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Abbreviations

CJCS	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
CTBTO	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization
EU	European Union
GLCM	ground-launched cruise missile
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICBM	intercontinental ballistic missile
INF treaty	Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty
IRBM	intermediate range ballistic missile
MAD	mutual assured destruction
MRBM	medium range ballistic missile
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDS	National Defense Strategy
NPR	Nuclear Posture Review
NSS	National Security Strategy
PPDs	Presidential Policy Directives
SC UNO	Security Council of United Nations Organization
SecDef	Secretary of Defense
SIOP	single integrated operational plan
SLBM	sub-marine launched ballistic missile
SRBM	short range ballistic missile
SVC	Special Verification Commission
TBM	theatre ballistic missile
UNIDIR	United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research
UNO	United Nations Organization
USA	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WMD	weapons of mass destruction

Abstract:

The INF treaty, which was signed by the USA and the USSR in 1987, became a cornerstone of the European security and demarcated the turning point in relations between two nuclear superpowers. The termination of the treaty in 2019 that was allegedly provoked by the constant incompliance with the treaty from the Russian side, raised serious concerns in the international community about the future of nuclear arms control and proved that the nature of nuclear deterrence has changed over time.

In this master thesis, I conduct research comparing the INF treaty debates of 1979-1987 and 2014-2019 in order to determine their similarities, differences and specific features, which influenced the outcome of each of the debates and reasoned the behavior of decision-making actors. It further discusses the changing nature of nuclear deterrence and the consequences of the post-INF era as well as possibilities and requirements for a new INF treaty. The research is based on a complex theoretical approach combining literature on structuralism (neorealism), deterrence and arms control. The data for analysis was obtained from primary and secondary sources and expert interviews. The comparison included three dimensions – spatial (the USSR- USA), temporal (1979-2019) and contextual (nuclear deterrence).

The findings of the research proved that the power distribution in the international system plays a crucial role in terms of military/nuclear deterrence and has an impact on the outcome and the future of arms control treaties. The nature of nuclear deterrence has changed over time from being the most effective but at the same time, dangerous means of retaliation, to a support mechanism in a state deterrence and a tool of political coercion. The technological development made conventional weapons as efficient as nuclear weapons in terms of deterrence, especially considering the ethical principles condemning the usage of nuclear arms.

The termination of the INF was predestined by many factors - the treaty became outdated, it had many shortcomings, it had no expiration date, thus, was not improved since it was signed and was not adapted to new challenges in the international security, regarding the emergence of new threats and rising of other nuclear powers, which were not parties of the treaty. Both the USA and Russia had their formal and informal reasons for withdrawal from the INF, which influenced their posture to the treaty and the decision-making process.

The future of arms control seems to be in jeopardy for an unidentified period. The end of the INF proves the reluctance and disinterest of two main nuclear states to continue the path of cooperation in nuclear arms control. Most of the experts predict the termination of other treaties in this regard and a possible nuclear arms race between nuclear powers.

Key words: political neorealism, international relations, nuclear deterrence, arms control, INF treaty debate 1979-1987 vs 2014-2019, the USSR/Russia, the USA

Abstract (deutsch):

Der INF-Vertrag, der durch die USA und die UdSSR im Jahr 1987 unterzeichnet war, wurde zum Eckstein der europäischen Sicherheit und hat den Wendepunkt in Beziehungen zwischen zwei Supermächten abgegrenzt. Die Beendigung des Vertrags (2019), der durch die angebliche kontinuierliche Verletzung des Abkommens von der russischen Seite provoziert wurde, hat ernste Sorgen in der internationalen Gemeinschaft über die Zukunft der Rüstungskontrolle ausgedrückt und hat bewiesen, dass sich die Natur der nuklearen Abschreckung mit der Zeit geändert hat.

In dieser Masterarbeit habe ich die INF-Debatten in den Jahren 1979-1987 und 2014-2019 verglichen, um ihre Ähnlichkeiten, Unterschiede und spezifische Eigenschaften zu bestimmen, die das Ergebnis von jeder der Debatten und das Verhalten von Akteuren beeinflusst haben. Außerdem wird in der These die sich ändernde Natur der nuklearen Abschreckung und die Folgen des post-INF Zeitalters sowie der Möglichkeiten und der Voraussetzungen für einen neuen INF-Vertrag diskutiert. Die Forschung basiert sich auf einem kombinierten theoretischen Ansatz - Strukturalismus (Neorealismus), Abschreckung und Rüstungskontrolle. Die Daten für die Analyse wurden von primären und sekundären Quellen und den Experten-Interviews erhalten. Der Vergleich hat drei Dimensionen – räumlich (die UdSSR - die USA), zeitlich (1979-2019) und Kontext - (nukleare Abschreckung) eingeschlossen.

Die Ergebnisse der Forschung haben bewiesen, dass die Machtverteilung im internationalen System eine wichtige Rolle in Bezug auf die militärische/nukleare Abschreckung spielt und Einfluss auf das Ergebnis und die Zukunft von Rüstungskontrollverträgen hat. Die Natur der nuklearen Abschreckung hat sich mit der Zeit auch geändert – von einem der wirksamsten Mittel des Abschreckens zu einem Mittel des politischen Zwangs. Die technologische Entwicklung hat konventionelle Waffen viel effizienter in Bezug auf die Abschreckung Strategie gemacht.

Die Beendigung des INF-Vertrags wurde durch viele Faktoren prädestiniert - der Vertrag ist überholt geworden, er hatte viele Nachteile und kein Verfallsdatum, deswegen wurde er auch nicht verbessert und an neue Herausforderungen in der internationalen Sicherheit nicht angepasst. Sowohl die USA als auch Russland hatten ihre formellen und informellen Gründe für den Abzug aus dem INF. Diese Gründe haben das Benehmen und Entscheidungstreffen von Akteuren beeinflusst.

Die Zukunft der Rüstungskontrolle bleibt obskur für eine ungewisse Zeit. Das Ende des INF-Vertrags beweist den Widerwillen und das Desinteresse von zwei Hauptatomstaaten, um den Pfad der Zusammenarbeit in der Rüstungskontrolle fortzusetzen. Die meisten Experten sagen das Ende der anderen Rüstungskontrollverträgen und eines möglichen Atomwaffenrennens voraus.

Schlüsselwörter: politischer Neorealismus, internationale Beziehungen, nukleare Abschreckung, Rüstungskontrolle, INF Vertragsdebatte 1979-1987 vs 2014-2019, die UdSSR/Russland, die USA

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Introduction

The system of international relations is complex and fragile. Considering the elaborations of neorealism, every actor (state) tends to maintain a status quo in an unstable anarchic architecture of international relations, which influences the behavior of each individual state. Often states choose the path of increasing their military strength to show the opponents that it has capabilities to respond possible aggression. It establishes deterrence relations between countries, making them unwilling to act hostilely against each other. With the invention of a nuclear weapon by the USA and the bombings of Japan in 1945, the notion of military deterrence achieved a new status – the status of survival by all means as the destruction capabilities of nuclear weapons are unprecedented and have long-lasting effects. The USSR as a direct opponent of the USA gained the technologies to produce nuclear missiles fast enough, and that was the start of the most prominent case of direct nuclear deterrence between states.

The bi-polar world with two superpowers finding themselves in a Cold War and leading an intensified nuclear arms race against each other, started raising concerns in the international community and especially in Europe that was devastated after the World War II and found itself torn between two mighty states possessing the most destructive weapon ever known before. The USA and the USSR – each of them had spheres of influence and its allies. Tense relations between states and especially an excessive military arsenal they possessed decreased the potential of a direct war between them but increased the number of minor conflicts and proxy wars between satellite states. As the USSR deployed its new missiles system on the frontiers with Europe, the USA, pressured by its European NATO allies, offered to start negotiations to reduce the quantity of nuclear weaponry and curb its proliferation (1979) (Anthony, 2017).

Although the negotiations and the debates regarding the new nuclear arms control treaty were very complicated and lasted from 1979 to 1987, the USA and the USSR managed to come to a consensus and the talks finished by the signing of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty in 1987 (INF), which eliminated the whole class of nuclear missiles with a range of 500-5,500km. The INF treaty became a cornerstone and a silver lining in international relations in questions of international security and peace, and a starting point for strategic cooperation of two superpowers - the USA and the USSR (Meier, 2018).

The slow demise of the treaty started at the beginning of 2000s with the first declarations of the US and Russian presidents about the possibility of withdrawal from the treaty or amicable suspension of the latter. The deterioration of the INF treaty intensified in 2014 when the US government stated that Russia had been violating the treaty for a certain period and demanded the partner to return to compliance. In 2019 with the Trump Administration at power, the USA became less patient about the Russian incompliance, and on the 1st February 2019 the USA

declared its unilateral withdrawal from the treaty within the 6 months period as was stipulated in the INF agreement. Thus, the INF treaty was terminated in August 2019 became - a moment that became a turning point in international security. It caused a wave of criticism as from individual actors so from the IGOs and NGOs and most of all from the EU decision-makers, whose security was undermined enormously. Some experts consider that the end of the treaty may provoke a new nuclear arms race and destabilize international peace in larger scales. Others claim that it is the right time for a new INF treaty that will include other nuclear states as well. Still, the future of a new treaty and nuclear arms stays vague.

The long history of the INF-treaty, debates around it and multiple discussions about the efficiency and necessity of nuclear treaties prove the complexity of the nuclear deterrence debates in common. If the danger of such weapon is evident, its utility for the stability of international relations and peace is questionable, and experts and politicians still do not have a unanimous opinion in this regard. Some consider the deployment and possession of this class of weapon to be a condition for the state's security, making other states unwilling to act aggressively. Others argue that the very fact of the existence of nuclear weapons leads to instability in international relations, especially when atomic weapons belongs to states, which lack credibility in the world politics (Powell, 2003).

Therefore, the INF debates of 1979-1987 and 2014-2019 play a crucial role in understanding the changing nature of nuclear deterrence, the rationale of decision-making actors, which influenced the outcome of the talks in 1987 and 2019, as well as public perception of the treaty and its attitude to nuclear threats today and back in the Cold War times. The INF debates present a substantial subject that must be researched in order to define the main characteristics of arms control and nuclear deterrence comparing two periods of time and the factors that impacted the argumentation lines of the USA and Russia, which also helps to predict the future of other arms control treaties.

In this master thesis, I investigate the INF treaty debates of 1979-1987 that led to the signing of the agreement and the debates of 2014-2019, which ended with the termination of the treaty. I determine the specific features of both debates and compare them, according to the criteria I developed to define the similarities and differences between them as well as particular features of each of the debates. The analysis serves to identify the changing notion and importance of nuclear deterrence in the times of the Cold War and nowadays, depicting the shifts in the framing of the nuclear deterrence debates. The research question I pose in this thesis is as follows:

What are the specifics of the INF debates in 1979-1987 and 2014-2019?

In order to answer the research questions, I exploit a combined theoretical approach, which consists of: 1) political neorealism that tends to explain the general state of the art in international

relations and motivations of actors in it, which constitute the decision-making process and determine the future of international relations, 2) general deterrence theory with closer elaborations on rational deterrence presuming rationality of actors in decision-making processes and nuclear deterrence as a specific type of rational deterrence, which emerged after the invention of nuclear weapons, 3) arms control with its main purposes and typology, ways it can be achieved and short historical overview as well as shortcomings and problematics of arms control in the times of the Cold War and today.

In the methodology section, I introduce research methods that I applied in this thesis. Such as comparative analysis based on document analysis and expert interviews. The comparison of the INF debates has three dimensions – time (1979 vs 2019), space (the USA – the USSR/Russia) and context (nuclear deterrence). Further, I present the list of criteria, which I developed for analyzing the phenomena under question – 1) political context of debates, 2) actors of the debates and their security strategies in terms of nuclear weaponry, 3) arguments pro/con the treaty, and 4) the reasons and the demands from both sides – and explain the choice of the criteria. Regarding expert interviews, I present the advantages and disadvantages of the method and the list of the interviewed experts with a background on their fields of expertise.

The third chapter of the thesis elaborates on a background of the phenomena and discusses the state of nuclear deterrence between the USA and the USSR in the times of the Cold War, strategic advantages and technic characteristics of short- and intermediate-range missiles, the history of the INF treaty and its problematic. It helps to comprehend the importance of the issue and depicts the complexity of both debates.

The fourth chapter represents a comparative analysis of the INF debates of 1979-1987 and 2014-2019 according to the developed criteria. The chapter is divided into four sub-chapters, which correspond to an individual criterion, where I describe each of the debates identifying its specific features and then make a comparison of the debates, defining the differences and similarities between them regarding the attitude to the nuclear deterrence and shifts in its framing and perceptions.

In the last chapter, I sum up the discussions and remarks on the post-INF era, the possibility of a new arms race and prospects of a new INF treaty as well as the position of the nuclear deterrence in the modern security planning.

The conclusion section gives an overview of the research, shortly describing its content and problematic and lists the main findings of the thesis.

1. Theoretical approach:

In this section, I describe the theoretical approach I applied to answer the research question. It consists of three theoretical literature - political neorealism, arms control, and deterrence with a closer focus on rational and nuclear deterrence. The combination of this body of literature serves to explain the roots and dynamics of the political context of international relations that make states follow the paths of militarization and weaponization as a mistrust reaction on actions of counterparts; deterrence theory argues that states as rational actors can be deterred from aggressive actions each other for the reasons they are afraid of mirror measures and that excessive military arsenal serves as a guaranty of peace and nuclear weapons play a significant role as means of deterrence; the arms control, in its turn, tries to address issues of an arms race and to de-escalate relations between states through agreements and negotiations and increasing cooperation.

1.1 Political neorealism/ structural realism

The theory of political neorealism – also referred to as structural realism – derives from the book of Kenneth Waltz “Theory of international politics” (1979) which reformulates and further develops main ideas of political realism. According to Waltz (1979), the architecture of international relations has specific decisive characteristics that influence behavior of each individual state and interactions between states. In the world of instability, the balance of power between nations plays a decisive role because states find themselves in constant anarchy relations and only the balance of power and preserving *status quo* can guarantee a certain stability. This problem of instability occurs since there is no highest authority above states that can regulate their actions and condemn them in the case of wrongdoing; therefore the states have to prioritize their security first in order to achieve all other goals (Lundborg, 2019), (Waltz, 1979).

Kenneth Waltz (1979) defined a “structural triad” as the main principle in international relations: 1) the first motivation of each state is survival, 2) the relations in the international arena are build and possible only among states and 3) states vary from each other in their capabilities (population, resources, economic and military power) and potential. It means that in the world of anarchic relations, states seek to survive and keep their position unchanged in the structure of international relations. At the same time, the behavior of states is sensitive to any shifts in the architecture of IR and constantly adapting to these shifts in order to preserve *status-quo* and guarantee their own survival. Thus, neorealism intertwines aspects of the external anarchic system and internal priorities of states binding them together and making them interdependent (Waltz, 1979). These elaborations of neorealism have strong connections with the classic realism theory. Keohane (1986) underlines that the structural realism has inherited three assumptions of classical realism:

1) states are the main actors in international politics, 2) states are rational actors and act to maximize the expected utility and 3) states seek to maximize their power to influence others. Further, the author refers to Waltz and argues that the behavior of states is influenced by the system of international relations and cannot be regarded as independent (Keohane, 1986).

Keohane (1986) compares the actions of each state with the micro-economic model where each company seeks to make a profit, but its strategies of maximizing gains depend directly on the changes in the market and other environmental factors. The same happens in IR, when actors notice that (an)other actor(s) is undertaking actions that can change the existing order, they retaliate to stay competitive and keep its position in the system. This juxtaposition shows that the simple rules of survival in the market can be implemented to explain dynamics in state's behavior in the international system. Therefore, the anarchy in relations between nations is shaped by the system structure and is influenced by the tactics of each individual actor (Keohane, 1986). These characteristics relate to the theory of rationalism and have links with the game theory as well, assuming that states have a system of priorities and assess the situation to make the maximum profit out of it. However, the "game" of international politics includes many actors. These actors, whether allies or enemies do not give opponents complete information about their strategies and goals. Thus, every actor has to develop diverse scenarios and tactics to address possible changes in behavior of its counterparts (McCarty/Meirowitz, 2007).

The book of Mearsheimer (2001) "The tragedy of great power politics" developed the neorealist's thought further on and divided neorealism in defensive (Waltz) and offensive (Mearsheimer). According to defensive realism, all states try to maintain *status-quo* and their position in the world's politics by concentrating more on (national) security. Mearsheimer's offensive realism presupposes might maximization of states by all means in order to gain regional hegemony. Mearsheimer (1979) also adds a geographical aspect to the theory of neorealism, arguing that regional hegemony is of great importance to states that influence their strategy and decision-making (Mearsheimer, 2001). Both types of neorealism assume that states cannot be sure of each other strategies; thus, they try to increase their military strength to deter counterparts of possible aggressive actions. It leads to misbalance in the international system and causes the so-called "*security dilemma*" meaning that might maximization of one state automatically leads to might loss by other states. Nevertheless, defensive realism presumes that to resolve the problem of „*security dilemma*“ the states can choose the path of diplomacy and cooperative agreements, whereas the offensive realism considers that states have to undertake aggressive measures as annihilating other states (Tang, 2010). In order to reestablish the equilibrium of the system, other states may pursue two different paths: 1) to maximize its own military and economic power. This option may though result in 1) a *security spiral* where two or more states get engaged in arms

race responding to the increased armament of each other (the USA and the Soviet Union in the times of Cold War) or 2) building of alliances to protect themselves. Types of these alliances include bandwagoning and chainganging. By bandwagoning, weaker states seek to align themselves to a powerful state to get protected by it and not to experience threat from its side. In chainganging tactic, several states build an alliance against the potential aggressor. Thus, in case of an attack, they commit to defense each other under mutual defense clause (Fiammenghi, 2011), (Wivel, 2011).

Other two strategies of preserving status-quo are *balancing* and *buck-passing* (sometimes called blame-game). By the balancing, a state undertakes actions that help it to diminish the chances of more powerful states to exercise a military attack over a weaker state. By buck-passing, states ignore the growing power of another state in the hope that some other states will confront it. Thus, even possessing enough resources to restrain a hegemon's rise, another powerful state refuses to make a stand against it and pushes the responsibility to any other state. One of the most prominent examples of the buck-passing is the not-involvement of mighty states such as the USA and the USSR against the increasing power of Germany in the 1930s. Also, the late engagement of the USA in the World War II makes believe that the American government waited as long as possible staying on the sideline for the USSR and Germany weaken one another as much as possible, so the USA could influence the post-war Europe, because the Soviet Union would not have enough military, economic and social resources to contradict the USA (Savic/Shirkey, 2017).

According to neorealism, there are three possible power systems that can exist in international relations: 1) unipolar, with one mighty state (the USA in the 90s), which raises uncertainties in the international system and increases a possibility of war, 2) bipolar with two mighty states (the USA vs the USSR during the Cold War) that is supposed to be the most stable system, where two hegemonies are balancing each other, 3) multi-polar with many mighty states that compete with each other (the modern system) (Waltz, 1979).

The theory of structural realism serves as a starting point in this master thesis explaining the principals of international relations in common and the dynamics in relations between two superpowers (the USA and the USSR) after the WWII that started with the maximization of military power and aspirations to achieve regional hegemony on each side that led to the continuance of security dilemma threatening the world's peace and resulted in an intensified arms race and rational nuclear deterrence. The theory is applicable to describe the development of the relations between the successor of the USSR – Russia – and the USA, their security strategies and reasons that led to the termination of the INF treaty.

1.2. Deterrence theory

Discussions on deterrence in relations between states go back to ancient times, but as a theory in international relations, it was developed during the WWII and found its most prominent case during the Cold War between the USA and the USSR that was reasoned by the invention of the nuclear weapon and an intensified arms race. For today the deterrence theory accounts many different types that are being discussed and further developed by the scholars because state of the art in international politics is constantly changing and thus the ways deterrence is being implemented and operationalized are modifying as well. Still, the main principle of the theory stays permanent and is as follows – one state deters to act aggressively against another state if the costs of such actions will exceed its profits. Thus, states force other states to deter by means of threat (Goldstein *et al*, 2011).

Quackenbush (2011) writes that nowadays, scholars distinguish between two approaches to the deterrence theory – classic deterrence theory and perfect deterrence theory. The classic deterrence can be further subdivided into two groups – the structural deterrence theory and the decision-theoretic deterrence theory. The first type has strong connections to neorealism and assumes that the balance of power helps to maintain stability and peace between states. Thus, actors tend to preserve the *status quo* on the international arena. The second type refers to the game theory and calculations of expected utility. If an actor estimates deterrence to be in its interests, it abstains from aggressive actions. As soon as rational preferences of an actor change and aggression becomes of more utility, then an actor may reject to deter. The classic deterrence theory presents a narrow concept by depicting deterrence as only a military tool. A broader concept includes other measures of deterrence such as economic sanctions, diplomatic isolation, etc. (Mazzar, 2018). The perfect deterrence theory underlines the credibility of threats as the most important tool to achieve equilibrium and maintain *status quo*. Thus, to deter a state has to believe that threats of an opponent are credible enough and will be fulfilled in case of non-compliance by another state. For example, state A expresses intentions to act aggressively against state B (or its allies), state B has to prove that it is prepared to an open conflict and has capabilities to defend itself, to make state A believe that its actions will be punished and repelled. Therefore, deterrence as a tool of appeasement and war prevention plays a crucial role in the world politics (Quackenbush, 2011).

In the document issued by Rand Corporation in 2018, Michael J. Mazzar discusses types of deterrence in international politics that differ in their dissuasion strategies - general deterrence, immediate deterrence, deterrence by punishment, deterrence by denial, direct deterrence, and extended deterrence. *General deterrence* refers to an ongoing long-lasting effort to prevent aggression (Mazzar, 2018). *Immediate deterrence* takes place during urgent crises when an

aggressor can venture an attack any time, and a defender has to increase its threatening capacities to retaliate an opponent. Quackenbush (2010) argues that the state of immediate deterrence proves the failed general deterrence because successfully implemented general strategy prevents sudden conflicts (Quackenbush, 2010). *Extended deterrence* is preventing an attack on allies and third parties of a particular state – for example preventing a possible attack of the Soviet Union on NATO allies. In case of extended deterrence, a mighty state is ready to protect its weaker allies against a potential threat from a rival. Thus, another mighty state refuses from malicious actions directed on smaller or weaker states that bandwagon with a mighty one, because it will face reactive measures. The extended deterrence has a vital shortcoming – a conflict between two protégé states may involve mighty defenders in a direct military confrontation because of their obligations to protect its allies (Huth, 1988). *Direct deterrence* means preventing an attack of one state directly on another state. *Deterrence by denial* prevents an aggressor from any adverse actions by making these actions impossible to succeed in. *Deterrence by punishment* makes an opponent believe that his actions will be gravely punished (sanctions, diplomatic and economic isolation, etc.). Therefore, the costs will be much higher than the gains (Mazzar, 2018).

