight into allied concerns, and the true solutions to those concerns, by listening to allied officials, prioritizing deterrence and allied assurance, and working together to execute agreed solutions. In particular, allied confidence is likely only repairable with a more consistent U.S. policy of elevating extended deterrence and assurance considerations above the continued fruitless pursuit of reciprocal Russian and Chinese nuclear reductions and nuclear disarmament.

Conclusion and Recommendations

To extend deterrence credibly and assure allies, the United States should consider a number of diplomatic and military measures. First, the United States needs to take great care regarding how its decisions on the size and composition of its forces will affect allies' perceptions of U.S. extended deterrence credibility. Given the growing chorus of allied commentators calling for independent nuclear weapon programs, the United States should prioritize its nuclear force requirements for extending deterrence and assuring allies. This will both strengthen alliances and help preserve nonproliferation. As Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter stated in 2016, "You [military members supporting nuclear missions] assure allies that our extended deterrence guarantees are credible, enabling many of them to forgo developing nuclear weapons themselves, despite the tough strategic environment they find themselves in and the technological ease with which they could develop nuclear weapons."³⁴



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The 2023 Strategic Posture Commission consulted with multiple allied representatives and came to similar conclusions as Secretary Carter's, namely:

The United States uses its strategic posture to support Allies by extending to them deterrence, including nuclear deterrence, against adversaries. The U.S. strategic posture also serves to assure Allies that the United States is a credible security partner. As a result, many Allies perceive no need to develop their own nuclear weapon capabilities, which is in the U.S. national security interest. Any major changes to U.S. strategic posture, policies, or capabilities will, therefore, have great effect on Allies' perceptions and their deterrence and assurance requirements.³⁵

Another step for helping to restore credibility to extended deterrence is reversing the Biden Administration's decision to cancel SLCM-N. Congress has kept the program on life support and there appears to be growing bipartisan backing for SLCM-N. The bipartisan Strategic Posture Commission report, for example, notes that forward-deployed systems like SLCM-N are directly connected to allied concerns, "Given the geographic distance between the U.S. homeland and its Allies overseas and the long lead time for force projection from the U.S. homeland, Allies stressed the importance of U.S. military forces being available in theater for deterrence and assurance purposes."³⁶ Indeed, the Commission reported that, "Allies repeatedly stressed that the worsening threat environment requires closer and stronger cooperation with the United States because the consequences of deterrence failure are so severe, and for some Allies, existential."³⁷

Third, the United States must improve its understanding of, and responsiveness to, allied concerns. As this case study demonstrates, the United States often creates its own problems by either failing to heed allies' concerns or by subordinating them to U.S. arms control goals which have proved illusory. When the United States has attempted to make up for the loss of the TLAM-N and SLCM-N capabilities, the solutions have been temporary and not responsive to the core of allied concerns – potentially inspiring allies to seek their own security arrangements and capabilities, including nuclear weapons programs. By increasing meaningful dialogue with allies and responding to their concerns, however, the United States can improve the credibility of its extended deterrence threats and strengthen allied assurance – all to the benefit of U.S. security.

¹ Caspar Weinberger, *Annual Report to Congress, FY1986*, p. 209, available at https://history.defense.gov/Portals/70/Documents/annual_reports/1986_DOD_AR.pdf?ver=2016-02-25-102404-647.

² *Ibid.*, p. 209.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁴ Caspar Weinberger, *TLAM/N Targeting (U)* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Secretary of Defense, October 9, 1985), p. 1, available at



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https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/FOID/Reading%20Room/MDR_Releases/FY18/FY18_Q2/Targeting_9Oct1985.pdf.

⁵ See the comments of Chief of Naval Operations, ADM A. Carl Trost, in “302. Memorandum of Conversation,” *State.gov*, May 20, 1988, available at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1981-88v11/d302>.

⁶ Susan J. Koch, *The Presidential Nuclear Initiatives of 1991-1992* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, September 2012), p. 11, available at https://ndupress.ndu.edu/portals/68/documents/casestudies/cswmd_casestudy-5.pdf.

⁷ John Harvey and Robert Soofer, “Strengthening Deterrence with SLCM-N,” *Atlantic Council Issue Brief*, November 5, 2022, p. 4, available at <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Strengthening-Deterrence-with-SLCM-N.pdf>.

⁸ U.S. Department of Defense, *Nuclear Posture Review Report* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, April 2010), p. 28, available at https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/features/defenseReviews/NPR/2010_Nuclear_Posture_Review_Report.pdf.

⁹ Barack Obama, “Statement by President Barack Obama on the Release of the Nuclear Posture Review,” *WhiteHouse.gov*, April 6, 2010, available at <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/statement-president-barack-obama-release-nuclear-posture-review>.

¹⁰ *Nuclear Posture Review Report*, op cit., pp. v-vi.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. vi.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. v-vi.

¹⁴ William Perry, James Schlesinger, et al., *America’s Strategic Posture* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace, 2009), p. 26.

¹⁵ John S. Foster Jr., as quoted in, U.S. Senate, *The Report of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: May 7, 2009), p. 28, available at <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-111shrg54357/pdf/CHRG-111shrg54357.pdf>.

¹⁶ See, for instance, James Miller, as quoted in, *Foreign Press Center Briefing* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, April 7, 2010), p. 7, available at https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/features/defenseReviews/NPR/FPC_4-7-10_Nuclear_Posture_Review.pdf; and, James Cartwright, as quoted in, “Briefing on Release of the Nuclear Posture Review,” *State.gov*, April 6, 2010, available at <https://2009-2017.state.gov/t/us/139934.htm>.