Rapid globalization and development of digital technologies led to the appearance of another type of deterrence that is called *modern deterrence*. It refers to new technics and asymmetric strategies of war (hybrid-war) like cyber-attacks or media war, etc., which became more sophisticated and less traceable. Although nuclear weapon arsenal and development is still an urgent issue in the security discussions, new types of weaponry can pose a more significant threat to the relative peace in the world. These concerns led to the development of a so-called “*tailored deterrence*”, which seeks to address specific situations using diverse retaliation tactics regarding characteristics and nature of an opponent, and not only a possibility of an attack and military arsenal (Morgan, 2012).

Nonetheless, deterrence, as a military strategy cannot always be a guaranty of success. Decision-makers may have their own priorities where military contradiction becomes a tool to achieve personal goals even if such actions lead to defeat. Lebow (1983) underlines that personal perceptions of an aggressor play a decisive role influencing his/her behavior and not the actual calculations about probable success. This fact challenges the deterrence theory and the state of the art of international politics as well because an actor can be assured that in case of non-action he/she will face more losses even if his/her opponent has enough capabilities to defend. The author describes four possible motives making states undertake questionable actions against other states and ignore the profits of deterrence: 1) an actor can become aggressive if it fears to lose its positions in the international scene due to unwanted shifts in the balance of power, 2) an actor faces challenges in domestic politics and tries to redirect attention from internal situation

creating an external „threat“, 3) an actor may become aggressive if it loses popularity in domestic politics and needs to increase its ranking among the population, 4) intra-elite competition for power in domestic politics may force a current decision-maker to act aggressively (Lebow, 1983).

All that proves the complexity of the issue and depicts the changes that happened in the international relations since the concept of deterrence was first introduced as a theory and the significance it has today. The deterrence theory helps to explain and understand the reasons why the INF treaty came into force in 1987 and why it was terminated in 2019 referring to instability of the international system and might accumulation by different states and personal interests of decision-making actors of the treaty.

1.2.1. Rational deterrence

The previous section introduced the general concept of deterrence theory and its types as well as scholars' elaborations on actors' reasons to keep up with the strategy of deterrence in the international politics. In the core of each variant of deterrence lays the presumed rationality of political actors and thus the deterrence theory is also referred to as rational deterrence. The rational deterrence theory relates to the classic deterrence theory and its decision-theoretic type in discussions about the subject. It derives from the rational choice theory and has strong connections to the game theory. Rational deterrence further develops the classic concept of deterrence in international politics under the assumption that the deterrence takes place between rational actors (states, decision-makers) that calculate their own actions and actions of their counterparts and act in a specific way in order to maximize gains (Lebow, 1983), (Nalebuff, 1991).

The problematic point in assumptions about actors' rationality lays in personal preferences and perceptions of decision-makers that may influence their strategic behavior. Thus, a specific scenario that can be seen as the best option for all from the point of view of general rationality may not be considered as such by an individual actor because his/her own perceptions of the future gains may vary from that of others or according to his/her real motives, deterrence and state of peace is less profitable than confrontation (Quackenbush, 2010).

Lebow/Stein (1989) argue that the rational deterrence theory rests on the following three aspects, which the aggressor has to regard carefully before undertaking any malicious actions - “the expected costs of military action, the probability of winning, and the probability that the defender will retaliate” (Lebow/Stein, 1989: 215). All three of these aspects can be calculated with the help of game theory. There are many types of games that actors can have between each other but the most common type of game in international relations is the extended game with imperfect

information. The theory of rational deterrence estimates political actors as rational that will not make decisions that can harm themselves, but at the same time these rational actors have imperfect information about their counterparts' strategies; thus they cannot trust them and need to maximize their own security (Quackenbush/Zagare, 2016). Lebow/Stein (1989) state that sometimes rational deterrence fails because of miscalculations and overestimation of self-capabilities when an aggressor considers itself stronger and estimates the expected utility as profitable, but costs of conflict outweigh the gains at the end, or the defender managed to retaliate an attack despite the expectations of the challenger (Lebow/Stein, 1989).

Huth *et al* (1993) distinguish between five variables in the rational deterrence theory that directly influence the strategic behavior of actors: “(1) the balance of conventional military capabilities, (2) the defender's possession of nuclear weapons, (3) challenger's and defender's interests at stake in the dispute, (4) challenger's and defender's involvement in other disputes, and (5) the past dispute behavior of challenger and defender” (Huth *et al*, 1993:613). Based on these variables the authors developed hypotheses which conclude that: 1) the challenger will have more incentives to attack the defender if the latter have an inferior military force, 2) the potential attacker will restrain from aggressive actions if the opponent possesses nuclear weapons, 3) the challenger is more likely to escalate a conflict if it has its vital geographic interests concerned, 4) the challenger is less motivated to start a dispute if the defender's vital geographic interests are concerned and 5) the previous escalations between two parties play a significant role in their future behavior. For example, if the defender once backed down, the challenger would start a conflict against it in the future with a higher probability, and if once repelled the challenger will unlikely consider commencing conflict with the defender. The authors also elaborated the sixth variable, which they found as important in modern politics as the other variables. They call it “the current dispute behavior between the challenger and the defender” (Huth *et al*, 1993:613). It refers to the present positions of potential rivals on the international arena and can be explained as follows – if one party is involved in a conflict with the third state, another party is more likely to attack, because the defender is already weakened. If the challenger finds itself in a military confrontation with the third party, its prospects to attack the defender decrease manifold (*ibid.*).

The theory of rational deterrence plays an essential role in this research as it serves as the ground for the assumption that the rational calculations of the USA and the USSR in the INF debates of 1979-1987 led to the signing of the agreement meaning that back then the treaty had the maximum of the expected utility for both actors. Moreover, the same reason of rationality led to discussions 2014-2019 that ended with the termination of the treaty. This assertion helps to analyze the debates from the angle of changed priorities of the USA and Russia in domestic and international politics.

1.2.2. Nuclear deterrence

The invention of a nuclear weapon has pushed the importance of military deterrence between states on a new level. The destructive capabilities even after one nuclear attack are significant for a state, and in case the defender can react in the same manner – launching a nuclear bomb – the aftermath of such actions is evident for everyone. The nuclear deterrence is a specific variant of rational deterrence between states, which possess nuclear weapons. In this case, the defender and the challenger abstain from aggression because it may end by using nuclear bombs and result in mutual destruction (Powell, 2003).

The core terms of the nuclear deterrence theory are the pre-emptive (first) strike capability and the second-strike capability. Under the pre-emptive strike capability, military strategists understand a mass nuclear attack on the opposing state. Such an attack aims to destroy nuclear facilities and defensive/offensive potential of the defender as well as to eliminate the possibility of the second strike. In its turn, the second strike is the capability of the defender to react on the first strike. The absence of such a capability means that the aggressor has the strategic nuclear superiority, and it leads to misbalance in deterrence. The second-strike capability of a nuclear state can be ensured by the availability of a nuclear triad, meaning that the defender possesses land-launched nuclear missiles, nuclear-missile-armed submarines and strategic aircraft with nuclear bombs and missiles. Thus, the defender state has guaranteed credibility of a second strike, and it increases chances of a successful nuclear deterrence (Powell, 1985).

Other two theoretical discussions on nuclear deterrence include the brinkmanship and stability-instability paradox between actors, who have a nuclear arsenal. The brinkmanship model explains the provocative behavior of international actors, who exert coercive measures on other actors showing that there is a possibility of a nuclear attack until the opponent backs down. Stability-instability paradox refers to the nuclear deterrence and describes the strategic behavior of two states possessing nuclear weapons. A potential of war between such states decreases manifold but at the same time, the possibility of minor conflicts increases. Therefore, from the one side, the possession of nuclear weapon guarantees a certain grade of stability between states, but at the same time creates instability between states that bandwagon a mighty state. It also increases the possibility of multiple proxy wars, which may further escalate relations between nuclear states (Powell, 2003).

Another important aspect of the nuclear deterrence theory and its practical implementation is that it goes hand in hand with a strategy/concept of arms race. For example, Kugler *et al* (1980) writes: “Under the nuclear deterrence doctrine, fear of the nuclear arsenal of an opponent, and his credible threat to use it deters the attacker from attacking“(Kugler et al, 1980:107). Thus, the nuclear deterrence between superpowers occurs only in case if both states possess excessive

nuclear military arsenal. According to Richardson (1960), one state increases its defense budget and accumulates weaponry, when it sees that its opponent does the same (Richardson, 1960). These actions lead two counterparts to a so-called *prisoner's dilemma*, when two actors do not cooperate with each other despite evident positive effects of such cooperation. Arms control agreements and non-proliferation treaties may increase trust between actors and resolve *prisoner's dilemma* (Axelrod, 1980). Kugler *et al* (1980) state that in case there is no agreement on nuclear arms limitation and disarmament, each side will again try to develop their weaponry and enrich arms' arsenal equal to the efforts of the other side, because it is supposed to be the only condition for stable deterrence (Kugler *et al*, 1980). Thus, the non-proliferation treaties and disarmament agreements are necessary for bi- and multilateral cooperation to de-escalate the possible potential of a massive nuclear war.

Nonetheless, there is another point of view on proliferation of nuclear weaponry. Proliferation optimists consider that an increased nuclear arsenal by different states may have a positive effect on stability and peace in international relations. It presupposes that multiple nuclear states will deter each other from major and minor conflicts, thus also decreasing the potential of stability-instability paradox (Sagan, 1994). Still, this position has many contradictions and blindspots. Not every state has capabilities to present a credible threat and the capability of the second-strike, even possessing nuclear weapons. Rational calculations of decision-making actors may not always consider the state of peace as a priority, as individual actors have their own rational utilities in regard. It may result in a pre-emptive attack on another state and later – in a massive nuclear conflict. Taking into consideration the game-theoretical approach and games with imperfect information between states, actors cannot be sure of their counterparts' intentions. Thus, they try to constantly expand their military arsenal, which will further decrease stability on the international arena.

Another concept discussing the problematic of nuclear deterrence is the concept of *minimal deterrence*. It presumes that a state should possess only a minimum number of nuclear weapons possible to destroy strategic aims of an opponent, implemented only as the second strike following the doctrine of no-use. According to the doctrine of no-use, a state rejects to use nuclear weapons in warfare and keeps it in the arms arsenal to deter a pre-emptive attack of an adversary. Minimal deterrence is supposed to resolve the problem of arms race and *security dilemma* regarding nuclear weapons and pave the way to nuclear disarmament. However, the concept is very contested because it raises an important question – how much nuclear arms should a state possess for a successful minimal deterrence? The trust and cooperation issues between states play a crucial role in this situation because decreasing the nuclear arsenal, a state may become

vulnerable if the relations deteriorate. Nowadays, the minimal deterrence as a military doctrine and security strategy is adopted by China and India (Nalebuff, 1988), (Kristensen *et al*, 2009).

The first and the most significant case of nuclear deterrence in international politics found place in the times of the Cold War between the USA and the Soviet Union. After the WWII, the relations between two superpowers – the USA and the USSR – were mostly described as military deterrence and later, when the Soviet Union produced its own nuclear weapon, represented the case of direct nuclear deterrence (Quackenbush/Zagare, 2016). The deterrence strategy between countries led to “*security dilemma*” because both states significantly increased their military spending and weaponry arsenal to retaliate each other. The USA and the USSR started a very intensive arms race in order to maintain its hegemony and position in international politics. It resulted in the accumulation of weaponry and especially nuclear arms that raised serious concerns in the international community (Lebow/Stein, 1995). Despite high tensions in relations between the Soviet Union and the USA, this case represents a successful rational and nuclear deterrence because it did not escalate to an actual military conflict (Downs, 1989).

Thus, it is possible to conclude that the end of the INF treaty will possibly result in a new intensified nuclear arms race but this time not only between the USA and Russia, but also other nuclear states. Such a situation may have serious negative impact on the international security. Therefore, there is an evident necessity to elaborate another treaty curbing and controlling the nuclear armament of states between all the actors that already have nuclear weapon in its possession or best of all total elimination of all such weaponry – the idealistic scenario that is rather impossible nowadays.

1.3. Arms control

The term *arms control* became popular after the WW II and can be described as an effort of states to come to agreements prohibiting development, production, proliferation, and stockpiling of different groups of weapons - from conventional to the weapons of mass destruction. It differs from the concept of *disarmament* as it is less ambitious and does not seek the complete elimination of all weapons, but rather restricts their implementation and proliferation and mostly refers to weapons of mass destruction (WMD) (Blacker, 2015). Arms control has three main objectives: “to reduce likelihood of war; to limit the extent of damage should war occur; and to reduce expenditures on military forces” (Blacker, 2015: 976). More than that, arms control resolves the security dilemma and curbs massively the arms race between states. Thus, the arms control in forms of framing norms, signing treaties, and exercising peaceful but, if necessary, also coercive diplomacy became an effective mechanism of decreasing the possibility of war (Anthony, 2006).

Some scholars distinguish between quantitative and qualitative arms control. “Quantitative arms control refers to the limitation or reduction of the number of certain armaments” (Mutschler, 2013:17). For example, nuclear arms control treaties between the USA and the USSR. “Qualitative arms control in contrast means the limitation or even abolishment of certain military options” (ibid., 2013). For example, the prohibition of the biological and chemical weapon under the Geneva Protocol (1928). Thus, military strategists could not add this type of weaponry in their military plan. Further on, arms control can be divided into horizontal and vertical. Horizontal arms control restricts the proliferation of weaponry. It includes the production of nuclear weapons by states other than already existing nuclear powers. Vertical arms control deals with the development of advanced weapons and its stockpiling, such as production and storage as well as an increase in quantities of advanced WMD (Breese, 2016).

The first cases of alleged arms control go back to ancient times and known through history, but earnest efforts in reduction of weaponry possession were undertaken during the Cold War. The tension in relations and ideologies between two superpowers – the USA and the USSR – resulted in an unprecedented arms race, including a large production of nuclear warheads causing the security dilemma. The states found themselves in constant brinkmanship tending to provocative behavior. As the world just started recovering from the disasters of WW II, the potential of a new more devastating war between the USA and the Soviet Union was intimidating for the international community. Thus, despite the existing controversies, the superpowers started the dialogue leading them towards mutual arms control based on cooperation, symmetrical demands, and reciprocal obligations under the treaties (Anthony, 2006), (Blacker, 2015).

Most of the arms control conventions and agreements were signed after 1945 when the world witnessed, how devastating chemical and nuclear weapons are. Such conventions as the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the INF (terminated 2019), New START treaty, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and many others paved the ground for establishing peaceful relations between states and acknowledgement of cooperation merits on the international level (Lewis/Thakur, 2004). The problematic of some of the agreements, especially those regarding nuclear weapons control, is that not all the parties possessing certain class of arms sign the treaties. Thus, it produces an advisability dilemma. For example, if only three states out of eight possessing nuclear weapons sign an agreement in non-proliferation and non-deployment, then such an agreement makes them vulnerable to arbitrary decisions of non-signee states. Complex legal procedures of international law also impede the implementation of arms control treaties because states that have signed an agreement but have not ratified it are not legally bound by it. Thus, there are no legal coercion instruments to force states to keep in compliance with the treaty (Anthony, 2006). Another problem by arms control is that it is

successful only if being followed and adhered by all the parties. If one side is not respecting the clauses of the treaty, then it is also discouraging and outraging for the others and lead to demise and withdrawal from the treaties and further escalation and mistrust in relations between states (Blacker, 2015).

The verification of compliance with the treaties and surveillance of their implementation are exercised by many organizations that were specifically established for these purposes. Most of them are the part of the UNO structure such as the IAEA, the CTBTO, the UNIDIR, etc. However, there are also many non-governmental organizations, which play a serious role in exercising pressure on decision-makers and attracting public attention to the problematic and importance of arms control treaties. NGOs actively promote arms reduction, disarmament and elimination of weaponry, especially nuclear class (Lewis/Thakur, 2004).

The nature of arms control has changed a lot since the Cold War. The treaties became multilateral and more engaging, but at the same time, new challenges appeared. For example, international terrorism and access to weapons of non-state actors pose a threat to civil society and state's security from another perspective, where the alleged enemy is unknown and invisible. The UN Security Council Resolution 1540 adopted in 2004 binds the states but not limited to criminalize and pursue all the acts of the proliferation of WMD to non-state actors. The rapid development of dual-use technologies makes possible arms control more complicated because such technologies can be used for peaceful purposes but can also cause severe damages if needed. The perception of arms control in a paradigm of curbing superpowers' arms race as it was in the times of the Cold War should be changed because nowadays, other actors have access to diverse classes of weapons. Thus, the security building is not abandoned to states only, but today it has to include the private sector as well, and arms control has to be exercised more strictly and promoted more effectively (Anthony, 2006), (Levi/O'Hanlon, 2005).

2. Methodology

In order to answer the research question, I conduct a qualitative comparative analysis applying such research methods as document analysis of primary and secondary literature on the subject, official statements of high-profile politicians and heads of states regarding the INF treaty and expert interviews.

The comparative method is a cornerstone of comparative politics, which is one of three main fields of political science standing together with the international relations and political theory. Application of comparative analysis in political science helps to explain and describe complex political phenomena, identify factors and specifics, which may lead to certain outcomes. There

are diverse dimensions, which can serve as the base for the analysis – spatial, functional and temporal. The comparative analysis can be qualitative, aiming to describe and provide an interpretation of research subjects, and quantitative that tests hypotheses and seeks to establish correlations and rules of phenomena. Due to the increasing rates of globalization and growing interdependence of states, comparative politics comes closer to international relations, making comparative method relevant for this thesis (Caramani, 2017).

This research is based upon three dimensions of comparison: 1) temporal, comparing the INF debates through time - in 1979-1987 and 2014-2019; 2) spatial, including the USA and Russia and, 3) contextual, as the both debates take place in the context of changing nature of nuclear deterrence and play a crucial role in framing its notion. It is a diachronic single case study as it investigates the same phenomenon at two different time points. The comparison is conducted under the criteria, which are relevant for answering the research question. These are: 1) political context of debates; 2) actors and their security strategies; 3) arguments pro and con; 4) demands from both sides. First, I describe the debates separately according to the criteria and then I compare them in order to establish similarities and differences as well as define specific features of each of the debates.

Comparison criteria:

The international order and the political context of debates. The analysis starts with the political context of both debates. It includes the international situation and position of the main actors of the debates in the system of international relations - the USA and the USSR (Russia). Understanding the current state of the art on the international arena is essential for estimating the intentions and incentives of actors who initiated the debates and explain, why the non-proliferation treaties were parts of security strategies of both states back in 1979 and how the perception of nuclear deterrence has changed with the time and what shifts in the international system have induced these changes.

The actors of the debates and their security strategies. Second, the analysis of the main actors of the debates and their security strategies with a focus on nuclear planning gives a thorough overview on the objectives of the states regarding their national security and subjective estimation of their position in the international system as well as a description of state's priorities, which in its turn serves as an impulse for the construction of debates.

Arguments pro and Arguments con. The third step is the analysis of the written texts, speeches and political debates between representatives of the USA and the USSR defining main arguments for the signing of the treaty and against it. Here I also use additional arguments from other significant political actors such as head of European states (for the years 1979-1987) and

representatives of the EU (for the years 2014-2019), positions of other nuclear states (China, Israel, North Korea, France, Great Britain, Pakistan, India).

The reasons and the demands of the actors that influenced the outcome of the treaty. This criterion depicts the conditions, which both sides must have accepted to come to the mutually satisfying agreement. It also discusses formal and informal reasons, which influenced the decision-making process regarding the future of the INF by the USA and the USSR/Russia.

Expert interviews

Expert interviews complement the overall analysis of texts and speeches, giving significant input to the understanding of the debates and their specifics. I conducted five interviews in total. As all the interview partners gave the consent to record the interviews, I transcribed them and then coded. The names of the three experts as well as the Institutions they represent are not anonymized with the consent of the interviewed persons. The name and the Institution of the fourth and the fifth experts are anonymized as requested and in the thesis is referred to as expert A and expert B.

Interviewed experts

Arbatov, Alexey - the head of the Center for International Security at the Primakov National Research Institute of World Economy and International Relations and the chair of the Carnegie Moscow Center's Nonproliferation Program. His fields of expertise are international security and military affairs, disarmament, strategic stability, foreign politics, Russian domestic politics (Carnegie, n.d.). The interview was conducted over the telephone on 13 April 2020 at 13 pm (Vienna time) and lasted around 20 minutes.

Expert A - fields of expertise are international security, joint crises response, peace operations of international organizations, nuclear policies, nuclear non-proliferation. The interview was conducted over WhatsApp on 5 May 2020 and lasted 35 minutes.

Expert B – fields of expertise are International Law, foreign politics, arms control, non-proliferation, military conflict management. The interview was conducted via Skype on 23 May 2020 and lasted 26 minutes.

O'Hanlon, Michael – a senior fellow and director of research in Foreign Policy at the Brookings Institution. His fields of expertise are the US defense strategy and national security policy, the use of military force (Brookings, n.d.). The interview was conducted via e-mail from 16 April 2020 till 18 April 2020. The expert replied to the questions consequently in writing.

Sokov, Nikolai – a senior fellow at Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation. He participated in START I, START II and other arms control negotiations as well as numerous

summit and ministerial meetings. His fields of expertise are arms control, disarmament and international security, theory and practice of international regimes, comparative foreign and defense policy and military strategies, nuclear non-proliferation, international cooperation for non-proliferation (VCDNP, n.d.). The interview was conducted over Skype on 17 April 2020 and lasted 86 minutes.

Limitations of the study

One of the most significant limitations of this research is the lack of access to the documentation because most of the documents on military and security strategies are classified. Therefore, the main sources of information presented scientific papers and published unclassified documents.

Although being a valuable source of information, expert interviews may have such shortcomings as transmission of biased information, subjected points of view, speculation of information. Thus, the obtained data were thoroughly assessed only in connection with the data received from primary and secondary sources. Another problem of the expert interviews is the difficulty in establishing a contact with experts in the field of research, especially from the US side. Out of 18 contacted experts, only five agreed to participate in the research.

3. Background

The end of the World War II, the first tests of nuclear bombs exercised by the USA in 1945 and ideological contradictions designated the beginning of the Cold War between the USA and the Soviets gravened by the nuclear arms race. Despite the deep mistrust in relations, heads of rival states managed to sign several arms control agreements including the INF treaty paving the way to bilateral cooperation and ending the Cold War and arms race.

This chapter consists of three sub-chapters and 1) represents a short historical overview on the development of the relations between two superpowers in the state of a direct nuclear deterrence during the Cold War and up to the signing of the INF treaty in 1987; 2) tells the history of the INF treaty starting 1979 and ending in 2019 by its termination; 3) and discusses the strategic and technological advantages of short- and medium-range missiles, thus explaining the reasons for the elimination of this very class of weapons stipulated in the treaty.

3.1. Nuclear deterrence between the USA and the USSR

In 1945 during the Conference in Potsdam, President Truman declared the possession of the nuclear bombs by the USA, being sure that Josef Stalin was not aware of the existence of new technologies, thus making the USA the only state with such a weapon. Nonetheless, the Soviet

intelligence service found the information about secret American projects long before the conference and the USSR used the data to conduct their own research on development and production of nuclear bombs. Although the UNO that was founded in 1945 established a special body - United Nations Atomic Energy Commission - to attempt the control and probable elimination of all nuclear weapons, the USA and the USSR did not find a mutually acceptable decision on the future of atomic weapons. The USA called for preserving nuclear weapons and energy for peaceful purposes. The USSR demanded the abolition of all the existing atomic weapons. The unsuccessful negotiations marked the start of the Cold War and the intensified arms race between two superpowers (Brown/Arnold, 2010).

Despite the calculations of the US experts, who thought that the USSR would not have the bomb till the mid of 1950s, the first Soviet atomic bomb was already tested in 1949. Since that moment, the USA and the USSR tried to produce as much nuclear and other conventional weapons as possible to successfully retaliate the opponent in case it decides to act aggressively. In the middle of 1960s both superpowers possessed the so-called “nuclear triad” consisting of land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), sub-marine launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) and strategic aircraft bombers. The nuclear triad ensured the second-strike capability even if one of the component parts of the triad was attacked (Schaffer, 2012), (Brown/Arnold, 2010).

Kristensen *et al* (2009) argue that the term “deterrence” was misused in the Cold War. The relations between the USA and the USSR were that much mistrustful that both states were afraid of a surprise attack and called it “deterrence”, though it was more the art of “paranoia”. Thus, both of them thought that the only way to stay alive is to guarantee the first- and second-strike capabilities, which in its turn destabilized the situation even more (Kristensen *et al*, 2009). ““Deterrence” has become to be defined as whatever it is that nuclear weapons do. Indeed, the US ICBMs and SLBMs are often called the “land-based deterrent” and the “sea-based deterrent,” respectively. Moreover, nuclear bombs deployed in Europe are called the “extended deterrent.” Nuclear weapons have simply become deterrence no matter what mission they have” (ibid., 2009:15).

In the mid-1950s the USA formulated its military policy of massive retaliation. This doctrine appeared prior to mutual assured destruction and flexible response when the USSR yet lacked the second-strike capability. The massive retaliation stipulated that in case of an aggressor’s attack, the USA will reply with a disproportionately greater force including nuclear weapons. Nonetheless, when both superpowers stockpiled enough atomic weapon to destroy each other, the USA decided to modify their military policies and adopt the doctrine of *mutual assured destruction*, meaning that the use of the complete nuclear arsenal by two counterparties will

inevitably lead to the obliteration of both, thus being a solid ground for stable nuclear deterrence based on Nash equilibrium and making the attack senseless (Schaffer, 2012), (Slantchev, 2014).

In 1961 NATO presented its nuclear strategy called *flexible response*. It is a “defense strategy in which a wide range of diplomatic, political, economic, and military options are used to deter an enemy attack” (Britannica, 2014). The strategy was adopted by the USA as well. The strong advantage of flexible response was its intention to apply all possible measures to retaliate an opponent, not only military and not exclusively nuclear weapons, but also other conventional arms and peaceful means of conflicts resolution as diplomacy. Still, this policy was very costly and not always worked as wanted (Slantchev, 2014).

The Cuban missiles crisis of 1962 put the superpowers in a state of brinkmanship. At that time, the possibility of the nuclear war seemed to be quite realistic and therefore, appalling to the whole international community. This grade of tension in relations had to be de-escalated, and after negotiations, the Soviets withdrew their missiles from Cuba (Adamsky, 2013).

In the 1970s the relations between the USA and the USSR became less stressed and that period was called *détente*. The states changed their tactics in bi-lateral relations initiating diplomatic negotiations on multiple issues, but especially important - mutual arms control. During this time in 1972, the states signed SALT I agreement that limited number of the strategic ballistic missiles' launchers and other arms arsenal. SALT I was estimated as a breakthrough in the US-USSR relations giving hope for further positive developments. Another important bi-lateral agreement signed in 1972 was Anti-ballistic-missiles treaty that limited the quantity of anti-ballistic systems of each signee. It was necessary to eliminate the possibility of ABS competition between states that could decrease the retaliation capability of actors and have negative effects on arms control and stability of deterrence. Still, after the invasion of the Soviets in Afghanistan in 1979, the relations with the USA deteriorated again. The same year the USA initiated the INF talks. It happened after the USSR deployed their ballistic launchers on the borders with Europe and NATO members demanded actions from the USA (Kimball/Reif, 2020), (Brown/Arnold, 2010).

The negative domestic dynamics of the 80s forced the Soviet government to adopt a new political course with its new liberalizing policies as *perestrojka* and *glasnost*'. The withdrawal from Afghanistan and the signing of the INF treaty in 1987 marked another warming in relations between the USA and the Soviets. As the Cold War began for the reasons of the geopolitical and ideological race for hegemony, the collapse of the Soviet Union and democratic change of Russia put an end to a long phase of tension and mistrust and offered a way to cooperation between two rival states. At least until recently (Adamsky, 2013).

The whole US nuclear deterrence logic of this period was grounded on the assumption of rationality of the Soviet Union. The retaliation of the Cold War serves as an example of a

successful nuclear deterrence strategy. However it stays unclear if it was an accumulation and possession of excessive weaponry of both states that kept them from launching a war against each other or they would not choose the path of aggression anyway.

3.2. The history of the INF-treaty and its problematic

States try to secure its citizens and do it mostly by developing their military technologies to deter alleged enemies of a possible attack. Thus, the USA invented nuclear weapon and tested it during World War II with its bombings of Japan. The destructive capabilities of a nuclear bomb and consequences of the first two nuclear attacks in the world proved that this type of weapon is very efficient but, at the same time, that it may bring serious challenges to the world peace in the future. The aftermath of the World War II and the constant rally for the world hegemony between the USA and the Soviet Union only escalated the relations between states, who started an unprecedented arms race, which also included the production and stockpiling of nuclear weapons in large scales, after the USSR exploded its first atomic bomb in 1949 (Schaffer, 2012).

In the 1970s the European states started raising concerns about new modified missiles of the Soviet Union – RSD-10 Pioneer with a range of 5,000 km that could reach targets within 10 minutes anywhere in Western Europe. As the USSR deployed these missiles, many European states, who were already NATO members by the time, increased the pressure on the USA to commence strategic actions to retaliate the USSR. Thus, in 1979 the USA adopted “dual-strategy” (Kimball/Reif, n.d.). According to this strategy, the first option called for the USA to offer the Soviets to sign the arms control agreement and reduce INF to the minimum. If the USSR rejects to take part in negotiations on arms reduction, the USA was ready to implement the other option. Under the second option, the USA agreed to deploy their two intermediate range-missiles launchers in Western Europe in 1983 that could reach Moscow also within 10 minutes, and due to its accuracy in delivering missiles, it was capable of destroying the first-strike capacities of the USSR (Kimball/Reif, n.d.), (The USA bureau of arms control, 2017). As the second option was a severe strategic loss for the Soviets, they agreed to conduct negotiations to sign *the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF treaty)*. It was the beginning of negotiations, which lasted until the year 1987. The first preliminary talks between the USA and the USSR were held in Geneva in 1980 and only a year after in 1981, the formal talks found place (Risse-Kappen, 1991).

The USA developed its negotiations strategy consulting with the NATO because NATO states should not have lost their defence capabilities if the treaty was signed. Thus, the main claims from the US side to the treaty were: “(1) provide for equality both in limits and rights between the United States and the Soviet Union; (2) be strictly bilateral and thus exclude British and

French systems; (3) limit systems on a global basis; (4) not adversely affect NATO's conventional defence capability; and (5) be effectively verifiable" (The USA bureau of arms control, 2017).

The talks were extremely complicated, as the sides could not find a satisfying agreement upon the treaty. The USSR designated from the discussions several times. The "zero-zero offer" of President Reagan, proposing to dismantle all the deployed missiles from the USSR and in its turn, USA would destroy their nuclear systems, was not accepted by the counterpart as the Soviets invested much more capital in the development and production of nuclear weapons and possessed much more missiles than the USA. Thus, the Soviets offered to limit the number of atomic arms up to 300 for each party, including Great Britain and France as a part of NATO on the US side with no future deployment, but the USA insisted on "zero-zero-option". Such a stalemate became a reason for the USSR to cease negotiations in 1983. In its turn, in 1984, the USA deployed their missiles Pershing II with nuclear warheads in Germany, Italy and Great Britain and prepared deployment in Belgium (Risse-Kappen, 1991).

The talks recommenced in 1985 and intensified during 1986. Both states showed real efforts in finding a solution that would fit both parties. The Soviet side tried to include British and French forces into the treaty through all the negotiation process, but it was vainly. In 1987 the USA offered a consequent plan on elimination of all INF weapons by 1989 and a plan of a rigid verification procedure. Later in 1987, Mikhail Gorbachev accepted the "double-zero deal" proposing the complete elimination of short-and intermediate-range missiles by both sides (Dunn, 1988).

The INF treaty was finally signed between the USA and the Soviet Union by the President Ronald Reagan and the General Secretary of the Communist Party Mikhail Gorbachev in 1987 and came into force in 1988. The preamble of the treaty declares that the undersigned states are "Conscious that nuclear war would have devastating consequences for all mankind, Guided by the objective of strengthening strategic stability, Convinced that the measures set forth in this Treaty will help to reduce the risk of outbreak of war and strengthen international peace and security" (INF treaty, 1987).

The treaty was of great importance for the European security after the WW II because the main purpose of it was the destruction and non-deployment as well as non-production and non-testing of all short and mid-range missiles, land-based ballistic missiles, cruise missiles and missile launchers with the range between 500-5,500 km (Meier, 2018). Not only, the treaty obliged the states to dismantle and destroy the missiles that had already been deployed, but also those were kept in storage (Kimball/Reif, n.d.). It reduced the threat of a potential nuclear attack from the side of USSR on the European states enormously and helped to decrease tension in the continent

in the years followed as well as marked the warming phase in the strategic relations between the USSR and the USA.

According to the agreement, both states had to eliminate all the nuclear weapon mentioned in the text of the treaty within three years after it is signed. Since then both sides of the agreement reduced their nuclear arsenal dramatically – a total of almost 2,700 missiles. Two-thirds of the total amount belonged to the Soviet Union. It was the first bilateral treaty that resulted in the abolishment of such large stocks of weaponry (Anthony, 2017).

The Article XIII prescribed the establishment of a Special Verification Commission (SVC), which served to discuss and resolve disputes that could emerge in the future with the implementation of the treaty and to increase the effectiveness of its implementation (INF text, 1987). Under the treaty each of the sides had the right to verify its counterpart on compliance with the treaty by sending special commissions on military sites (Harahan, 1993) There were several types of verification: “baseline inspections, to confirm the initial data update; closeout inspections of facilities and missile operation bases at which INF activity ceased; short-notice (quota) inspections of declared and formerly declared facilities, and elimination inspections to confirm elimination of INF systems in accordance with agreed procedures” (The USA bureau of arms control, 2017). This verification and inspection system was unique because of its intrusiveness and rigidity. The treaty provided up to 20 short notice inspections yearly from each party during the first three years after the treaty was signed. The USA was authorized to conduct verification procedures in all the Soviet states with nuclear facilities. The USSR became the right to inspect all the nuclear facilities in the USA but also “at specified bases in Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, West Germany, and Czechoslovakia” (Kimball/Reif, n.d.).

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the treaty became multilateral, because three of the former Soviet states - excluding Russia as the successor of the USSR – Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine were active parts of the treaty and its implementation and verification, as they possess nuclear facilities on their territory. Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan had only one inspectable site, respectively. In order to continue inspections in the former Soviet republics, the USA conducted multiple diplomatic negotiations with the head of states and signed necessary agreements, giving the verification commissions allowance to inspect nuclear facilities (Anthony, 2017).

In July 2014, the USA for the first time publicly accused Russia of violating the treaty and after that constantly claimed the incompliance with the treaty by the Russian side. According to the USA accusations, Russia allegedly has produced and tested new missiles that superseded the range prohibited under the INF treaty. Russia denied all the violations and, in its turn, as well accused the USA of non- compliance with the treaty. With the time it became clear that the future

of the INF treaty is jeopardized (Richter, 2019). In 2018 Trump expressed the intentions of the USA to withdraw from the treaty if Russia did not stop violating it. This decision was supported by NATO (Seligman/Gramer, 2019). As Russia kept denying the accusations, in February 2019 President Trump stated that if Russia was not going to change its attitude to the treaty and kept on producing and testing short- and intermediate-range missiles, the USA would have to withdraw from the treaty within six months. Thus, the INF ceased to exist on 2 August 2019 (Kimball/Reif, 2019). Nonetheless, approx. three weeks after the breakdown of the treaty the USA tested a mid-range submarine missile from a land launcher, which underpinned the concerns of the international community that the end of the treaty would mean the start of a new nuclear arms race („*INF nuclear treaty: US tests medium-range cruise missile* “, 2019).

The reaction of the European Union, the UNO and many other IGOs and NGOs to the termination of the treaty was extremely critical. The significance of the treaty for the world peace was never questioned, and the necessity to maintain the agreement seemed to be evident. Although the undersigned states decided differently. Russia pointed several times to the inconsistency of the treaty with the modern security situation on the continent and offered mutual withdrawal before it came to mutual accusations and demise of the agreement. The USA was unsatisfied with the treaty because of the rise of China and possession of short- and intermediate-range missiles by other states (Rose, 2019).

The course of action of the USA and Russia can be explained with the tools of neorealism - each of the INF actors pursued their own interests – might maximization and self-survival, which led to the withdrawal from the treaty. Its termination gives Russia and the USA free rein to enrich their nuclear arsenal again and construct short- and intermediate-range missiles. Both states also agreed upon and declared that the bilateral nature of the INF treaty became outdated as other nuclear states, for example, China and North Korea, continued to expand their nuclear systems. Thus, it seems to be reasonable to develop a new nuclear non-proliferation treaty, which will include other nuclear powers. Although for the moment, it stays a challenging task.

The INF treaty was the first bilateral agreement of such a scale that for almost 30 years was considered to be a successful strategic contract between two powerful states with unprecedented verification capabilities. It paved the way for multiple other disarmament and arm-reduction agreements (Kuhn/Peczeli, 2017). The end of the treaty is dramatic for the security of the world, giving the incentives to a new intensified nuclear arms race between nuclear states. Especially the situation raises concerns in the EU as it is the closest neighbor of the Russian Federation and at the same time the NATO ally, making the Union be literally caught between a rock and a hard place. President Putin has many times stated that Russia would not deploy any missiles on the frontiers with the European states until they do the same. Nonetheless, Russia is perceived as a

non-reliant partner by its Western colleagues, and the EU has little confidence in further actions of the country. The yet uncertain position of Ukraine and its high potential to produce and deploy short- and intermediate-range missiles compound the security problematic of the EU (Anthony, 2017). The end of the treaty presents another more complicated problem - “the collapse of the existing U.S.-Russia strategic stability framework”, which means a possible beginning of a new Cold War that could destabilize not only the EU but also result in proxy wars and a renewed nuclear deterrence with a possibility of a backslide to mutual assured destruction doctrine and state of brinkmanship (Rose, 2019).

The history of the INF treaty stated above defines its problematic nature from the beginning of initial negotiations till the withdrawal of both actors from the agreement. The analysis and the comparison of both debates - 1979-1987 and 2014-2019 – are necessary 1) to comprehend the differences and similarities of the debates as well as their specific features, 2) to identify factors that influenced the decision-making process of both actors at both periods of time, 3) to define the standing point of nuclear deterrence between Russia and the USA and incentives of the actors regarding the future of nuclear deterrence based on their security strategies and 4) to estimate the possibility of creating a new more inclusive treaty.

3.3. Short- and intermediate-range missiles

Under the INF treaty, the USA and the Soviet Union were obliged to eliminate all ballistic and cruise missiles and missile launchers with the range between 500 km to 5,500 km. This range responds to three types of missiles – short, medium and intermediate, which also have specific technic and strategic advantages in warfare and as means of deterrence (Anthony, 2017).

Technic characteristics

Short-range ballistic missiles (SRBM) have a range of around 1,000 km and less. Such missiles are used because of small distances between some countries and also can be deployed on the frontiers to protect domestic territory and the frontline. Medium-range ballistic missiles (MRBM) are missiles that can reach its target on the distance from 1,000 km up to 3,000 km. Intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBM) have a range from 3,000 km up to 5,500km and belongs to strategic weapons (Davenport, n.d.).

The modern typology of missiles ranks SRBM and MRBM (with a range up to 3,500km) to theater ballistic missiles (TBM), which are used on the area of actual military events - land, sea, air (ELE times, 2017).

Strategic advantages

There are two main types of missiles ballistic and cruise. Ballistic missiles are faster than cruise missiles that makes it harder to intercept them. Still, cruise missiles are cheaper, more mobile, and as they fly close to the surface, they are difficult to detect by ABM systems (ELE times, 2017).

“The main advantage of short- and intermediate-range missiles is that they can reach their targets very quickly. ICBMs can take tens of minutes to deliver a warhead to enemy territory, while “short-” and “intermediate-range” missiles need mere minutes.” (Kuznets, 2018). Another advantage of SRBM is in its low costs in comparison to other missiles.

In 1976 the USSR deployed RSD-10 Pioneer with a maximum range of 5,500, which had important advantages over previous missiles – it could be (re-)deployed more rapidly and better concealed. It also was loaded with three independently targetable nuclear warheads instead of one like former missiles (the USA bureau of arms control, 2017).

Missiles banned by the INF –the USSR

TR-1 Temp (SS-12 Scaleboard¹) 900 km, R-12 Divina (SS-4 Sandal) 2,080 km; RT-15 (SS-14 Scamp) 2,500 km, RSD-10 *Pioneer* (SS-20 Saber) 5,500; R-14 Chusovaya (SS-5 Skean) 3,700 km; RK-55 Relief cruise missile (SSC-X-4 Slingshot) 3,000 km (INF, 1987).

Missiles banned by the INF – the USA

MGM-31 Pershing 740 km – Ia/Ib, Pershing II Weapon System medium 1,770 km; BGM-109G Gryphon cruise missile 2,500km (INF, 1987).

Additionally, both sides were obliged to destroy all training missiles, training missile stages, training launch canisters and training launchers, all stages of intermediate-range and shorter-range ground-launched cruise missiles (GLCM), all front sections of deployed intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles (INF, 1987). All these weapons and supportive structures were dismantled and destroyed by June 1991 as was stipulated in the treaty (Kuznets, 2018).

4. The comparison of the INF debates 1979-1987 and 2014-2019

In this chapter, I conduct a comparative analysis of the INF debates regarding three dimensions - time, space, and context. The debates took place with an almost forty years' time difference, starting in 1979, re-emerging slowly in 2014 and intensified in 2019. The spatial dimension lays

¹ According to NATO reporting mechanism, all weapons are given names regarding the purpose of their use. SS- refers to “surface-to-surface” meaning that the missile is launched from the surface and aims targets based on the surface. SSC- refers to surface-to-surface coastal defense submarine launched missiles (Parsch/Martynov, 2008).

between the USA and Russia (the USSR), including Europe and Asia in discussions. The context of the debates is the changing nature of nuclear deterrence in the system of international relations. The analysis includes such criteria as actors and their security strategies, the international order and the political context of the debates, arguments pro and con, demands from both sides.

4.1. The international order and the political context of the debates

The identifying of the international political context plays a crucial role in the comparative analysis of the INF debates. It is essential to comprehend the context in which the debates first emerged and then pursue the evolving stages of the discourse up to the moment the agreement failed. The international political context is a complex environment, which is produced and influenced by many factors – political, economic, social and interactions between states. In terms of a state, if the political context changes, when power structures shift in domestic politics, but it is also modified by the shifts in the international system and behavior of other actors. The political context defines and coordinates the decision-making strategies and the efficacy of these strategies and measures depending on the political environment (Nash *et al*, 2006). In its turn, the international order represents the arena, set of rules and power distribution between actors, where the actual political context is being created. Both phenomena – international order and international political context - are essential for the analysis of the INF debates.

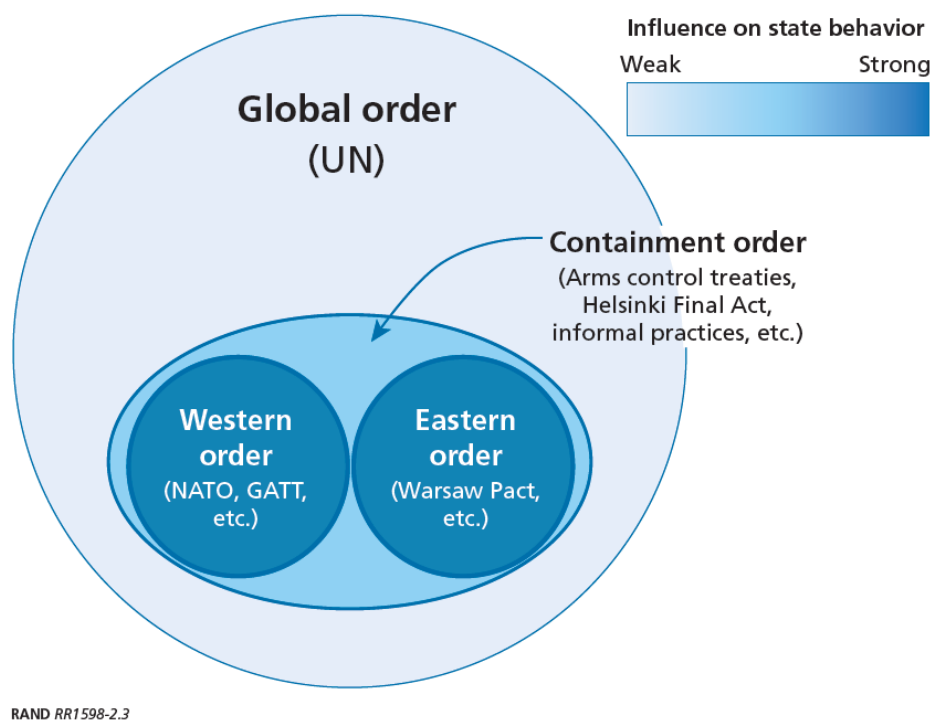
The debates 1979-1987

The international political context of the Cold War was unambiguous and simple (if compared to the modern one). It was a rivalry and a withstand between two superpowers in a bi-polar world – the USA and the USSR. There were just two ideological camps, each having its own allies and each trying to win the race for hegemony and active proliferation and establishing its international order. The USA sought to create liberal rule-based order, and the Soviet Union wanted to expand its socialist values and build communism (RAND, 2016). In the neorealist's perspective, such a bi-lateral system is the most stable and balanced because it clearly distinguishes the leading powers and their mechanisms to achieve their goals, with the ultimate one – to become the only superpower in the international system and establish the global order resting on its values (Waltz, 1979).