¹⁷ Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear Matters, “Chapter 3: Nuclear Delivery Systems,” *ACQ.OSD.mil*, no date, available at <https://www.acq.osd.mil/ncbdp/nm/NMHB2020rev/chapters/chapter3.html>.

¹⁸ See, for example, Katsuya Okada, “Letter to the US State Secretary Hillary Clinton,” December 24, 2009, available at https://icnndngojapan.files.wordpress.com/2010/01/20091224_okada_letter_en.pdf.

¹⁹ See, Justin V. Anderson and Jeffrey A. Larsen, with Polly M. Holdorf, *Extended Deterrence and Allied Assurance: Key Concepts and Current Challenges for U.S. Policy* (USAF Academy, CO: Institute for National Security Studies, September 2013), p. 117, available at <https://www.usafa.edu/app/uploads/OCP69.pdf>; and, Gen. Kevin P. Chilton, “On Nuclear Deterrence,” *Strategic Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 11, No. 4 (2017), pp. 9-10.

²⁰ U.S. Department of Defense, *Nuclear Posture Review* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, 2018), p. 55, available at <https://media.defense.gov/2018/Feb/02/2001872886/-1/-1/1/2018-NUCLEAR-POSTURE-REVIEW-FINAL-REPORT.PDF>.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Taro Kono, “The Release of the U.S. Nuclear Posture Review (NPR),” *MOFA.go.jp*, February 3, 2018, available at https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press4e_001893.html.



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²³ For example, see, *Strengthening Deterrence and Reducing Nuclear Risks, Part II: The Sea-Launched Cruise Missile-Nuclear (SLCM-N)* (Washington, D.C.: Department of State, July 23, 2020), available at <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/T-Paper-series-SLCM-N-Final-508.pdf>.

²⁴ U.S. Department of Defense, *2022 Nuclear Posture Review* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, 2022), p. 20, available at <https://media.defense.gov/2022/Oct/27/2003103845/-1/-1/1/2022-NATIONAL-DEFENSE-STRATEGY-NPR-MDR.PDF>.

²⁵ Greg Hadley, "Pentagon Solicits Allies' Input In Drafting Nuclear Posture Review," *Air & Space Forces Magazine*, December 3, 2021, available at <https://www.airandspaceforces.com/article/pentagon-solicits-allies-input-in-drafting-nuclear-posture-review/>.

²⁶ For more commentary on this point, see, Matthew R. Costlow, "What is a 'Responsible' Nuclear Power? Assessing the 2022 Nuclear Posture Review," and Keith B. Payne, "The 2022 NPR: Commendation and Concerns," chapters in, Keith B. Payne, ed., *Expert Commentary on the 2022 Nuclear Posture Review* (Fairfax, VA: National Institute for Public Policy, March 2023), pp. 1-10, 85-96.

²⁷ *2022 Nuclear Posture Review*, op. cit., pp. 12, 16.

²⁸ Choi Si-young, "[Top Envoy] S. Korea is done with 'Strategic Ambiguity,' ex-envoy says," *The Korea Herald*, October 25, 2023, available at <https://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20231025000595>.

²⁹ The White House, "The Washington Declaration," *WhiteHouse.gov*, April 26, 2023, available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/04/26/washington-declaration-2/>.

³⁰ Chae Yun-hwan, "U.S. Strategic Bomber B-52 Lands at S. Korean Air Base for First Time," *Yonhap News Agency*, October 17, 2023, available at <https://en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20231017005300315#:~:text=SEOUL%2C%20Oct.,South%20Korean%20stealth%20fighter%20jets>.

³¹ See, for example, "U.S. nuclear weapons should be committed to supporting South Korea's security against N.K. threats - report," *Yonhap News Agency (South Korea)*, October 30, 2023, available at [https://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20231030000479#:~:text=National%20North%20Korea-100%20US%20nuclear%20weapons%20should%20be%20committed%20to%20supporting%20S,security%20against%20NK%20threats%3A%20report&text=KCNA\)-South%20Korea%20and%20the%20United%20States%20should%20modernize%20around%20100,a%20research%20report%20said%20Monday](https://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20231030000479#:~:text=National%20North%20Korea-100%20US%20nuclear%20weapons%20should%20be%20committed%20to%20supporting%20S,security%20against%20NK%20threats%3A%20report&text=KCNA)-South%20Korea%20and%20the%20United%20States%20should%20modernize%20around%20100,a%20research%20report%20said%20Monday).

³² Ashton Carter, "Remarks by Secretary Carter to troops at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota," *Defense.gov*, September 26, 2016, available at <https://www.defense.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/956079/remarks-by-secretary-carter-to-troops-at-minot-air-force-base-north-dakota/>.

³³ Harry B. Harris, Jr., as quoted in, *Peace in the Pacific: A Conversation with Former Indo-Pacific Commanders* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, October 16, 2023), p. 8, available at <https://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/231016-Peace-in-the-Pacific-A-Conversation-with-Former-Indo-Pacific-Commanders-Transcript-1.pdf?x91208>.

³⁴ Ashton Carter, "Remarks by Secretary Carter to troops at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota," *Defense.gov*, September 26, 2016, available at <https://www.defense.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/956079/remarks-by-secretary-carter-to-troops-at-minot-air-force-base-north-dakota/>.

³⁵ Madelyn R. Creedon and Jon L. Kyl, Chair and Vice Chair, *America's Strategic Posture: The Final Report of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for Defense Analyses, October, 2023), p. 75.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 76.



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