The RAND Corporation (2016) depicted the international order and political context of the Cold War consistent of three main spheres (orders) embedded in each other. The first two orders are the Western pole and the Eastern pole. Within each pole, states are bound with each other through military and economic cooperation agreements and ideological base (NATO, Warsaw Pact, etc.).

Both poles as the parts of the international system are embodied in the containment order, where they tried to impede the consolidation of each other, and at the same time, they cooperated within its order via treaties and agreements guaranteeing arms control and state of peace between them. Even the nuclear deterrence may be referred to as containment order practice that contributed to the development of peaceful relations between two superpowers. The third order is the global one and presented by the UNO and International Rule of Law with universally accepted and adhered rules (RAND, 2016). Back to the Cold War, the international institutions were less dominant than today. Therefore, states had more power over their zones of influence. It is reasoned by the notion of state's sovereignty in the times of the Cold War and the rivalry between the West and the Ost, which outcome was yet unknown. Thus, it was not yet clear, which value system would pave the ground to the new international order and would dominate the political context of the years to come.

Figure 1. International order, 1980



Source: RAND Corporation (2016), p. 18

The perception of state's sovereignty plays an essential role in understanding the international political context of the INF debates. The sovereignty granted to states is the guarantee of security from the whim and hawkish motives of other states. The Cold War world international order and political context were based on the Westphalian model with states having paramount sovereignty, where no other state could openly interfere in domestic affairs of each other, especially with the

use of force. Although this rule was not always appropriately adhered, it was commonly accepted and known. State's decision-makers knew that the breach of the non-interference principle would be condemned by the international community and sanctioned (Rawlings *et al*, 2013). It was crucial for the states' military deterrence as well. With the later consolidation of the liberal global order promoted by the West, human rights and democracy promotion, the notion of paramount sovereignty has changed. It caused significant shifts in state's behavior, especially weak and rogue states regarding security issues. Thus, it altered the notion of deterrence as well making it more complex and relevant in the modern politics.

The debates 2014-2019

After the Cold War, the collapse of the Soviet Union and a short period of a unipolar international system ruled by the USA, the situation started to change. The international order planned and promoted by the West has consolidated - the liberal international order based on the US values, which also designated the victory of the USA over the Soviet Union. Nonetheless, the international system is not stable, and it is always motion. The emergence of new and the rapid development of some other centers of power started to readjust the international order and political context influencing behavior of the INF treaty actors (RAND, 2016).

Today states are deeply integrated into the system of international institutions with its rules and prescriptions. Due to multiple bi-(multi-)lateral, transnational, regional, etc. agreements and treaties, countries became more interdependent economically and politically. The International Rule of Law created a universal system of values for the whole international community. Moreover, despite many controversial issues in this regard, it still brought governments of diverse states to the dialogue. It even led to the emergence of a new theory in international relations – the regime theory, which contradicts realism and neorealism claiming that despite states find themselves in anarchic relations, they cooperate as they depend on each other and bound with the obligations under the regime (international institutions, agreements and standard international order) (Anagnostakis, 2017). In frames of this thesis, I want to confirm the importance of this theory. Nonetheless, I argue that states adhere the international institutions only as long as it gives them more gains than loses and as soon as a state decides that a certain regime stands on the way of its might maximization or gardening the *status quo*, a state can easily abandon or violate the regime, as it happened with the INF treaty.

The INF debates of 2014-2019 processed in a complex multi-lateral environment, where many other factors – domestic and external – influenced the position of the treaty actors. The multipolar power system in modern international relations, as Kenneth Waltz (1979) argued, is rather unstable because many actors compete but do not balance each other as it was the case in the bi-

lateral system (Waltz, 1979). For example, the USA is involved in an arms race with Russia, but the latter cannot be a decent opponent economically. At the same time, China pursues somewhat limited military accumulation, especially regarding nuclear weapons, but the country is rapidly developing its economic potential – the threat that forced Trump's administration to commence a trade war with China.

The non-state powerful actors among IGOs and NGOs but also individuals exercise their pressure on decision-makers, and also contribute to the framing and structuring of the international political processes and context. Due to globalization and digitization of communication, people became more interconnected, and it led to the buildup of strong civil societies around the globe, which in case of wrong-doing on the side of a state, may create a counterpower and opposition being supported by IGOs and NGOs.

The rapid globalization led to the extremely high grade of interdependence between states, especially in production networks and value chains, which became possible due to liberal order and international institutions. This interconnection created new threats that influence state's policies and strategies such as terrorism, climate change, demographic problems, migration, economic challenges on the local and global levels, etc. (Grizold, 1994).

The notion of sovereignty has also changed over time. With many rogue states accumulating military power, with failing and collapsed states and rising terrorism, the sovereignty has ceased to be an exclusive priority. The Responsibility to Protect Doctrine (2005) has additionally underlined the conditional status of state's sovereignty. It has complicated the international politics even more because weak states feel endangered by mighty states and their whim as the US intervention in Iraq of 2003 proved that was not authorized by the SC UNO (Lea-Henry, 2018). After RtoP was ratified, the SC UNO was given a legal ground to intervene in domestic affairs of other states. The position of Russia to interventions even under RtoP is rather negative, and the USA adheres a more interventionist course – the dilemma that once again clashes two states based on their ideological attitude and comprehension of complex political questions. The erosion of the Security Council of the UNO as a decision-making mechanism handling issues of humanitarian and military intervention tangles the situation furthermore (Paras, 2019).

The consolidation and the growing power of the European Union with prospects and discussions about the possibility of the EU army and certain alienation of the USA from NATO diminishing the American importance for the alliance and in the region. The improved relations between the EU and Russia from 2000 until 2014 also became problematic for the USA in terms of exerting its influence in Western Europe (Haar, 2018). From the Russian side, the attempts of the EU to integrate Ukraine in the Union and the possibility to include the country into NATO conveying the Crimea – an important military strategic point - under Western influence contradicted Russian

interests and undermined its physical security manifold. The Ukrainian conflict and the annexation of the Crimea seriously damaged the reputation of Russia and its government under the rule of Vladimir Putin, making Russia even more vulnerable and weak than it was before. It proves once again that modern Russia has little to do with the might of the USSR, but it cannot accept its new position in the international order - as simply a modernizing state and not a superpower.

There are more components of international order and political context, but I concentrated on those essential for the INF treaty debates, which influenced the outcomes of the debates.

Comparison of the international order and the political context 1979-1987 and 2014-2019

From previous chapters, it becomes vivid that the political context and the international order of the INF debates took place in are profoundly different. The changes occurred in the international system and the positions of the USA and Russia in it, made both states undertake actions that led to the demise of the treaty as they wanted to keep *status quo* and preserve its military might and deterrence capacities.

A. Arbatov explains the termination of the INF treaty regarding political context as follows:

“The reason for the demise of the INF treaty is the changes in the technological and military situation in the world. The treaty was concluded in the period of détente and was the first step to end the Cold War and nuclear arms race. Today we are living in the times of a new Cold War in relations between Russia and the USA. We can see the disintegration of the whole system of arms control. The denunciation of the INF treaty became the first step for that. The USA reasoned its withdrawal with alleged Russia’s constant violations of the treaty and with the rise of China. The growing military capacities of China are estimated by the USA as a threat to its Western and Pacific allies. Deterioration in relations between the USA and Russia, technological changes that are not anymore subject to existing verification system that was established for the first ten years of the treaty, although it was profound and intrusive. There is a high level of mistrust between Russia and the USA. The rise of China is changing the international political and geopolitical context. The USA considers China its main opponent and competitor. We are in the new arms race, including nuclear arms race after a long pause. In the context of the modern international situation, nuclear arms race will be multi-lateral rather than bi-lateral.”

The expert A argues that the changes in deterrence axes played a crucial role for the termination of the treaty because back in the Cold War the world dealt with only one significant deterrent line – the USA vs the USSR. The problematic of modern nuclear deterrence in its multipolar nature – India vs Pakistan, the USA vs North Korea, and also the USA vs China. Thus, the political and also military context changed not only in terms of bi- and multi-polarity of the system but also the very possession of nuclear weapons by other states, which are not superpowers and have questionable reputation, added to the escalation on the regional level.

The altered situation with the Chinese military and economic raise undermines the supremacy of the USA as China tends to promulgate its own values and seeks to consolidate its own

international order. There are proves that China possesses around 1800 nuclear warheads against 300 as it declares. Thus, it creates a situation of solid mutual deterrence between the USA and China because the balance of power has changed as the technologies have also changed. At the same time, the deterrence between the USA and Russia de-escalated manifolds due to various bilateral agreements. For example, the New START eliminated the possibility of a first strike because it reduced the military capabilities of both states. It proves that the nuclear war between the USA and Russia is the least possible scenario because of bi-lateral cooperation in armament questions. But the possibility of regional conflicts between nuclear powers has increased (the expert A), (the expert B.)

N. Sokov also addresses the growing importance of China for the demise of the INF. Regarding the political context, China plays a more prominent role now than it was in the Cold War – both military and economically. Notably, it is relevant for the USA because of the emergence of a new bipolar axis - the USA vs China. The rivalry on this axis is more potent than that of Russia and the USA. Russia has enough military power and nuclear weapon, but economically it cannot stand competition as a superpower. Another issue that is crucial for nowadays situation is the loss of separation between politics, geopolitical conflicts and competitions and arms control. It happened due to the timely nascence of the unipolar world in the 90s, after the collapse of the Soviet Union when the USA became the only superpower, the decrease of Russia's influence in the world and the rise of China. These factors negatively influenced the political thinking and decision-making processes in the domain of military politics. During the Cold War, the USSR and the USA had tense relations, and they conducted long and not always successful negotiations. Nonetheless, they continued talking about arms controls searching for agreements as they had a shared interest. The loss of will to find a compromise in questions of disarmament and arms control has become a problem of international politics today.

“In the 80s there was an assurance among politicians that the possibility to conclude a solid arms control treaty exists and it would help to solve the problems between states in an amicable way. The INF treaty became such an effort, although it didn't totally work out. But the international political situation didn't play much of a role here, rather from the side of Russia it was the discreditation of Gorbachov's politics, especially domestic politics. Probably, if the USSR kept the economic level of 1987, the situation would develop another way. But his ideas came unstuck” (N. Sokov).

Although the interviewed experts and researchers claim that the rise of China mostly poses a problem to the USA, I want to address this issue from the Russian perspective too. First of all, in the times of the Cold War, the USSR and China had a common ideological base - communism, which is not the case nowadays. Second, Russia possesses vast uninhabited areas and shares borders with overpopulated China, which has already started to rent lands from Russia, and there is also a significant flow of Chinese immigrants coming to Russia. Therefore, even considering

that China is a strategic partner of Russia and the states try to support each other in the SC UNO and deterrence of the USA influence, the situation may change overnight as it often happens in international politics. Thus, China is a more potent threat to Russia than to the USA.

N. Sokov argued that the will to negotiate arms control agreements deteriorated in recent years. In my opinion, it is reasoned by the alterations in the international system and power distribution between states. These factors influenced the thinking of decision-makers. Returning to the neorealism and game theory in politics, during the debates 1979-1987, the actors saw more profits in cooperation. In the Cold War, two rival superpowers reached its levels of armament and military supremacy, and no-other state could compete with them. That is why further arms race became senseless and dangerous. Furthermore, the USA won the Cold War not due to its military arsenal but because of its innovative ideas and economic growth. Today the military deterrence and military power are gaining significance back because the level of trust between states is decreasing, the sovereignty ceased to be the nation state's privilege, and some countries became highly militarized, mostly driven by the incentive to protect themselves from the whim of mighty states. In its turn, Russia and the USA consider they have their hands tied by the bilateral arms control agreements – the point of view that also makes sense because Russia is not a superpower anymore and the USA faces competition from China. Therefore, I assert that the lack of will to discuss new arms control agreements has not vanished, but these agreements must be more embedding and multi-lateral creating equal conditions for participating states.

The political context of the INF debates in 1979-1987 and in 2014-2019 have little in common, and there are particularly important differences that influenced the viability of the treaty. First of all, the changes in the power distribution from a bi-lateral rivalry that balanced the international system to multi-lateral power poles that disbalance each other. The second problem is the emergence of new threats due to rapid globalization and high grade of the interdependence of states, which alter the notion of military deterrence and have a direct impact on national security planning. The adaptation of states to the new liberalized international order after the collapse of the Soviet Union provoked shifts in the political context and regional orders around the globe. The understanding of state's sovereignty has changed as well leaving weak states in a less profitable position. All these factors contributed to the discontent of the USA and Russia regarding the INF treaty that further led to its demise.

4.2. Actors of the treaty and their security strategies from the Cold War till 2020

One of the most important domains of state's politics is national security. If citizens confront with security issues on a state's level (also individual), a state cannot function properly, its institutions deteriorate, and it may result in domestic unrests but also making it vulnerable to

influence of other states and non-state actors. Therefore, it is crucial to provide national security on all the levels - economic, social, and military.

There are five constituents of national security: 1) ensuring the existence of the state as a political community, a nation and its physical survival, 2) protecting the territorial integrity of the state, 3) maintenance of political independence, 4) ensuring the quality of life, 5) embed the vital interests of the state in the national security policy (Grizold, 1994). National security has many dimensions such as economic, political, nutrition, physical, border, cyber, infrastructural and some other (Baldwin, 1997). Talking about security, politicians, first of all, mean physical security from aggressors, which is provided by the military sector. Governments formulate their long- and short-term security strategies regarding the international and domestic situation and adopt it when unexpected changes occur. In the national security strategy, the government defines the main priorities, issues and aims that are essential to keep the status quo of a state in international politics, protect citizens from outside threats and guarantee the prosperity of a state and its inhabitants. The national security strategy also entails military doctrines and serves as an initial document for further interpretation as a defense strategy. All the levels on national security stated above are normally addressed in the document called - the National Security Strategy (Isaev, 2005).

Potential threats may come from diverse directions as within the state itself, but more often from other states, whose activity and pursuing self-interests in the international system may endanger the security of another political entity or pose a direct threat to it and its allies. Other threats may as well come from non-state actors (terrorism) or through natural disasters, international economic crises and (as was experienced in 2020) pandemic of diverse diseases (Baldwin, 1997).

At the same time, it is necessary to notice that states always confront security issues, and it is a normal part of everyday reality. Thus, the state of national security is not an absence of threat, it is the constant activity through which “the basic functions of society can be ensured” (Grizold, 1994: 43). This activity is exercised by diverse state’s institutions and provided by different industries (military, pharmaceutical, etc.). The planning and forecasting strategies and programs of national security play a crucial role in case of real danger, it determines the promptness of a reaction in a critical situation, successful planning helps to minimize damages and decreases crisis time.

The projecting of strategies entails four dimensions of national security: 1) the referent object, 2) the issue dimension, 3) the spatial dimension, and 4) the dimension of perceived danger. On the level of referent object, it has to be decided who has to be safeguarded from determined threats. The issues dimension defines where a potential threat comes from. If till the end of the Cold War, the main danger was a military attack from another state, today, a possible scope of threats

widened manifold (economic, cyber, environmental, etc.). The spatial dimension deals with the geography of the object that needs to be secured. Traditionally the security was to be guaranteed to a nation-state. Nowadays it is also crucial to have “good neighborhood” too, because “bad neighborhood” may result in *domino effect* and *spill-over effect* to other states. For the USA in the Cold War, it was essential not to let the USSR proliferate communism in Europe (especially its Western part) because Western Europe is an important strategic point for the USA and lose its influence in the region was unthinkable. Nowadays, states face asymmetrical dangers. It means that the danger dimension is constantly changing. If in the times of the Cold war, it was enough to determine the enemy, its intentions and military capabilities, today the detection of an enemy, the scale of possible threats as well as means an aggressor may use to achieve its goals became much more problematic and complex (Daase, 2010).

Regarding the changing nature of threats to national security, states rather have to estimate their vulnerability than the strength of an enemy. Christopher Daase (2010) writes that: “The famous “window of vulnerability” was thus a byproduct of détente, since disarmament raised the fear that the good-will of cooperation could be exploited by the enemy” and “Today, risks, not threats, dominate the discourse about international politics. The “clear and present danger” of the Cold War has been replaced by unclear and future “risks and challenges” (ibid., 2010: 33). It constitutes a crucial point for this master thesis because the efficient performance of national security and complexity of threats that states are dealing with had a dramatic impact on the INF treaty. The time and space comparison of the dimensions of national security shows the shift in priorities of the INF actors regarding national security and their nuclear strategies that influenced the treaty.

Another essential part of the security strategies analysis was described by David Baldwin, a senior political scientist of Princeton University. He stated that the national security has to be specified “with respect to the actor whose values are to be secured, the values concerned, the degree of security, the kinds of threats, the means for coping with such threats, the costs of doing so, and the relevant time period” (Baldwin, 1997:17). This classification includes the value dimension. It is an integral part of national consciousness and political rhetoric that is often used to justify the actions of decision-makers. This dimension is manifestly depicted in the grand strategy of a state and further reflected in the security strategies.

Therefore, it is vivid that national security strategies with a special focus on the nuclear strategy of the USA and the USSR/Russia are an important part of the analysis of the INF debates as it helps to identify how each of these states saw/see itself in the system of international relations, the values they seek to protect and promote, and challenges they urge to overcome. Therefore, states thoroughly plan the ways to reach the determined aims. The comparison of the security

strategies of two INF actors shows the evolution and positive development of bilateral relations in the Cold War in order to find diplomatic means to solve complex security issues between the Soviet Union and the USA, but also depicts the deterioration of the situation that further led to the demise of the INF treaty. Thus, in this sub-chapter I present and discuss national security strategies of the USA and the USSR/Russia in the Cold War and the 21st century, starting with the grand strategy and further describing the national security and the nuclear strategy of both actors, and then compare these strategies through time and space in the context of nuclear deterrence.

4.2.1. The US grand strategy

The definitions of the term *grand strategy* are manifold and vague. However, it is possible to conclude that a grand strategy is an intellectual basis of a state's political identity, its foreign policy and domestic security. It proclaims the vision and ultimate goals a state seeks to achieve on the long-term and is reflected in short- and medium-term national security concepts and national defense policies as well as other strategies. The grand strategy calculates all the resources (economic, social, military, etc.) and distributes them to apply with the maximum utility to reach its objectives. It articulates the ideology of a state and its moral set of ideas, its conceptual framework that shall be followed by state's representatives by structuring their policies and politics (Brands, 2014).

In order to practice a sustainable grand strategy, a state has to build strong alliances both - economic and military, possess sufficient deterrence capabilities against opponents – military forces and advanced weaponry, as well as sustainable economy that can support all the other components. The “soft power” as a diplomatic tool can be complementarily applied in grand strategies. Regarding the direct potential threats such as military attacks, the USA employs the tactic of meeting the threat as far as possible from its own borders. Thus, the deployment of weapons and establishment of military bases on other continents as well as making coalitions with other states to retaliate and deter opponents is one of the cornerstones of the American grand strategy. The strategy of conflict prevention by all peaceful means before military force plays an important role in military planning of the country (Hooker, 2014).

World War II left the USA in a good economic and military position if compared to other countries, but the Americans had a serious rivalry to compete with - the USSR. Thus, right after the war, the USA formulated its grand strategy setting two main objectives – 1) containment of the Soviet Union and 2) to encourage liberal market relations with free flows of capital and resources (Gavin, 2015). “American grand strategy at mid-century (...) could be summarized concisely as monitoring and enforcing a stable international order and economic system that

preserved American sovereignty, security, and prosperity; ensuring the security of the homeland through nuclear deterrence, alliances, forward-deployed ground forces, and airpower and seapower; and preventing the rise of peer competitors that might challenge its economic and military superiority” (Hooker, 2014:7).

Europe became an important strategic point for both actors - the USA and the USSR, and each sought to have a geopolitical advantage in the region exerting its control over European states and tried to gain it with minimum costs. Such control and ideological influence would help the USA contain the widespread of communism without considerable expenses. The establishment of a military alliance - NATO in 1949 became the first important step of the USA in their efforts to resist the proliferation of the Soviet power, consolidate the US presence in the region and also exert influence over Western Europe.

With NATO assistance, the USA practiced two grand strategies regarding Europe during the Cold War – “negative liberty” and “positive liberty”. The first strategy started with Eisenhower’s administration and lasted till Kennedy came to power and launched “positive liberty” strategy. They comply with the theoretical assumptions of structural realism as buck-passing in case of negative liberty and balancing in case of positive liberty (Green, 2012).

Under the negative liberty, the USA planned to establish the European pole of power under US control that can contain the USSR without direct commitment and aid of the Americans. According to the US experts back then, it could be accomplished through an intensified European integration. Such institutions as the European Defense Community (EDC) and the European Economic Community (EEC) were supposed to strengthen the partnership of participant states and build a regional counterpower against the Soviet Union. As the USA considered that the next war possibility was with the USSR, they supposed that this time the European coalition would protect themselves as long as needed without the US help. This strategy also supported the nuclear weapon sharing between the USA and NATO, thus strengthening the *third power* potential in a bilateral world (ibid., 2012).

The positive liberty looked at the problem of geopolitical influence differently and considered that the direct engagement of the USA through diplomacy and tension decreasing would strengthen Europe faster and also give the USSR the incentive that the USA did not abandon the region. The plan refused nuclear weapon distribution between NATO states and also criticized the possible establishment of the third power (Gavin, 2001). The USA undertook a line of policy actions to place a control on nuclear weapons and political decision-making in Western Europe as the Kennedy administration raised concerns that Europe did not need much economic support anymore and it could lead to erosion of the US influence in the region. Therefore, it increased its

control over the decision-making processes of NATO and control over nuclear weapons among US allies in Europe (Green, 2012).

In the times of the Cold War, the US grand strategy mostly based on the containment of communism spread and proliferation of liberalism. The self-identification and role of the USA were simple and clear. The grand strategy had concrete objectives and tried to achieve the set goals by tactics of containment and deterrence. With the collapse of the USSR, the containment of the communism became outdated. The USA became the only superpower in the international politics, and although with the fall of the major enemy, the USA was supposed to enter the era of military de-escalation, the country got involved in many minor conflicts. Many experts consider that having lost its main counterpart; the USA lost its own strategic vision for a while. Although, a bit later it prescribed itself the role of the world peace guardian, started an active campaign of democracy promotion and economic superiority, and also set war on terrorism as one of the most important objectives to guarantee the security of the state (Cha, 2020), (Hooker, 2014).

Under the Trump administration it became clear that the USA has a new goal, which was expressed in a formula “*America first*”. This vision and this perspective vividly depict that the USA is pursuing the path of self-interest, in a manner described by neorealists, seeking maximum profits for itself and ignoring collaborative goals with its allies and counterparts choosing a competition rather than cooperation. Some experts call it the grand strategy of restraint as the Trump administration prefers not to finance and not to meddle in the affairs of its partner-states and stay aside from other issues in the international order (Brands, 2014). I would rather call it “my way or highway attitude” because a row of strategic decisions made by the new government, such as the trade war with China and the EU, disrespect to diverse multi-lateral agreements, bold undiplomatic decisions regarding international politics and allies, prove that the pursued US grand strategy is to consolidate its position in the international system as the only superpower and the government is ready to achieve this goal by all means. The great difference to the previous grand strategies of the USA is that President Trump abstains from the course of *liberal hegemony* and involvement in processes of nation-building and democracy promotion as well as the war on international terrorism (limiting it to homeland protection), disregarding its obligations in front of international institutions. Thus, the new policy can be called the *illiberal hegemony* and is performed rather aggressively as the USA uses coercive democracy against its rivals and allies, increases its defense budget and its military presence in Asia and the Middle East. This demonstration of power serves to deter possible aggression on the country both from non-state and state actors (Posen, 2018).

4.2.2. The US security and nuclear strategy

With the invention of nuclear weapons as the most destructive weapons ever known, it became the cornerstone of the US security strategies based on protection of a state from physical aggression but also as effective means of retaliation. Through the last 75 years, the grade of reliance on the atomic weapon among the US defense experts was changing depending on diverse factors discussed below, but the importance of atomic arms for state's security stays uncontested. The US government has developed a complex system for security and nuclear planning. The modern procedure goes as follows: the President administration issues the National Security Strategy (NSS) that includes all the security objectives and concerns of the state for the next years. Then the President and his advisers prepare guidelines of security policies and pass it to Secretary of Defense (SecDef) and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) to develop a detailed and highly précised strategy on nuclear weapons for a certain period of time. The Office of Secretary of Defense “translates” the NSS into the National Defense Strategy. The NSS is not a classified document and is in free access, contrary to the Presidential Policy Directives (PPDs), which consist of more detailed information of security situation and planning. Among others PPDs provide such documents as the Nuclear Weapons Stockpile Memorandum that directs the quantity and type of stockpiled nuclear weapons, or the Nuclear Weapons Deployment Authorization that represents a deployment guide, and many other documents on atomic weapons prepared and published by the administration (some of described below) (Kristensen *et al*, 2009).

As it was already noted, the basis of all the US security strategies in the Cold War was the idea of deterrence – and mainly the military deterrence of the Ost-Block and proliferation of communism. The security strategies were adopted and modified mostly regarding the shifts in relations between the USA and the USSR but also other factors as shrinking or widening of communist influence, results of proxy wars, subjective perception of the US leadership, etc. Still, disregarding all these factors and changes in international relations, the core of the US military doctrines laid in retaliation through threat (Isaev, 2005).

The nuclear security strategy of the USA started in the late 40s with the doctrine of *massive retaliation* when the USA was the only state possessing the nuclear weapon, which served to deter an aggressor from a possible attack stating that in case of even a small scale attack the response will be disproportional and devastating for the counterpart. Under massive retaliation, the USA and NATO almost entirely relied on the nuclear weapon by responding to an enemy's attack. Later, when the USSR also produced the nuclear weapon (1949), the USA went from the doctrine of massive retaliation to the doctrine of massive assured destruction. However, it only proved that during the first years of the Cold War, the USA officials failed to draw a visible line between *deterrence* and *defense*. MAD was based on nuclear deterrence notion, but as a part of

national defense plan, the doctrine was very questionable as it presupposed the large-scale usage of atomic weapon in case of military conflict against another nuclear power, which would lead to an inevitable destruction of all the opposing sides. The doctrine presupposed that the USSR would use the nuclear weapon first; thus, the USA must be ready to accomplish the second strike, which should assuredly destroy an opponent. A successful second strike must make a counterpart's state inviable, with the significant tolls among civilians (half of the population or one-third of it) and almost total destruction of industry (Schaffer, 2012), (Slantchev, 2014), (Isaev, 2005).

The doctrine of flexible response developed by NATO forces at the beginning of the 60s showed that nuclear weapons are good to deter, but in order to exercise efficient defense it is necessary to apply a broader range of conventional arms first and other diplomatic instruments either amicable or coercive. Flexible response combined three types of military forces in case of an attack - conventional, tactical nuclear and strategic nuclear. It helped to decrease the tension created by the MAD and employ the term of *limited nuclear warfare* meaning that even in case of a nuclear attack a response should not include nuclear weapons or at least it should be a small-scale attack on military facilities of an opponent to facilitate an invasion of conventional forces. This strategy was more realistic and reasonable, regarding the nuclear parity of the USSR and the USA (Kristensen *et al*, 2009), (Isaev, 2005).

All these doctrines of the Cold War are mirrored in the Single Integrated Operational Plan that was developed at the beginning of the 1960s, approved in the middle of the 60s and was valid until 2003. The SIOP offered a list of targets and described launch procedures where nuclear weapons of the nuclear triad (ICBM and SLBM) must be used with the highest utility against a potential aggressor. The SIOP was constantly overviewed and updated adapting to the changing tactics of opponents, and the targeting strategies were modified and slightly changed overtime as well from initial counterforce doctrine (the beginning to the mid of 60s), which targeted the nuclear and military forces of an enemy, to countervalue strategy in the 70s-80s, which aimed massive casualties among civil population targeting cities that concentrated on limited nuclear reactions and flexible response. However, at the end of the 80s, it returned to the counterforce tactic. The collapse of the Soviet Union led to a decrease of possible targets. In 2003 the SIOP was replaced by OPLAN 8044, and since July 2012, it was substituted by *Strategic Deterrence and Force Employment* with an unclassified code name OPLAN 8010-12. The targets of the new plan are mostly allocated in Russia, China, North Korea, Iran. OPLAN 8010-12 adheres a counterforce tactic rejecting countervalue attacks. It is reasoned by the USA rhetoric of human rights promotion and protection. More than that it is prohibited by the International Law. Thus, targeting civilians would contradict the morality of warfare, be illegal and cause the criticism of

the international community. The document is highly classified and the information, which is made public, is rather limited (Kent *et al*, 2008), (*Britannica*, 2016), (Kristensen/Norris, 2018).

Another important US document on nuclear weapons is the Nuclear Posture Review. The first NPR appeared after the Cold War in 1994 by the presidency of Bill Clinton. Later each administration of the US president issued NPR, where it declared and described its nuclear strategic plan including maintaining and further development of atomic weapons, its (non-) proliferation and other questions regarding the nuclear weapons. Further, the nuclear strategy got embedded in the National Security Strategy (NSS) - the first document under this name published in 1987 under the Reagan presidency, and also in the National Security Defense (NSD). Such a thorough approach and detailed description of nuclear strategies enhanced and articulated in many state's documents proves its importance for the security planning and military tactics.

The signing of the INF treaty and the collapse of the Soviet Union that put an end to the Cold War, defused the tension between the USA and Russia massively as the latter ceased being a superpower and a solid adversary of the USA, the expansion of communism was also off the table. All these factors let the Clinton administration deviate from Reagan's security and nuclear strategy. The NSS published in 1987 clearly underlined that the Soviet Union posed a threat and problem to the USA and in case of a military confrontation, the USA must be prepared for a protracted nuclear war. Under the Clinton presidency, the attitude to nuclear weapons changed manifold. The state ceased to prepare for possible nuclear warfare and prescribed nuclear weapons the role of an effective deterrent but not anymore as a means to win a war with another nuclear power. It marked a positive development in the US nuclear policy, de-escalating relations between Russia and the USA and proving that the times of a nuclear escalation are over (Keith, 1998).

In the 21st century, the nuclear deterrence got even stronger implanted into the US security policy. In the NPR 2002, President Bush underlined as one of the most important steps in his security planning is to abandon the practices and strategies of the Cold War period and concentrate on challenges and threats that are relative to the country in the post-Cold War period (NPR, 2002). Thus, the USA nuclear tactic shifted its focus from Russia as the main enemy, recognizing that Russia does not pose a threat to the USA comparable with that of the USSR, and concentrated on the rogue states that possess or develop nuclear weapons and also terrorists, who possibly could get access to atomic technologies through these rogue states or other sources, the detailed nuclear planning stayed the priority for the US officials. The doctrine of pre-emptive war (2002 and re-emphasized in 2006 NSS) became another important retaliation mechanism in Bush's military policy. At the same time it caused a wave of criticism as it contradicted the principles of

the “Just war” and widely untied hands of the US government for a possible aggression against so-called “evil” states (Buchan, 2002), (Findley, 2009).

In order to increase the nuclear deterrence capabilities, the Bush administration presented a New Nuclear Triad that consisted of: “Offensive strike systems (both nuclear and non-nuclear); Defenses (both active and passive); and A revitalized defense infrastructure that will provide new capabilities in a timely fashion to meet emerging threats” (NPR, 2002:1). Technically it was enlarged from *bombers-ICBM-SLBM* to *bombers-ICBM-SLBM + Intelligence and Planning + C2 (command and control)*. It thus tried to combine nuclear, non-nuclear and defensive capabilities, which, according to the NPR 2002 should have decreased the reliance on nuclear weapons, but as a result, this strategy only blurred the line between nuclear defense and conventional defense massively (Kristensen *et al*, 2009), (Sokov, 2003). The New Triad was further articulated in the NSS of 2006:

“Safe, credible, and reliable nuclear forces continue to play a critical role. We are strengthening deterrence by developing a New Triad composed of offensive strike systems (both nuclear and improved conventional capabilities); active and passive defenses, including missile defenses; and a responsive infrastructure, all bound together by enhanced command and control, planning, and intelligence systems. These capabilities will better deter some of the new threats we face, while also bolstering our security commitments to allies. Such security commitments have played a crucial role in convincing some countries to forgo their own nuclear weapons programs, thereby aiding our nonproliferation objectives.” (The White House, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, 2006:22).

The Obama administration pursued the same course regarding nuclear weapons as a means of retaliation but with a stronger emphasis on nuclear non-proliferation and the development of conventional forces to deter non-nuclear attacks. The development of new types of warheads was off the table, and the usage of nuclear weapons was justified only in response to a nuclear attack. The President underlined that even in case the USA or its allies are attacked with chemical or biological weapons from other states, the US would react with a devastating conventional force attack if aggressor states stay in compliance with NPT and respect its clauses. The main objectives of the American nuclear strategy outlined in the NPR 2010 included the reduction of nuclear weapons importance in the national security strategy, maintaining the quantity necessary to deter aggressors and defense the state and its allies in case of a conflict. The signing of a New START treaty in 2010 between the USA and Russia also showed the willingness of both states to continue bilateral cooperation in nuclear weapons questions (Reif, 2010), (Ridderhof, 2018).

The situation dramatically changed with the election of Donald Trump as a president. In 2017 the Trump administration adopted a New National Security Strategy with four main Pillars: 1) protect the American people, the Homeland, and the American way of life, 2) promote American prosperity, 3) preserve peace through strength, 4) advance American influence (*The White House, The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, 2017). This plan emphasizes that

Russia and China are the first competitors of the USA and they also threaten the interests of the USA as they try to proliferate their influence and strengthen their positions in the international power system - China with the military and economic expansion and Russia with its increased spending on defense and advanced weapons' development and its aggressive methods of conflict management as the annexation of the Crimea. At the same time, the White House officials underlined the importance of positive development in relations between the USA and China and the USA and Russia (Gearan, 2017).

Regarding the nuclear weapons, the document states that:

“Nuclear weapons have served a vital purpose in America’s National Security Strategy for the past 70 years. They are the foundation of our strategy to preserve peace and stability by deterring aggression against the United States, our allies, and our partners. While nuclear deterrence strategies cannot prevent all conflict, they are essential to prevent nuclear attack, non-nuclear strategic attacks, and large-scale conventional aggression. In addition, the extension of the U.S. nuclear deterrent to more than 30 allies and partners helps to assure their security, and reduces their need to possess their own nuclear capabilities. Following the Cold War, the United States reduced investments in our nuclear enterprise and reduced the role of nuclear weapons in our strategy. Some parts of America’s strategic nuclear Triad of bombers, sea-based missiles, and land-based missiles are over 30 years old, and much of our nuclear infrastructure dates to the World War II era. At the same time, however, nuclear-armed adversaries have expanded their arsenals and range of delivery systems. The United States must maintain the credible deterrence and assurance capabilities provided by our nuclear Triad and by U.S. theater nuclear capabilities deployed abroad. Significant investment is needed to maintain a U.S. nuclear arsenal and infrastructure that is able to meet national security threats over the coming decades.” (The White House, The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, 2017:30).

Thus, the Trump administration defined aims regarding nuclear weapons and in its role for the next four years. The reference to the Cold War and outdated technologies as well as naming the main adversaries of the USA, who are increasing their atomic capabilities shows that the US will further on rely on nuclear weapons and continue the technological development of this branch to retaliate opponents and win the competition in a new nuclear arms race. Modernization of nuclear forces and its infrastructure is one of the main priorities for the new administration. At the same time, the document also expresses the readiness of the USA to conduct negotiations on new arms control agreements “if they contribute to strategic stability and if they are verifiable” (ibid., 31:2017).

The objectives listed in the NSS 2017 were further reflected in the National Defense Strategy 2018, which represents the US military guidance. The NDS of 2018 declares that:

“It is increasingly clear that China and Russia want to shape a world consistent with their authoritarian model—gaining veto authority over other nations’ economic, diplomatic, and security decisions”, and further: China and Russia are now undermining the international order from within the system by exploiting its benefits while simultaneously undercutting its principles and “rules of the road.” “Long-term strategic competitions with China and Russia are the principal priorities for the Department, and require both increased and sustained investment, because of the magnitude of the threats they pose to U.S. security and prosperity today” (the National Defense Strategy, 2018:2, 4).

Such choice of words and description of China and Russia as principal adversaries and the main actors posing a threat to the USA strongly reminds the relations between the USA and the USSR in the Cold War. Thus, it is possible to conclude that the USA has declared a new Cold War, but this time a multi-lateral one - with Russia on one side possessing excessive military arsenal and modernizing nuclear weapons, and China on the other side with its rapid economic but also military development. The competition becomes more complicated for the USA because of the strategic partnership between China and Russia.

The NDS (2018) claims that the USA was military uncontested during an extended period, but today the States are being challenged by other countries, not only clear adversaries as Russia and China but also rogue states as North Korea and Iran. The changing nature of war due to the rapid development of advanced technologies is also noticed in the Strategy (2018). It thus refers as well to the changing modes of nuclear deterrence diminishing its role in the modern military politics. Another negative development in the US nuclear strategy is the appeals to create more applicable and advanced nuclear weapons – low-yield warheads.

The experts from *Arms Control Today* condemn the new nuclear policy as it may only increase nuclear arms race around the globe and increase chances of a possible implementation of these weapons in a real conflict. They state that the NPR 2018 mentioned the usage of nuclear weapons as a deterrent against non-nuclear attacks 30 times, which is rather excessive and raises concerns. The NPR 2018 also suggests the nuclear response to asymmetrical threats and non-nuclear attacks and introduction of low-yield warheads, which decreases the threshold of nuclear weapons use and blurs the difference between nuclear and conventional arms as something. The problematic of this policy lays in the fact that other states (especially nuclear) may regard this policy as a direct threat or at least a potential aggression and adapt their security policies in a familiar manner. Close ties of the USA and NATO in military planning may also create tension among allies, especially if the USA pursues with nuclear forces deployment in the region (Kimball/Reif, 2018), (Ridderhof, 2018).

This sub-chapter depicted the development of the US national security strategies with a focus on nuclear forces from the Cold War until the beginning of 2020. It proves that the invention of the nuclear weapons became a serious challenge to the world peace and stability as it led to nuclear brinkmanship between two superpowers spurring them to continue arms race, diminishing mutual trust and endangering Europe with the deployments of atomic bombs in the region to deter each other. The nuclear policies of Clinton, Bush and Obama transferred the role of nuclear weapons in security strategy from active nuclear warfare planning as it was in Reagan's NSS to stable and solid deterrent. The years that preceded the Trump presidency showed the importance of the INF treaty for the establishment of cooperative relations between Russia and the USA and

building trust among nations. It helped to decrease the nuclear tension in the international system starting to rely on conventional forces more and considering the nuclear weapon only as means of deterrence with no actual intention to use it tailoring defense and deterrence proportionally to possible threats.

The NSS 2017 and the NPR 2018 marked the new period in the US security and nuclear strategic planning. All the efforts of post-Cold War US presidents to reduce reliance on nuclear weapons and reduce its quantities were abolished. The plans to develop and produce more advanced nuclear weapons and readiness to use it against non-nuclear attacks raises serious concerns regarding the future of peace and stability in the international system. The introduction of low-yield nuclear warheads in the nuclear program of the country as a part of tailored deterrence is also rather questionable because the explosive strength of low-yield warheads is comparable with those detonated in Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Kristensen/ Norris, 2018). Most probably with the end of the INF treaty, this kind of nuclear weapon will be deployed in Europe in short and intermediate-range missiles, as they have strategic advantages in regional warfare.

4.2.3. The USSR/Russia grand strategy

The post-war grand strategy of Josef Stalin grounded on the development of the ideology of socialism and its culmination - communism. Subverting of capitalism and the proliferation of communism became the main objectives of the Soviet Union (Brands, 2014). The national security strategy and defense/military strategy as independent doctrines did not exist in the USSR; they were strongly embedded in the grand strategy of communism expansion. More than that, the “security of state” was understood mainly as the “military security” – the security from physical threats such as an attack of another state, but it did not include the notion of security of individuals, citizens and society (Sergunin, 2012).

The USSR tried to widespread its ideological and geopolitical influence, first of all, on the territory of Europe. In order to secure its positions, the Soviets signed the Warsaw Pact with seven republics, which represented an Eastern bloc – Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Poland. This Pact was a reply to the establishment of NATO and guaranteed military cooperation between signed states. Still, the liberalization wave in Czechoslovakia raised serious concerns in the USSR leading party, as it proved that despite the operating Pact, the Eastern bloc allies might turn its course to the West. Therefore, in 1968 Leonid Brezhnev proclaimed the Doctrine of limited sovereignty under the Warsaw Pact, also known as Brezhnev’s doctrine. According to this doctrine, the countries of the Warsaw pact were obliged to preserve the existing socialist regime. It also allowed the Soviet Union to military intervene in the countries of the Pact if socialist values, and thus the Soviet influence, there seemed to be

undermined. The doctrine was valid till 1985 and abandoned after Mikhail Gorbachev came to power. The new Soviet leader also withdrew Soviet troops from Afghanistan and refused military intervention to the Eastern bloc, when it was overtaken by the democratization wave (Isaev, 2005), (Ouimet, 2003).

With the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia, as well as its main counterpart, the USA, lost its perspectives regarding the grand strategy. The competition for supremacy in the international system that had lasted for decades was over. The proliferation of socialism-communism was off the table. The country pursued a new yet uncertain and unknown course in direction of democracy and capitalism. It lost its geopolitical influence, the status of a superpower, its military and economic significance. The biggest problem for the definition of national strategy and security strategy posed the fact that Russia had never been democratic. Before the Leninist revolution, it was an empire ruled by the Tsar, and in the Soviet times, it was governed by one political Party, which especially under Stalin had little differences with the Tsarist rule. Therefore, a new government had to create a Russian national identity from scratch, identify its values and objectives, and first after that develop the grand and security strategies.

In order to establish new relations and define its role in the new international system, Russia tried to dismantle the negative reputation of the repressive Soviet Union and show to the international community that it respects and fosters democratic values. After the USSR collapsed, Russia had to build new trustful relations with the former Soviet states to guarantee the security on the borders of the country. New Russia turned its focus to the West relating to the human rights promotion, freedom of speech and restrictive nuclear policy. As one of the leading democratic postulates is not to wage war with democracies, Russia was sure that being a democracy would secure it from possible aggression from the West (Donaldson, 2000).

In 1993 Boris Yeltsin chose another course for Russia that was called "*pragmatic nationalism*". His concept mainly concentrated on building and strengthening the domestic structure of Russia after the collapse of the USSR, although the concept addressed foreign politics issues as well. In the official statements and documents, the President called Russia a *great power* (Великая держава), which attracted attention among inside experts but also foreign ones. This rhetoric served to create a feeling of national proud and strength among the frustrated population, but also to express the objectives of the new government and as such formulate the grand strategy – despite a very contesting period in the history of Russia and its nation, it will be a superpower again, and it is the main goal for the leading party. Sergei Primakov, the deputy Foreign Minister of RF, many times repeated the following statement "Russia doesn't have permanent enemies, but it does have permanent interests", which confirms the objectives of the new Russian grand strategy oriented on gaining one of the leading positions in the international power system, where

the country can have its place familiar to that of the former Soviet Union, exert influence on other states in the region and build strong cooperative relations with the West (Donaldson, 2000).

President Vladimir Putin continued to prioritize the returning to Russia the status of the superpower with a strong economy and territorial integrity. It includes a closer connection to post-Soviet states with financial and military domination over them, widening its influence in Europe and the Middle East, and create a pole that has a strong voice and can present a serious concurrence to the Western dominance. Many experts agree that President Putin aims at restoration of the Soviet Union but this time following the example of the EU architecture of supra-national institutions and without returning to the ideology of communism. Although, during the long-lasting reign of the President it is getting clear that this goal may not be achieved in the foreseen future for the following reasons: the war in the Ukraine and annexation of the Crimea that contradicted the International Law and thus was condemned by the international community and once again depicted Russia as an aggressor, unstable economy still dependent on exports of natural resources, lacking respect to human rights within the country, diminished trust to the Russian government among post-Soviet states, imposed sanctions and many other issues the state is confronting with. Nonetheless, the state continues to pursue its grand strategy, and one of the means stays the development of advanced technologies and expansion the military sector (Akin, 2017), (Clark, 2019), (Tsygankov, 2011).

The grand strategy of the Soviet Union can be hardly compared with the same in the modern Russia. First of all, because of the states' incompatibility. The USSR was a superpower with a strong ideological core and values system that united citizens from different states with different mentalities and confessions under one rule. The geography of the state and the number of citizens was much larger. The economic and military power of the Soviet Union with its strict policies and a common aim to establish communist order has less to do with a weak disintegrated Russia of today. The heritage of the Soviet Union supremacy makes the state's decision-makers believe that it is possible to restore its position in the international system akin to the Cold War. Still, the country lacks mostly all of the qualities necessary for that and all its actions stem from the nostalgic feelings about "all good days". The Russian economy is lamentable, it has no ideology to unite the people within the country and no political course to offer other states to make them its strategic partners. The efforts to return the status of superpower are mostly based on the possession of the nuclear weapon and excessive military strength, which is largely supported by the government. The overreliance on the military sector is outdated nowadays. It may help to deter direct aggression, but the scenario with Ukraine showed that other states might poke Russia without direct interference and attack, making it vulnerable and undermining its reputation in the international arena.

4.2.4. The USSR/ Russian security and nuclear strategy

The grand strategy of the Soviet Union was supported by its military strategy that was formulated during World War II and stayed unchanged till 1962. As it was mentioned above the physical security of a state from any aggression was the main objective of the Soviet government regarding state's security, which was essential to achieve the goals of the grand strategy. The military planning consisted of three pillars: 1) strategic defense first, then strategic offense; 2) the warfare must be conducted only with the conventional arms, the nuclear weapons play only deterrent role; 3) the base of the military power is land-forces with artillery (Isaev, 2005). The significance of the nuclear weapons was rather overlooked and first seriously underlined after the death of Stalin. In the middle of 50s, the importance of pre-emptive strike was articulated amongst the Soviet defense ministers, and soon the military elite supported the opinion that nuclear weapons are like any other weapon can be used in warfare (Chevallier, 1992).

Thus, in 1962 the military strategy was modified and theoretically underpinned by Vasilii Sokolovski and also carried his name as a *Sokolovski's doctrine*. This strategy was embedded in all the military planning of the Soviet Union until 1982. Its main difference from the previous doctrine was the increased role of a nuclear weapon. Under the theoretical assumptions of the strategy, in the conflict between two superpowers, the losing state would inevitably use the nuclear weapon to attack its counterpart. The excessive nuclear arsenal with delivery vehicles raises the significance of surveillance and the possibility of the first strike. Still, the aim of the strategy was to avoid the nuclear attack. After NATO developed the doctrine of flexible response, the Soviet military elites started to doubt their theoretical and strategic approach to nuclear weapons and decided to raise the reliance on advanced conventional weapons, living the nuclear weapons secondary role (Isaev, 2005), (Chevallier, 1992).

In the 1980s, when the USA and the USSR both possessed excessive nuclear arsenal, the Sokolovski strategy became vulnerable for the state's reputation because the USSR was seen as a possible aggressor or a state, which could react aggressively to achieve its goals. Another reason was for changing the attitude to nuclear weapons was mere rationality. As in the case of a nuclear attack, there would be no winners. Thus in 1982, the USSR adopted another doctrine that had a defensive character with a greater reliance on conventional forces, and the nuclear weapon can be used only as a response on a nuclear attack of an opponent. The USSR representatives in the General Assembly of the UNO officially declared the strategy of no-first-use of nuclear weapons, thus trying to promulgate its peaceful intentions to the international community (Isaev, 2005), (Chevallier, 1992).

The collapse of the Soviet Union seriously amended the security situation and military position of Russia. It lost vast territories, the financial influx into the economy and military bases but also

millions of people, who now became the part of independent states. The new security strategy had to be combined not only with coercive mechanisms but also a big portion of soft power to communicate with the former Soviet states effectively and to build cooperative relations with them and not to cede them to the Western influence. Thus, in 1993 the President and his cabinet developed and published the first complex military doctrine akin to the USA type of national defense strategy. In this military doctrine, the government rejected imperialist ambitions of the Soviet Union and underlined that the country military force has to be prepared for regional conflicts with a modified army and more mobile equipment. The meaning of security was also changed and now included three components – individual, society and state, which marked an important shift in the security planning making it more complex with an increased role of citizen's rights and freedoms and their protection. At the same time, the nuclear doctrine of 1982 was abolished. Russia did not address the principle of no-first-use in the doctrine and did not deny it openly; therefore it could be interpreted as readiness to use nuclear weapons in case of need. The implementation of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear powers was condemned, but there were exceptions, if a non-nuclear state being an ally of a nuclear state attacks Russia or supports aggression of another nuclear power against Russia, then the state might use nuclear weapons against such a country. The position to nuclear states became more rigid - as Russia reserved the right to a nuclear response if a nuclear weapon or other weapons of mass destruction were used against Russia by a nuclear power. Still, the nuclear weapons were assigned to a global war with the main mission - deterrence of such a conflict (Sergunin, 2012), (Коньшев/Сергунин, 2014).

Later in 1997, Boris Yeltsin and his cabinet exploited a combined approach to the planning of national security that was articulated in three documents, which completed each other. The national security strategy of the Russian Federation was formulated in a special document named "The Concept of National Security" (концепт национальной безопасности) and included all the problematic areas the country had to deal with, the main goals and the strategies to achieve them. The second document the "Concept of Foreign Policy" elaborated on the position of the RF regarding other states, the priorities of the state and its objectives and the third one - the "Military Doctrine" concentrated on the embedment of the first two concepts in the military planning including nuclear strategies. The development of a new security strategy was based upon the newly approved grand strategy. It acknowledged that the main problem for the security of the state posed its weak economy, and the main objective of the government is to improve the economy to address other security issues successfully. The national strategy accented the readiness to establish and foster positive, cooperative relations with the Western states and the USA. The nuclear strategies remained unchanged (Donaldson, 2005), (Isaev, 2005).

With the outbreak of the war in Kosovo, but most important after the unauthorized military intervention of the USA in the region in 1999, the Russian government decided to amend its nuclear and military strategies. The US intervention was considered as a demonstration of force that could also be used against Russia (Sokov, 2016). Therefore, in 2000 Vladimir Putin adopted another “Concept of National Security” that was valid till 2009 and gave prominence to the deterrence of possible aggression on state and its allies, especially nuclear attacks, thus giving an impulse to increase in military spending and development of advanced military technologies. It also underlined the necessity to withstand the growing dominance of “*certain states*”, not naming the USA and its Western allies directly. Thus, the rhetoric of the new government changed significantly in comparison to the previous attitude to foreign affairs and national situation, which was more concentrated on domestic affairs. Still, the concept of 2000 did not call the USA an enemy and stated the importance of strategic cooperation with the West (Коньшев/Сергунин, 2014). The Military doctrine of 2000 was significantly altered compared with previous doctrines as it enlarged the types of military conflicts, where the nuclear weapons might be used, including regional conflicts in the list. The nuclear weapons were assigned a new mission – de-escalation of regional war. These amendments were supposed to deter the USA and its Western allies from possible aggression on Russia and its allies as the state showed its readiness to use its nuclear arsenal in a limited nuclear attack specially tailored for regional conflicts and targeting only military sites. Nonetheless, it was more the mechanism of deterrence directed on the USA and NATO because the possibility of implementation of nuclear weapons in regional conflicts was rather limited by the International Law and Russian obligations under diverse arms control agreements (Sokov, 2016).

In 2009 the “Concept of National Security” was substituted by the modern document, which is called “the Strategy of National Security” (стратегия национальной безопасности). The NSS has significant advantages over the concept of national security because it specifies the criteria of estimation the state’s security on diverse levels, it became more structured with clearly formulated mechanisms and procedures, how the objectives declared in the document can be achieved, and priorities followed. The initial document of NSS was supposed to be valid until 2020, but the dramatic changes of 2014 with the outbreak of war in Ukraine on the borders with Russia and the annexation of the Crimea forced the President and his advisers adopt a new security strategy regarding the changing international environment that has a significant influence on Russian economic, military and social sectors. Thus, in 2015 the government presented a new strategy (Segunin, 2012). The document stated that the USA and their allies withstand Russian attempts to pursue its own course in international and domestic politics and the politics of deterrence, that the USA implements against Russia, includes in economic, political, informational and military pressure. The military strengthening of NATO and its

expansion to the Russian borders is declared the direct threat to Russian national security. The increase of US laboratories that are engaged in the invention of biological weapon in the neighbour states is one of the main threats for Russia as well as colour revolutions supported by the USA and the EU bringing instability in the region. Nonetheless, the document underlines the importance of strategic cooperation between NATO, the USA and Russia especially in issues of arms control and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, it expresses the will to reduce and curb its nuclear arsenal further on but only if other states undertake the same steps. The role of nuclear weapons stayed unchanged – it is only a deterrent mechanism, but if other military options are implemented with no success, then the nuclear arsenal might be turned to (NSS, 2015).

In 2014 President Putin approved a new Military Doctrine, which was valid till 2020². The doctrine handled procedures and strategies that should be undertaken in possible warfare and defined the role of nuclear weapons in it. The position to atomic arms did not change - it still stayed the main deterrent, but its usage in warfare was condemned. By the exception of the second-strike as a response on the first nuclear strike from an opponent. The doctrine put emphasis on advanced and complex conventional weapon and entered a new notion of the “system of non-nuclear deterrence”, which is supposed to deter an aggressor without reliance on nuclear weapons. The Military Doctrine outlined the main threats (direct and in-direct) to the Russian security that were reflected in the NSS 2015. The Russian Military Doctrine in comparison to the US NDS does not name the USA its enemy, and although implicitly hints at the USA as its main counterpart and priority for the security of the state, the document does not point at the USA directly. Nonetheless, it many times refers to NATO and its expansionist ambitions and meddling into Russian foreign affairs (Military Doctrine, 2014).

On the 2 June 2020, the Russian government issued the new decree under the title “Foundations of State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Area of Nuclear Deterrence”. According to the analysis of the document by N. Sokov, it does not have many alterations regarding the nuclear policies in comparison to 2014 NSS, but it explains and describes many points, which were too vague and open to interpretation in previous documents. “Overall, it can be said that **Russian nuclear policy has demonstrated remarkable consistency during the past two decades**: the conceptual foundations have remained the same, and its evolution has been limited, and only in response to new external developments as well as upgrades in Russia’s military capabilities“. The expert says that clarity in descriptions of possible cases, where nuclear weapon can be used, helps to increase deterrence as vague formulations may provoke an opponent. The decree underlines the defensive character of the Russian nuclear policy and states that the nuclear

² On the moment of writing this thesis the new Military Doctrine was not issued. The previous doctrines were published in 2000 and 2010

weapons shall be used only if Russia is attacked, assuring that the damages of such an attack will exceed its profits (deterrence by punishment). At the same time, the decree includes some changes. For example, the *tailored damage* to the aggressor was replaced by the *unacceptable damage*. The nuclear response can be provoked if Russia's territorial integrity is endangered (which is a rather clear message to the USA and NATO regarding the Crimea). The decree lists several scenarios, when Russia will respond with a nuclear attack: 1) "a credible warning about the launch of ballistic missiles against the territory of Russia or its allies", 2) „nuclear strike against the territory of Russia or its allies", 3) "conventional strike on nuclear forces and command and control systems", 4) "conventional attack against Russia, which "threatens the very existence of the State". The author argues that the modern Russian nuclear deterrence is literally the same of NATO during the Cold War, which tried to balance the Soviet conventional weapons superiority with the possibility of nuclear attack (N. Sokov, 2020).

The Soviet nuclear strategy after 1982 with the doctrine of no-first-use prescribing the atomic arms only the role of deterrent was inherited by the Russian government after the collapse of the USSR and adhered till 2000. The new government with President Putin enlarged the tasks assigned to nuclear weapons, making them applicable in regional conflicts as well. This shift in nuclear planning was provoked by the military intervention of the USA in Kosovo and was considered threatening to the already weakened Russia. The NSS of 2014 have reduced the reliance on nuclear weapons underlining the importance of non-nuclear deterrence, which can be performed by advanced complex conventional weapons. Having studied the Russian strategy of reacting on its counterparts' behavior in the international system, I preliminary conclude that the new Russian Military Doctrine will be more aggressive to retaliate the NDS and NSS of President Trump. However, it will mostly rely on conventional weapons in terms of deterrence and response attack. As the decree on nuclear deterrence (2020) defined a very clear defensive character of the Russian nuclear strategy, although with some important explanations and alterations, sending a clear message to the USA and NATO that a nuclear response will punish any provocation and endangering the integrity of Russia. The USA and NATO are considered to be the first counterparts of the country as it was during the Cold War because they are constantly trying to undermine the positive development of Russia and meddle into its national and international affairs. Thus, the accumulation of the advanced weaponry plays a crucial role in terms of military deterrence guaranteeing physical security of the state against direct aggression. In order to enlarge its influence, Russia also uses its military potential by increasing its presence in zones of military conflicts.

4.2.5. The comparison of the USA and the USSR/ Russian grand and security strategies in connection to the INF treaty

After the World War II and the formation of the bipolar world the main aim of the USA and their NATO allies and the USSR and its allies from Warsaw Pact was to win the Cold War, become the hegemon in the international system and promulgate its ideology around the globe (Isaev, 2005). The first step to achieve this aim was to establish control over the weakened post-war Europe and spread the influence over it. The stalemate between two superpowers lasted several decades, and thus, their grand strategies were based on retaining and controlling the proliferation of each other's influence. From the neorealist's perspective, this stand-off helped to create a balance of power in the international system but simultaneously led to the arms race because of mistrust that ignited the incentive to might maximization as the counterparts were well aware of each other's grand strategies.

The military doctrines of the USA and the Soviet Union were specifically tailored to deter the counterpart from aggression as it was evident that no other country would endeavor to launch a war against the USA, except the USSR and vice versa. The involvement in the intensive arms race provoked the security dilemma for the superpowers themselves and other states as well, and nuclear weapons accumulation caused the prisoner's dilemma for the USA and the USSR, especially when the Soviets achieved nuclear parity and then overhauled the Americans. On the one hand, the more states enriched the nuclear arsenal the more deterred they were from possible aggression against each other, and as it was mentioned in the theoretical part, the USA and the USSR found themselves in a direct nuclear deterrence. At the same time, it destabilized the security of other states and resulted in proxy wars, where both states sought to establish its zone of influence. The arms control agreements became an efficient tool for both counterparts to escape the prisoner's dilemma. Especially regarding short- and intermediate-range missiles, which have strategic and also a tactic advantage in regional warfare and in the times of the Cold War had an increased significance in terms of nuclear deterrence between NATO and the countries of Warsaw Pact.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War left the USA the only superpower for a short period of time. The USA was the major winner of the WW II with a strong economy and military sector and the winner of the Cold War. Russia could not make a sustainable competitor to the USA anymore. The country anticipated an overly difficult period to overcome - the transition to democracy with a reconstruction of state's institutions, tackling newly appeared security issues with the former Soviet states, finding its national unity, restoring economic stability, gathering military power and, most important, defining its grand strategy and a new political course. Despite all the difficulties Russia faced and faces, the government officials set

the new course for the country – to make Russia superpower again, which is rather an unreasonable decision because the country lacks necessary resources to achieve this goal. Nonetheless, such a declaration became provocative for the USA, which in its turn started to watch Russia's actions to be able to prevent the rise of the state.

Regarding security strategies and military planning, it became vivid from the introduction of the national security strategies of the USA and the USSR/Russia, the Americans develop more sophisticated and complicated defense and national strategies, they also depict and describe their aims and means to achieve these aims more thoroughly. The length of documents and its structure designate a more thorough approach of the USA departments to security, military, and nuclear planning. It once again proves that the Americans have more resources for the development of more precise and structured strategies. Each state relies on nuclear weapons as a mechanism of deterrence. Although, with the time the lines between conventional and atomic weapons became blurred for both – the USA and Russia – and the threshold of using nuclear arms in warfare downsized. Nikolaj Sokov arguments this situation as follows:

“The role of nuclear weapons decreased massively over the last decades. But still it has its functions – it became more a political weapon rather than a military one as it was in the Cold War. Today people have ceased to fear war and the nuclear weapon is used now more as an instrument for psychological pressure in politics. Nevertheless, back in the Cold War, the nuclear weapons contributed excessively to the establishment of peace. In the beginning, people have conceived nuclear bombs as any other bombs and first started to fear it at the end of the 50s. And the perception of nuclear weapon as a weapon of mass destruction and ethically not implementable in a warfare was framed in the 60s. Back in the 80s, people knew that if a conventional war began, it would inevitably escalate a nuclear war. Today it is less obvious, and psychological political situation is on demise.” (N. Sokov, 2020).

A. Arbatov also addresses the changed perception of nuclear weapons and the securization of other political issues. The expert states that the principal difference between the debates is that in 1979 the USSR, the USA, Europe and others were very concentrated on the possibility of a nuclear war. There were massive anti-war movements as well as high awareness among the society of the consequences of a nuclear war. People were very engaged in the promotion of arms control and nuclear disarmament. Nowadays, the situation is different. The nuclear war and its possibility are not in the centre of public attention. The debate about nuclear arms control both in the USA and in Russia is rather noticeable and cannot be compared with the debate of 1979 because nowadays people confront with many other issues, as pandemic for example. Such negligence is reasoned by the 30 years of relative security regarding nuclear weapons because the INF treaty and also other agreements gave the society a certain feeling that this problem is solved. Thus, in public mind, a nuclear war became irrelevant; people started thinking that the threat no longer exists. New generations do not even confront with the idea of nuclear weapons. Of course, the number of nuclear weapons is ten times smaller nowadays, but there is still great destructive potential. On the present day, other problems became more relevant – such as

economic situation, terrorism, technologic development, migration, climate and other things. Furthermore, in the public mind, the problem of nuclear threat ceased to exist at all. And thus, it is not conducive for the political elites in Russia, the USA and China to continue with nuclear arms control (A. Arbatov, 2020).

Michael O'Hanlon supports the arguments expressed by A. Arbatov discussing the differences in the perception of the INF treaty and nuclear arms problematic:

“There is really one big difference. In the early 1980s, INF debates (and associated matters of US-Soviet nuclear arms competition) were headline-grabbing stuff. They were high politics, and dominated dialogues across the Atlantic, and became among the 3 or 4 biggest issues of the early Reagan presidency. In 2019, hardly anyone cared or noticed except arms control advocates--even more general defense analysts did not spend a lot of time worrying about the issue for the most part, and I am confident that 99% of all Americans couldn't even tell you what the INF Treaty was or whether it was still intact. It just hasn't been seen as newsworthy by comparison to so many other things” (M. O'Hanlon, 2020).

The shifts in perception of nuclear arms for the national security have played a crucial role for the INF treaty and predetermined its demise. The tactical and strategic advantages of short and intermediate missiles, which can be fitted with nuclear warheads, are incontestable and they are efficient in the deterrence of regional conflicts. The changes in military posture of other states and accumulation of intermediate-range missiles by them, including nuclear powers, partially affect the strategic planning of the USA and Russia, who are prohibited to have these types of missiles. The deterioration in relations between the West and Russia as well as the reminiscences of the Cold War contributed to growing discontent with the treaty. From the one hand, due to multiple arms control agreements and cooperation between states in non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, the possibility of nuclear war diminished manifolds, and it also decreased the significance of intermediate-range missiles. From the other hand, atomic weapons stay a cornerstone of Russian and American security policies. Therefore, differences, similarities and specifics of the INF debates reckoning the security situation and its understanding helps to trace the demise of the treaty based on the national security issues identified by Russia and the USA.

The first difference in the security situation of both states during the INF debates of 1979 and 2019 is the change of the theatre of possible conflict and deterrence. Europe ceased to be endangered by nuclear war after the treaty was signed and when the Cold War ended. Russia was satisfied with the promise of its American colleagues not to expand NATO to the Russian borders. Thus, it could concentrate on its newly appeared security issues with the former Soviet states. The focus of the USA transferred to the Middle East, and its influence and military presence started to grow. From the very beginning, the Russian government did not react openly and in full scale on the American actions in the region, but after the war in Libya and the war outbreak in Syria, Russia could not stay aside. The loss of Ukraine, which went from the Russian zone of influence in the Western one, is of great significance for Russia because if Ukraine enters the EU

and becomes another NATO state, the physical security of the state will be jeopardized massively. Thus, the deployment of short- and intermediate-range missiles would help to deter NATO and the USA from aggression against Russia (the expert B, 2020).

The expert A argues that one of the crucial differences between both debates is that in the moment of the initial INF debates, the USSR wanted to present itself as a state with peaceful intentions ready to compromise and achieved a significant armament level. The principle of the USSR presented in the General Assembly of UNO and operative from 1982 to 1993 declared that the Soviet Union would never be the state first used nuclear weapons. In the military doctrine of 1993 on the Independent Russia this principle was taken off. In the modern debates, Russia pursues a different course as it has been acknowledged among the decision-makers that Russia has reached the “bottom of disarmament” and needs to go the opposite direction. The initiative of President Obama in 2010 proves it because the public opinion was dominated by the attitude that the USA looked positive in the direction of the total nuclear disarmament, but Russia stood and still stands on the way of this perspective (the expert A, 2020). Evidently, it happens because the USA would be able to keep its position in the international system even without nuclear weapons, but for Russia, as for the weakened state, the nuclear weapon stays the main guarantor of its territorial integrity and retaliation tool from the possible aggression of NATO and the USA.

The experts declared that diverse security reasons from both sides contributed to the demise of the treaty. Nonetheless, none of these reasons was intricately linked with the substance of the treaty. They were rather linked with the political strategies and overall political atmosphere. The American side did not want to have its hands tied in questions of any arms deployment, and the government got bothered with the rising might of China. The USA's pivot to China started yet during the administration of Bush junior and was officially proclaimed by the Obama administration. Most of the missiles arsenal of China consists of short- and intermediate-range missiles. In connection with this, the USA felt disadvantaged in a military competition against China as the states were prohibited to possess such weapons. However, the main problem that the USA military service did not respect that they just do not have any bases where they could deploy such missiles. In its turn, the USA fail the concrete methods of China's retaliation. Thus, the military elites decided that short- and intermediate-range missiles can guarantee the deterrence. Yet again, the USA does not have appropriate bases for deployment. As these missiles should reach China's strategic and tactical points, but also be solid and not vulnerable to the opponent attacks. Moreover, the USA fails such deployment positions. According to the US estimations, China has mostly short- and intermediate-missiles in its arsenal - almost 2000. China has already deployed part of the missiles in the direction of Taiwan, some of them can reach the US military bases and also operate within the range of South Korea and Japan – allies

of the USA. Although the USA has carrier decks based in the region, in case of conflict China may have a tactic advantage using short and intermediate missiles for surgical strikes. The development of nuclear weapon by North Korea was another strong incentive to withdraw from the treaty (the expert A, 2020), (N. Sokov, 2020).

In 2017-2019 the USA underwent intensified debates between two parties - the Democrats and the Republicans – regarding the new START treaty, where President Trump criticized the decisions of Barack Obama for the engaging in this agreement that limited the US military capabilities. Thus, in his politics, Trump is transferring the slogan “America first” on the military sector and also foreign politics (the expert A, 2020), (N. Sokov, 2020). Therefore, these are the obvious reasons for the withdrawal of the USA from the treaty and the accusations of alleged tests of prohibited missiles by the Russian side had artificial nature.

Russia also had its security reasons to withdraw from the treaty. Back to 1987, the USSR did not plan to participate in any regional conflicts on the distance from 2000 to 5000km from Russian borders. In 1987 Mikhail Gorbachev already started politics of military presence reduction. As a result, the USSR withdrew its troops from Afghanistan, Cuba, and Vietnam. It was clear that Moscow did not plan to create any missiles threats in the range that can be covered by intermediate missiles. Direct threats from the USA were covered by other types of missiles that were not included in the INF treaty. In the last ten years, the situation changed. Russia participated in the Syrian conflict, renewed its presence in the Middle East. It also became clear that the distance to the military theatre of the Middle East, including Arab countries, Iran, Iraq requires the possession of intermediate-range missiles for regional deterrence and possible warfare. The other factor that influenced Russian attitude to the INF is the development of nuclear weapons by Iran and Iraq. Around 40 countries had intermediate range missiles in their military arsenal, among them all the nuclear powers, except Russia and the USA. Therefore, as Moscow increased the importance of military power in achieving its political aims, the lack of intermediate-range missile as well as test-ban of nuclear weapons became a hindrance for the Russian foreign military policy (the expert A, 2020).

By contrast with the USA, China does not pose a problem to Russia because the country is a strategic partner of the RF, and they do not “poke” Russia by the unnecessary deployment of these missiles near the borders. China deploys the missiles mostly on the East and South-East. More than that for retaliation of China, these missiles are not necessary because Russia can use conventional arms (N. Sokov, 2020). The cooperation between China and Russia is seen as a big problem by the USA officials as the American side lacks instruments of coercion it could use against China (the expert B, 2020).

Another problematic point of the treaty was the discontent of the Russian military personnel with it. The military elites in the USSR and Russia did not support the treaty, but still, it was accepted. The USSR decided to sign the treaty because of the Pershing II and its flight time – 10 minutes till Moscow, which means the absence of time to react. Therefore, it posed a threat to lose the senior leadership. The second problem is that in case the radars detected an attack; the senior leadership did not have the time to escape. Still they had time to decide if to launch a second-strike or not. However, there is an apprehension that the signals from the radars could be false. Thus, it raised a serious tactical dilemma. The USSR under Gorbachev did not want to escalate the situation even more, and the INF was signed and helped to de-escalate the situation. Now we have the risk of occurring the same situation with the short flight time because of the hypersonic missiles as the leadership and military personnel lack the possibility to check the information from the radars and time to take the least painful decision. In this regard, the West hopes that Russia will react the same way it was during Gorbachev's time. But the politics of Gorbachev are widely criticized and not supported in Russia. Starting the year 2000 under Putin, the critics of the treaty became very sound as the military elites declared the necessity of recommencing the production of SS-20 as they have high precision. Such a necessity was justified in front of government with the war in Chechnya and Afghanistan. Therefore, it is more likely that Russia today will take the path it was going before Gorbachev – and it was an arms race. Most probably Russia will choose the tactic of increasing the threat of opponent. For example, in 2018 and 2019 in his appeal to the Federal Assembly President Putin was telling the electorate about new military technologies developed, among them new nuclear delivery vehicles. It was a strong psychological manoeuvre for Russian people aimed at boosting the morale of the nation and distract people from domestic problems giving them a positive feeling about foreign military policy of the President (the expert A, 2020), (N. Sokov, 2020). It also signalled other states that Russia is increasing and modifying its military capabilities, which can be estimated as the tactic of retaliation through demonstration of power.

All the stated above proves that despite positive influence of the treaty on the security situation globally but also specifically for Russia and the USA, in reality, both states became reluctant to support the continuation of it with the time. As N. Sokov says, in the years 2006-2007 the USA and Russia already considered the possibility of withdrawal from the treaty. By that time Russia had developed a new missile that was not restricted by the INF, and the treaty seemed “harmless”, and it did not stand on the way of the Russian military potential. Thus, it seems not credible that in 2008 Russia tested prohibited weapons, because it makes less sense if in 2007 the state could leave the treaty absolutely “cost free” without condemnation from the international community and the accusation of alleged tests of banned missiles, which even more destructed the reputation

of the state. The foreign ministry, in contrast to military elites always stood out for the treaty, and of course, after its demise, the position of the ministry became very vulnerable (N. Sokov, 2020).

N. Sokov and the expert B argue that the treaty became outdated. From the very beginning, the treaty had serious shortcomings. The first one – it prohibited only the land-based systems. That time the USSR had a significant advantage precisely with this type of missiles. The USA possessed mostly sea-launched missiles. Thus, signing the treaty, the USSR made a serious cession as the treaty did not include the sea- and air-launched missiles. Later that problem was resolved by other treaties that covered these types of weapon as well. In the 90s the USA began transferring the military tasks from nuclear weapons on conventional weapons. It became a big problem for Russia at that time, and thus, Russia started to develop similar arms without nuclear potential rapidly. Following this logic, the nuclear weapon became barely usable in warfare, but conventional arms hardly had any restrictions. Furthermore, the INF treaty prohibited all surface-launched missiles regardless of the type of warhead. Therefore, nowadays, Russia is undergoing the same process as the USA in the 90s – the military tasks of nuclear weapons are being transferred to conventional weapons. According to N. Sokov, Russia does not need nuclear missiles either to deter China or Europe. The issue of deterrence can be solved with conventional weapons. In the Military Doctrine of 2014, it was declared that Russia switched to the path of “non-nuclear deterrence”. The main problem for Russia is not the possession of nuclear weapon by its opponents but the possession of advanced conventional arms. I want to contradict this opinion because Russia has not yet published its new Military Doctrine and it will definitely give consideration to the USA NDS and NPR of 2018 and the termination of the INF treaty (2019) will be reflected there. It may happen because the USA has in its plans to produce short- and intermediate-range missiles and it has already expressed that the nuclear weapons might be used in conventional warfare. Therefore, Russia most probably will regard these shifts in security planning of its main counterpart and adapt its strategies to the new international military situation.

The expert B warns about a new nuclear arms race and another direct nuclear deterrence between NATO and Russia that will be provoked by the termination of the INF:

“My prediction is that NATO will turn to nuclear weapons again, and it can result in a new nuclear arms race. Of course, it is evident that no one wants it, but there is a high risk that the situation will develop this way. And NATO will reposition its nuclear weapon to the borders of Russia. The USA is actively developing and producing medium-range surface-launched missiles now, and they also proved that sea-launched missiles could be started from the surface as they tested such a missile from the ground in August 2019. So, there is a high probability that a new intensified arms race starts with conventional weapons and then develops as a new nuclear arms race.” (the expert B, 2020).

The possibility of deployment of nuclear missiles by NATO in Europe has already been addressed by President Putin several times after the US withdrawal from the treaty. The President declared that Russia has no intentions to deploy nuclear weapons directed on Europe and consider doing

it only as a response measure. Thus, some NATO members expressed their negative attitude to the short- and intermediate-range missiles deployment on their territory and stated that they would not accept the pressure from the USA in this regard and escalate relations with Russia (Countryman/Reif, 2019).

One of the similar features of both debates lays in the comprehension of regional conflicts distance and its relevance for the national security. The implementation of short- and intermediate-range missiles in a direct conflict between the USA and Russia is rather impossible. The implementation of these weapons is foreseen in regional warfare. Therefore, both sides of the treaty in the then bi-polar confrontation realized that the treaty would not significantly change the security situation between them directly (the expert A, 2020). The problem of the modern security situation is in the extended nuclear deterrence between the USA and Russia because both states have it proclaimed in their security strategies that their nuclear potential covers their allies as well.

The mechanism of decision-making in the military planning in both states stayed the same as it was in the Cold War – the military elites and military technicians have the main influence on the decision-making process in such questions as arms control. The USA always had more decision-making agencies. And although every president tries to form its own cabinet and procedures, formally the mechanism stayed unchanged but became less professional because in the Cold War people who conducted negotiations had 20-30 years expertise in arms control. Now it is not the case anymore. This problem of decrease in professional level is also relevant for Russia but it still better than in the USA (N. Sokov, 2020). The deterioration in the professionalism of decision-makers in questions of security strategies and arms control make them prone to miscalculations in the estimation of international situation and tactics of state's counterparts, which can inevitably lead to escalations in relations because in the system without the highest authority states are mistrustful to each other intentions.

Summarizing the above arguments and discussion, the grand and security strategies of the USA and Russia reflected in their nuclear planning and thus, had a significant impact on the demise of the INF treaty. Although the official version is the alleged violation of the agreement by the Russian side, it is easily traceable that both parties were unsatisfied with the agreement. The prohibition of possession and deployment of a whole class of tactic weapons became outdated regarding the shifts in the international power system. The USA fears to lose its positions in Asia because of the rise of China. Russia is threatened by the NATO expansion, and the US meddling into its affairs. The possibility to deploy short- and intermediate-range missiles has become important for both states as these missiles are specifically tailored for regional warfare. Therefore, the deployment of these weapons not only helps to deter opponents but also serves as the

demonstration of power and regional influence, which are both necessary for the USA with its new strategy “*America first*” and for Russia with its efforts “to become great again”.

After decades of living with the INF, the perception of nuclear weapons has changed manifold. It led to the lowering the threshold of nuclear weapons use by the USA and Russia, making it applicable in the regional warfare and for these purposes short- and intermediate-range missiles are needed. Nonetheless, in the times of the Cold War, the possibility of the nuclear war was much higher than today. Back then the nuclear weapon was newly invented, and the USA had a monopoly over this weapon till the USSR produced its own nuclear missiles. The relations between superpowers were escalated to the brinkmanship, and thus, the overall threat of an atomic war was real. Nowadays, as N. Sokov stated, the nuclear weapon became more a political tool of exercising pressure and influence. It is also irrational to use it in warfare because modern conventional weapons are more mobile and applicable in conflicts. Yet, nuclear arms stay the essential part of security strategies of the USA and Russia, but even the lowered threshold of nuclear weapons use does not reverse its role as a deterrent.

Evidently, after the termination of the treaty both states will produce short- and intermediate-range missiles and integrate them into their national strategies and military and nuclear planning. The deployment of the missiles will depend a lot on the allies-states of the USA and Russia, which will make final decisions if they agree to host such missiles on their territories because many states have already expressed their discontent and unwillingness to support the deployment, which can undermine their national security.

Returning to the neorealism and deterrence theories, it is predictable that the USA and Russia will soon find themselves in a new Cold War (some experts state that it has already begun) with another arms race and other state and non-state actors involved in the militarization process. Still, there is a high possibility that after a certain time and escalation in relations between states, they start negotiating new arms control agreements and treaties, taking into consideration the shortcomings of the previous ones.

4.3. Arguments pro and con the INF treaty

In this chapter I analyze and discuss the arguments pro and against the INF treaty, which were expressed by diverse actors during the debates in 1979-1987 and 2014-2019, such as public views today and back in the 80s, the EU leaders’ position, public movements against nuclear weapons etc. and nuclear weapons positivists. In the second part of the chapter, I compare both argumentation lines to define similar and different features between them.

The Cold War debates

The INF debates in 1979-1987 were vividly more intensified than the modern ones. It is reasoned by the fresh memories of the Cold War and the first implementation of nuclear bombs in Japan. Thus, the nuclear brinkmanship between the USA and the Soviet Union raised serious concerns in the international community and among civilians. It led to the appearance of the anti-nuclear movements right after the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (1945), which became especially active in the 60s when the USA and the USSR were leading an intensified nuclear arms race. The anti-nuclear movement made a stand against the development and production of nuclear weapons and the nuclear-generated electricity. As it was clear that nuclear plants and nuclear weapons are dangerous to people and can contaminate the environment. The Chernobyl catastrophe (1986) back in the Cold War and the modern Fukushima tragedy (2011) only prove that. The anti-nuclear scientists were sure that a nuclear war would irreversibly affect human life and cause severe damages to the climate. The anti-nuclear movement around the world contributed to the positive outcome of nuclear arms control agreements between the USA and the USSR, among them the INF treaty (Rothwell, 2014).

The bombings of Japan provoked not only the emergence of anti-nuclear movements but also the debates about positive effects of nuclear weapons. Thus, nuclear arms positivists claimed that nuclear weapon as a means of deterrence could contribute to the peace in Europe and in the World as it helped to deter the Soviet Union. The proponents of this opinion considered that nuclear weapons made the minimum deterrence a viable mechanism of peace guarding on the regional and global levels as actors would already be deterred by the possibility of nuclear exchange even in small quantities and no actor would take the responsibility of a massive nuclear war. Kenneth Waltz also argued in favor of nuclear weapons proliferation. In his work “The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: More May Better” (1981), he supported the above-stated opinions and offered the path of the gradual spread of nuclear weapons among states, which would have positive effects on the peace in the global system. Waltz explained the security stability using the US-Soviet example when two nuclear powers did not dare to wage a war against each other out of fear of a nuclear response. The author assumed that the more states would have this weapon, the less potential of a war between states would exist (Waltz, 1981), (Kroenig, 2015). This point of view is based on premises of actors’ rationality, the reliance on which, in my opinion, is overrated. As it was described in the theoretical part, the rationality of the decision-making actors can be challenged as this is also a subjective category, which can be influenced by personal convictions about one’s calculated gains and not overall profits.

The USSR position to the INF at the beginning of the debates was rather negative. The Union had invested a lot of financial resources in the development and production of the nuclear weapon

and new SS-20 missiles and their deployment in Europe, having a significant advantage over the USA in short and intermediate nuclear missiles. Thus, the total elimination of this class of weapons was not welcomed among the Soviet military elites. It was a strong argument against the INF treaty and “zero-zero” option that was suggested by the USA. Another con-argument was the US obvious gains from the treaty because the Americans had an advantage over the USSR in the sea-launched missiles, which were not covered by the INF. The Soviet leadership considered that the draft agreement offered uneven playing fields evidently profitable for the American partners. Nonetheless, the deployment of the US Pershing II in Europe persuaded the Soviets to overthink the treaty. One of the weightiest pro-arguments became the possibility to decrease tension among NATO/the USA and the USSR and create a better reputation for the latter as a state, which was ready to cooperate and communicate with other states without exerting pressure and aggression. It was the part of a new political strategy of Mikhail Gorbachev, who started the path of liberalization in the Union (the expert B, 2020), (Rauhofer, 1990).

The European leaders welcomed the proposal of the INF treaty. After the Soviets deployed its new missile system SS-20 capable of destroying every strategic point in Europe, the state leaders raised concerns about the possibility of a new war in the region, which would be more devastating than the WW II. Thus, they called their mighty ally the USA to react and deter the USSR. Therefore, the USA and NATO came with the dual-track strategy to resolve the problem. The first path was to sign the INF treaty to guarantee security in Europe and de-escalate relations between the USA/NATO and the USSR/ the Warsaw pact states. The second path was to deploy the American missiles to deter and retaliate the Soviets in case of an attack. For the West European decision-makers, the signing of the arms control agreement was the best-case scenario as Europe was caught between a rock and a hard place in the confrontation of two superpowers and if the war were to break down, the main battlefield would be the European soil (Van der Meer/ Onderco, 2019).

For the USA, the INF treaty was profitable for several reasons. First, the proposal of an overly ambitious arms control treaty fostered the positive image of the USA in the international community. Second, it limited the nuclear posture of the USSR, which had to eliminate a thousand nuclear warheads more than the USA. Third, the treaty could help to build cooperative relations with the Soviets as the Cold War started to be exhausting and costly. Fourth, it would increase NATO conventional deterrence capabilities against the USSR making the Alliance more independent of the constant presence and control of the USA, letting the American government redistribute the resources on other purposes (Van der Meer/ Onderco, 2019), (the expert B, 2020).

The INF debates 2014-2019

The INF debates 2014-2019 found place among multiple actors discussing its positive and negatives sides. However, they were less widespread to the public than the initial Cold War debates. As almost 30 years passed after the treaty came into force, the advantages and disadvantages of its implementation became more vivid. Several significant argumentation lines help to understand the modern INF debates and draw conclusions about the negative development of the INF's fate. The most important axes for observation are the USA vs Russia, but also China, NATO and the EU standing points as well as the anti-nuclear movements of today.

The official statement from the White House dated 1 February 2019 expresses the regret of Russian violations of the treaty during a long time and shows readiness to withdraw from the treaty if Russia refuses to comply with it. Further, it states that the USA will develop its military response to hinder Russia in achieving any military advantage, which may result from its violations of the treaty. The President Administration defines that once the agreement is achieved it will mark the prospects of cooperation in other domains as well: "We stand ready to engage with Russia on arms control negotiations that meet these criteria, and, importantly, once that is done, develop, perhaps for the first time ever, an outstanding relationship on economic, trade, political, and military levels." (the White House, 1.02.2019). The US military officials and experts argued for the INF treaty claiming that the unilateral withdrawal was not an option. First, it would decrease the US credibility in front of its allies as the USA has a long list of unilateral withdrawal from various treaties and agreements. Second, the INF played a serious role in the nuclear arms control and was a symbol of the US-Soviet cooperation that should not be abandoned so easily. The opponents of the INF were influenced by the opinion that Russia had been violating the treaty, thus making the USA the only state in the world, which was not developing and producing short- and intermediate-range missiles. They argued that in this case Russia becomes a military advantage over the USA and that the USA had been patient quite a long time giving the Russian government enough time to return to compliance. This argument was underpinned by the discussion line about the rise of China and the US disadvantaged military position and lack of effective deterrence capabilities in the East Asia (Kubiak, 2018), (Pasandideh, 2019).

The Russian government also commented on the demise of the INF treaty many times. Yet in 2018, President Putin declared that the USA had not provided the Russian partners with all the necessary documents regarding the alleged violations; and thus, if the USA decided to withdraw from the treaty, it would be estimated as a lack of responsibility and willingness to communicate. Later after the official statement of the White House about unilateral withdrawal from the treaty, Kremlin said that Russia would not make any efforts to propose the USA a new INF treaty, and

all the future steps in this direction should be initiated by the American partners. On the Mass Media and in a public debate held in Russia, the treaty was highly supported, and the US withdrawal was estimated as a start of a nuclear arms race, which was undesirable both for Europe and Russia. As the military expert Konstantin Makienko (2019) wrote: “The USA maybe is ready to fight with Russia till the last European citizen, but neither Russia nor the EU need that”. For the present moment, Russia is seeking to gain its credibility back among the European partners and taking the blame on the demise of the landmark treaty in the history of arms control has not created a positive image of modern Russia. Another pro-argument is a possibility of the nuclear arms race with the USA and the deployment of short- and intermediate-range missiles in Europe, will push Russia to react. And it is not the best scenario for the Russian decision-makers as the arms race is a costly venture for the country that is economically sinking after the breakdown of the Ukrainian conflict (*Suspension of INF*, 2019), (Makienko, 2019), (Guneev, 2018).

For Mikhail Gorbachev, the termination of the treaty was hard news as for the man, who made many efforts into signing the agreement, stipulating all the controversial points and who saw the positive outcome of the INF. The former Soviet leader stated that the USA was making a big mistake withdrawing from the treaty and condemns all other states supporting this decision. He also said that every single agreement envisaged on limitation and control of nuclear weapons must be guarded and developed as such agreements are the cornerstones of the international peace („Горбачев назвал ошибкой выход США из договора с Россией о ракетах”, 2018).

One of the strongest arguments against the treaty among diverse actors and experts was the military rise of China. The Chinese officials stated that their military arsenal served only in aims of deterrence and defence and they deplored the end of the treaty. Surely, China realises, which consequences the termination of the INF will have for the security and regional might accumulation efforts of the state as the USA will most definitely challenge the Chinese military posture in East Asia. As the prevalent part of the Chinese missiles is short- and intermediate-range, which are designated for regional deterrence and military control, there is an extremely poor chance that China will agree to conduct negotiations on a multi-lateral INF (Panda, 2019), (Brookes, 2019), (Pasandideh, 2019).

For the NATO officials, the demise of the INF became very challenging. Not only they called Russia for compliance since the allegations of violations became public, but also they tried to de-escalate the situation between the USA and Russia because the reminiscences of the Cold War confrontation did not fade away completely. Two main arguments support the continuation of the treaty that NATO kept repeating through years – the INF helped to establish peace in Europe and released the region from the American-Soviet tension, and the second, the demise of the INF

would mean reorganising force in the region and preparing for the worst, which requires financial resources and probable hosting of the American nuclear weapon on the European soil again (*NATO and the INF treaty*, 2019).

As the INF treaty is first of all of great importance for Europe and the EU states neighbouring Russia, the EU officials and leaders as Emmanuel Macron and Angela Merkel tried to reconcile the USA and Russia and persuade them to save the treaty, which played a central role for the European security. The leaders of the EU states find themselves in a tough situation after the demise of the INF. First, most of the countries are NATO members, where the USA has a strong influence. Second, the EU is partially dependent on the Russian natural resources, which can be used to exert pressure on the Union in case needed. Third, the EU remains a more economical rather than an ideological entity with each state standing for itself (not like the USSR, where the citizens understood themselves as the Soviet people). The lack of integration within the EU may have negative consequences for its security regarding the end of the INF. For example, if Poland decides to deploy the US missiles, Russia will target the EU as well and it will lead to a rapid deterioration of relations with the EU, which are already quite tense. Thus, it is a hard task for the European leaders to fulfil its obligations to NATO, foster the cooperation with the USA and at the same time develop relations with its strong military neighbour Russia. The Union has already enough security challenges for the present moment, dealing with the nuclear missiles' deployment and escalation of the relations with Russia throwing it almost 40 years back is rather undesirable. Nonetheless, the reaction of the EU on the demise of the treaty is less intense as it was expected. The European leaders did not support the end of the INF and stated that it was a significant achievement for the European security back in the Cold War. At the same time, they realize that the geopolitical and international situation has changed. Russia does not pose such a threat as the USSR did, Europe itself has recovered from the devastating WW II and the formation of the EU as a strong economic entity with increased influence in the world politics, has increased the assurance within the Union that if the USA and Russia could not come to a common point regarding nuclear weapons, the EU and Russia might find the ways to cooperate (Kortunov, 2019), (Witney, 2019).

The European leadership network group (ELN) (2018) developed a proposal document for the governments of the European states, including both the EU and non-EU countries. The document received the name "A European response to US withdrawal from the INF Treaty. ELN group statement November 2018" and was signed by 81 high-level European official appealing to Russia and the USA to undertake steps for saving the INF. The ELN regretted that the EU and other European countries had no legal voice in the debates about the INF future, considering that the region would be affected most if the treaty was terminated. The response strongly supported

the INF treaty as the most solid nuclear arms control agreement ever known, which had not only the practical implementation but a significant psychological value – the cooperation on nuclear weapons reduction. According to the document, the USA did not clearly communicate its intentions about the treaty to their European allies, which was deplorable. Nonetheless, the issues of Russian non-compliance must have been solved, and the treaty should have been saved by all means (ELN, 2018). Unfortunately, even such a weighty support of the European decision-makers did not incline either the USA or Russia to start a real dialogue on the INF.

The modern anti-nuclear activists are worried about the proliferation of nuclear weapon and that the technologies can be possessed by terrorist groups. Thus, they demand the total nuclear disarmament and moratorium on the development of atomic arms and the usage of atomic energy. Both standing points got intensively articulated due to the increased number of terrorists' attacks in the world, and the problem of climate change and environmental protection. They argue that the nuclear weapon contradicts the International Law and cannot be applied in warfare; thus, the very possession of this weapon is senseless but very dangerous. The mining of uranium and the disposal of atomic waste negatively impacts the lives of multiple communities. In its turn, it prevents people from decent access to their basic human rights, which nowadays is an essential debate in the international community (Rothwell, 2014).

4.3.1. The comparison of the arguments against and pro the INF

The INF debates of the Cold War and the modern ones indicate considerable distinctions over time. First, there is a big difference between public perception of the debates. The expert A says that debates of 2014-2019 on the INF treaty were public as in Russia so in the USA. It is a significant difference in comparison to the debates of the Cold War period. In the USA, the debates were held publicly in the 80s as well. They were widely presented in media, and they were covered in scientific literature, but in the Soviet Union, the INF issue was discussed and decided on the level of the Communist Party within the Defense Ministry and the Foreign Ministry. There were no public discussions, no mass media coverage, and no scientific approach to the problem due to specifics of decision-making processes in the Soviet period. There is also not much information about the negotiations and discussions within the Party. The modern debates were more open than the Cold War ones. There was more occupation with the subject in academic circles, but still it is not comparable with the level of openness in the USA. It is reasoned, first of all, by the lack of arms control experts in Russia and by the limited number of periodicals that cover these issues. Therefore, the INF debates took place more in discussions of the Russian-American relations as a supportive material rather than a separate issue.

The expert B claims that the debates in the Cold War attracted much more public attention than the modern ones. Several reasons can explain it. First, the debates 1979-1987 were conducted in a taut atmosphere of military and ideological rivalry between the USA and the Soviet Union. The result of this standoff should have defined the course of international politics and establish the new world order (that actually happened when the Soviets backed down). Thus, the international community and people around the globe were interested in each interaction between two superpowers and as the INF was an ambitious project to implement, it attracted much attention. More than that, scientists, experts, and politicians back then understood that if the INF were signed, it would demarcate a new era in the American-Soviet cooperation that would become the breakthrough for the global security. The debates 2014-2019 were much less intensive, especially from public perception. They were barely mediated and negotiated. The political scientist and experts discussed the issue, but the public framing of the debates did not find place. There are too many other global problems, which seems to be of higher relevance to Mass Media and politicians. Disregarding all the advantages of the treaty, both sides were aware of; they had their own motives to suspend it. And although the US and the Russian officials expressed regret about the demise of the INF, neither of them undertook any solid steps to save it.

“Let’s not forget that the situation in Georgia in 2008, the implementation of R2P in Libya, the stalemate in Syria and then finally Ukraine, influenced the relations between the USA and Russia. It is important to understand that all these conflicts have a geopolitical significance and they all are intricately connected to the subject of effective deterrence and nuclear deterrence as well. The rivalry of the Cold War was put in slow motion after the collapse of the USSR, but it never really ceased to exist. The mistrust of the states to each other was growing through years, and finally resulted in this rupture – first the INF, then most definitely the new START. We can talk a lot about the advantages and disadvantages of these treaties, but it will stay only a talk. The real politics does not intend to make everyone happy. Every single actor tries to fulfil his ambitions. Thus, now we have to deal with the reality and its consequences – the termination of the most important agreement of the Cold War.” (the expert B, 2020).

The nature of anti-nuclear movements has altered over time. In the Cold War, when nuclear energy was first introduced in different domains of state’s life, people were more active in expressing their negative opinion on this type of power generation. The bombings of Japan, the Chernobyl disaster and the constant deterioration in the American-Soviet relations raised a lot of fear and concern among global population, and the possibility of nuclear war was rather high and was the issue number one of the global security. The constant demands expressed by the activists influenced the decision-making process between state’s actors and resulted in diverse anti-nuclear treaties. Today, the anti-nuclear movement was quite silent regarding the demise of the INF treaty, which became a certain surprise for many experts, politicians, and scientists. It is reasoned by the alteration in power distribution among states, the existence of many other nuclear arms control treaties and appearance of newly emerged threats on the global and local levels,

which diffuse public attention. There is a possibility of increased attention to the end of the INF in case of a renewed deployment of nuclear missiles in Europe.

The standing points of proliferation optimists (nuclear positivists) do not differ between the debates. The strongest argument that the possession of even small amount of nuclear weapons helps to deter power accumulation by individual states and stabilizes the might distribution in the international system stayed the same (Koernig, 2015). Nonetheless, this position is highly theorized and cannot be relied upon totally as it is mostly based on the example of bi-polar Cold War stalemate. Additional factors also play a significant role in undermining plausibility of nuclear positivists - political and international context of the Cold War, technological development, limited threats vs newly emerged threats, etc.

The arguments of advantages of the treaty stayed unchanged through time. First of all, the INF contributed excessively to the European security liberating the European citizens of the nuclear missiles on its soil and the risks of false attack detention. As the short- and intermediate-range missiles have a concise flight time depriving the military personnel of reflection period for a proportionate response, a false signal about a nuclear attack could result in an unprecedented nuclear disaster. Second, the INF treaty designated the new age of cooperative relations between the USA and the Soviet Union, which raised hope in the international community showing that even if such sworn enemies could find a common point, then other states can follow this positive example. The third advantage of the treaty is a massive elimination of nuclear weapon of a defined class and prohibition of its production as utilisation and mining of nuclear elements is a very contaminating process for the environment and people living in the nearby areas. Another advantage of the treaty is the possibility for the USA and Russia to allocate financial resources, that were wired for the development and production of the INF, to other needs. It is a pro-argument for every arms control treaty because states spending budget on military projects usually tends to increase. It leads to shifts in power distribution between states on the regional and global level making states take the path of military might maximization to augment the deterrence capabilities, which in its turn may result in a security spiral. Thus, arms control agreements help to resolve not only security issues but also have a positive effect on the overall state infrastructure.

The arguments against the treaty in the Cold War and the modern debates differ significantly. In 1979-1987 the nuclear positivists strongly believed that nuclear weapons increase deterrence capabilities between states; and thus, helped to balance power and diminish the possibility of an attack. There were some negative statements claiming that the treaty would diminish the military strength of the USA, and that the cooperation with the establishment of trustful relations with the Soviet Union was hardly feasible. Among the Soviet military elite, the treaty was also not

welcomed. Spurred with the spirit of military might maximization and plans of communism expansion, the USSR looked sceptically on treaties restricting their power and they, like the Americans, did not believe in the possibility of fruitful cooperation with its main enemy. In the modern debates, the most plausible argument against the treaty was its bilateral character in the international system, where other states are gaining military might (especially China) and are allowed to develop, produce, test and deploy short- and intermediate-range missiles. Thus, for the USA and Russia, the treaty became restrictive with regard to technologies that have important strategic and tactic advantages. For the USA and its proponents, the alleged violations of the treaty from the Russian side were outrageous, which also became a strong impulse and weighty argument against the INF that was complied unilaterally.

The comparison of the argumentation lines in the INF debates proves that the positive outcomes of the treaty remained obvious and constant over time among diverse actors. The negative statements about the treaty have changed as the geopolitical situation has changed, and global power distribution has altered. Therefore, it led to the emergence of new scepticism about the treaty based on political neorealism assumptions of might maximization for the achievement of balance of power and effective deterrence capabilities. In the Cold War the cooperation in questions of arms control was more rational and profitable than the continuation of confrontation and a costly arms race. Despite the anarchy in the international system, two power poles stabilized each other. Thus, the advantages of the INF treaty were promulgated to the public, framing the public opinion and winning the support of expert and decision-makers. It helped to pave the ground for the negotiations and build partner relations between the USA and the USSR at least for a certain period. The nuclear deterrence by denial of the Cold War has changed to the strategy of deterrence by punishment. With the alteration of international political context, the attitude to the INF treaty (and other bi-lateral treaties) has shifted to a more negative perception. The disadvantages of the agreement outweighed its advantages for the main actors of the INF – Russia and the USA. Therefore, the arguments against the treaty became more robust and reasoned the termination of the latter.

4.4. Reasons for the signing and the demise of the INF and demands of the actors

This chapter discusses the diverse reasons for the signing of the treaty in 1987 and its demise in 2019, highlighting the positions of experts, politicians, and researchers on the subject. There is a difference between the discussion of the disadvantages and advantages of the INF described in the previous chapter and the real reasons that led to the termination of the treaty. Surely, some of the arguments against the agreement turned into matters of the demise, but the arguments pro and con have a more discursive and broadcast character, while the reasons for the signing and the

withdrawal from the INF lay in the domain of domestic politics, security strategy and personal interests of decision-makers. I elaborate on the demands from both sides, which the USA and the Soviet Union, later Russia, placed upon each other during the disputes about the INF treaty and answer the question why those demands were met in the Cold War and why the solution was not found in the debates 2014-2019.

Debates 1979-1987

Back into the Cold War, bi-polar international system and the nuclear arms race between the USA and the Soviet Union in the post-World War II period, the will to find a common standing point was much stronger than now. Two mighty states balanced each other and recognized clear profits of cooperation, although they did not support each other's developments directions. It also proves the Waltzian claim that the bi-polar system is the most stable one. The main reason for the signing of the INF in 1987 was the vivid advantage of nuclear arms reduction and control. Both the USA and the Soviet Union officials saw that the arms race with the deployment of short- and intermediate-range missiles (mostly nuclear filled), only destabilizes the fragile peace situation in Europe.

For the USA directly, the deployment of the Soviet missiles in Europe was not of a direct threat. The USA was committed to the European security in frames of extended deterrence and its obligations to NATO allies. The US weapons, which had already been deployed in the European ground by 1979, were enough to deter the Soviets. However, NATO felt intimidated by the new Soviet SS-20 missiles. For the USSR, the deployment of the American missiles in the European territory created a serious danger. The deployed Pershing II could reach Moscow in less than ten minutes, eliminating the possibility of a timely and adequate reaction from the side of the Soviet leadership. The technologies were also less advanced and precise than now. The false missile detection signal could cause irreversible consequences. Thus, Leonid Brezhnev accused NATO of seeking the military superiority in the region and efforts to exert control over the USSR by military coercion and underlined that the replacement of the old SS-5s and SS-4s by the new SS-20s was a regular procedure of military equipment modification, which under the security strategy of the Soviet Union had only a defensive character. In its turn, NATO officials were concerned with the growing military might of the Ost-block, and the deployment of SS-20 forced the NATO allies to react (Tachibana, 1989), (N. Sokov, 2020), (the expert B, 2020). Therefore, with Pershing II and SS-20 on the European ground, the situation between NATO and the USSR escalated to the maximum requiring the start of negotiations on arms control matters.

Some other factors influenced the positive outcome of the INF as well. First of all, the appearance of multiple disarmament movements in Europe and the USA, which pressured politicians with

the demands of stabilizing the security situation. The liberal changes in the politics of Mikhail Gorbachev were another impulse to agree on arms control treaties with a prospective to build new relations with the West. The economic challenges and the growing dissatisfaction with the political course of Reagan in the USA and Gorbachev in the USSR also paved the ground to the fruitful talks on arms control, which both statesmen saw as an opportunity to raise their popularity in domestic politics. The USA and the USSR were challenged by the arms race, which demanded massive investments in the military sector and deprived the governments to grow spending on other domestic needs. Thus, the agreements not only helped de-escalate the US-USSR relations but also vacated the financial resources for economic development. The alterations in public mood, where people became tired of constant stalemate in relations of mighty states, increasing interconnections and interdependence between countries due to globalisation and the overall changes in the international system impacted the will of the USA and the USSR officials making them more open to a constructive dialogue in the field of arms control (Tachibana, 1989).

Although the USSR mostly impeded the INF negotiations and continually bailed out, they still realized the necessity of the agreement. Both sides were interested in negotiations and offered each other their vision of the treaty. The initial demands were articulated by the USA in their “zero-zero” offer – the USA dismantles their Pershing II and GLCMs if the Soviet does the same with their SS-20, SS-5 and SS-4. The proposal was not accepted by the Soviet Union as it did not want to dismantle the weapons system, it invested so much capital and craft in. Thus, the USSR offered the nuclear ceiling of 300 warheads for each side of the treaty, but the American ceiling had to include British and French capacities as well. The USA insisted on “zero-zero” option, which was more radical than the Soviet option but contributed more to the peaceful development of the American-Soviet relations and stabilized security situation for Europe and the Soviet states. This option was instrumented after the signing of the INF treaty (Bureau of arms control, USA, 2017).

The negotiations lasted almost eight years and intensified in 1985 when the Soviets became more flexible in their estimations of the advantages and disadvantages of the treaty. The most important feature in the demands of 1979-1987 is that they were clearly defined. Both – the USA and the Soviet Union - conducted open and very dynamic talks. The will to sign the mutually satisfying agreement was obvious, and despite several mischances in the talks, they still ended positively and demarcated the new era of European security and stability, and the start of the meltdown in the US-Soviet relations.

The termination of the INF treaty in 2019 did not come as something unexpected to the international community. Although till the last moment there was a ray of hope that Russia and the USA would find a common denominator and would save the agreement, which was of great importance to the European and global security. Unfortunately, both states proved to be uninterested in the viability of the INF anymore. There are several main reasons, which led to the deterioration of the treaty.

The official reason for the INF termination is the incompliance of Russia with its terms. The alleged possession, testing and deployment of a missile that exceeds the range of 500 km by the Russians, made the USA withdraw from the treaty. The American side demanded Russia to return to compliance and was rather patient to the continued disregard of the INF clauses. Russia also accused the USA in the deployment of missile-defense system in Romania (2016) that can launch the prohibited missiles, which the USA denied and refused to verify the technology by the Russian experts. In February 2019 President Trump announced the withdrawal from the treaty after six months term if Russia did not fulfill its obligations under the agreement. As Russia continued to controvert the US allegations, the INF ceased to exist on 3 August 2019 (Meduza, 2018), (Seligman/ Gramer, 2019), (N. Sokov, 2019). Nonetheless, the experts' views on the INF demise vary as there are also unofficial reasons that might be a stronger impulse for the end of the treaty.

M. O'Hanlon holds to the Western-dominated view on the demise of the treaty: "The Russians have been cheating going back at least 6-7 years; the Obama administration was firmly of that view, itself. Although, I don't think domestic politics mattered hugely in 2019. What I mean is that the Trump administration was reflecting bipartisan views in the United States in regard to both the points I made earlier. A Hillary Clinton administration might even have done the same thing—though it probably would have given Russia one last chance at compliance, first, to make it even more clear to the world who was to be blamed for the demise of the treaty. Still, the United States wasn't sure it wanted to be in a treaty that prevented it from matching China's modernization and build-up of its own, conventionally-armed, intermediate-range missiles in the Pacific theatre, and there was little realistic hope of persuading Beijing to join the treaty".

A. Kortunov (2019) argued that the demands of the USA and NATO to destroy the missiles that allegedly violated the treaty was unacceptable for Russia. First, the information of violations was vague and not underpinned by any subsequent documentation. Second, from the one side, if Russia agreed to destroy the missile SSC-X-8, it would automatically assert having undermined its obligations under the INF for years. From the other side, if the Russian missile was in full compliance, but the state's decision-makers agreed to destroy it to save the INF, it would mean

that NATO and the USA can change the Russian military posture on their whim without any solid reasoning, which is unacceptable for modern Russia. Such negotiation strategy of the West worked with Mikhail Gorbachev, who once destroyed the missiles that complied with INF to show the Western partners that the USSR had good intentions and was ready to cooperate. President Putin demands partnership on equal terms – if the Russian systems should be verified, the same must be done with the US systems in Poland in Rumania (Kortunov, 2019). Thus, the demands must have been accomplished from both sides. Apparently, neither one was ready for transparency nor open to a dialogue.

N. Sokov states that there are formal and informal reasons for the demise of the treaty. There are also the reasons regarding the treaty itself but also the reasons that do not concern the treaty. The well-known formal reason is that Russia allegedly violated the treaty. Still, it is important to understand that every treaty/agreement in the process of its implementation may cause some misunderstandings, arguments and also violations. Furthermore, this is a problem of a military sector – they sometimes do not even get familiar with the texts of agreements, and therefore it may lead to some miscalculations. Nonetheless, a big problem of this situation with the INF treaty is that no one knows for sure what has been violated. The Americans did not provide the Russian colleagues with precise data on violations. Such situations happen when the data was obtained from a source that cannot be discovered. The expert considers the Obama administration to be responsible for the demise of the INF because they refused to conduct negotiations regarding alleged violations when they first were expressed. Allegedly Russia tested short-range missiles twice in 2008 – from a stationary launcher with a distance more than 500 km and the second from mobile launcher with a distance less than 500 km, though the treaty allows both tests. The procedure of violations reporting was disregarded as the USA demanded all the data about all the missiles tests conducted lately, which also included technologies that are not listed in the INF treaty. Therefore, Russia refused to give access to such data.

N. Sokov further elaborates on the development of the INF debates in modern times:

“These discussions started in 2011 first, and only in 2014 it became publicly known after the US Congress learnt about the situation. However, the real talks began only in 2017 when Trump came into office and finally discovered to the Russian officials the name of the missile that was allegedly tested. The Russian side admitted the possession of the missile but assured that the missile is not covered by the INF. The USA insisted on the elimination of this type of missile. Russia refused to do it because the USA stipulated that they discover verification procedure only after they sign an elimination agreement. That was not acceptable by the Russian side as the USA could demand access to all the military bases and classified information. Violations is not a rare situation in the implementation of treaties. But usually actors are ready to discuss it openly and come to a mutual decision when they want to save an agreement. The INF treaty was not the case.” (N. Sokov, 2020).

The expert A states that Russia is partially responsible for the demise of the treaty. The Russian fault was in its overdue proposal to the US colleagues to visit and test the missile, which was

supposed to exceed the allowed range. Still, till the last moment, many experts from both sides requested to give them direct technic characteristics of the missile, which could be modified, thus solving the problem of over-range mechanically and adapt the missiles to the terms of the treaty. Russia has also offered this option to the USA claiming that if it changes the storage capacity of the fuel tank, the missile will not be capable to fly a distance over 500km as it will lack the fuel. And though the experts and technicians were ready to assist, the lack of political will from the American side, but also from the Russian side to undertake necessary actions led to the demise of the treaty (the expert A, 2020).

The Director of the Russian International Affairs Council, Igor Ivanov (2019) argues that President Putin at the beginning of his tenure tried to save the agreement offering diverse solutions to increase the sustainability of the INF. Among them, the development of the mutual ABM system in Europe, text amendment, etc. The expert states that in the time of the Cold War, both states were willing to find ways to cooperate and even in times of high escalation, they never stopped conducting negotiations in the domain of arms control. This time, there were almost no negotiations about the INF; and thus, I. Ivanov concludes that the USA became unsatisfied with multi-lateral power distribution in the international system and aims at gaining hegemony once again as it was in the 90s. At the same time, he admits that in the debates 2014-2019 neither side made efforts to save the agreement (*“Ядерная катастрофа: миф или реальность?”*, 2019).

The expert B argues that the USA has a specific manner of reporting violations – the States have been accusing the Russian side of incompliance with the INF for years but did not name either the type of the missile or the testing sites and range till the last moment. “The American partners just continued to say that Russia allegedly possesses the prohibited missiles, but all the demands from the Russian side to disclose the details on the violations were not met. It is hard to conduct negotiations when the colleagues on the other side just pressure you without giving any precise information. The word “allegedly” itself became very popular in international politics. It doesn’t prove anything, and it doesn’t express a firm claim, but it is very capable of ruining one’s reputation and damage relations between states”. Further, the expert says that even if Russia returned to compliance, it does not mean that the INF continued to exist. Both states were unsatisfied with it, and for the USA the termination of the treaty was of greater importance than for Russia because of the China problem. Yet, the USA profited from the situation by inflicting additional damages to the Russian reputation on the international political arena making Russia guilty in the collapse of one of the most important arms control treaties.

Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the most apparent reason for the demise of the INF treaty was the absence of the will among the actors to save it. Russia and the USA were not interested in the treaty anymore because it restricted their military options in comparison to other (nuclear) powers as short- and intermediate-range missiles, even if only conventional and not nuclear filled,

are effective tactical weapons and two mighty states regretted to be bound by the treaty tying their hands in developing and possession of these weapons. In the Cold War, the two states were the main actors in international politics and had nothing to fear but each other. Therefore, they tried to de-escalate the situation between them putting much effort in talks about arms control. Nowadays, there were barely negotiations regarding the future of the treaty. As N. Sokov and the expert A stated, there were options to save the treaty - technical and diplomatic but the USA and Russia preferred to play a blame game as in the altered international system the INF became un lucrative for them. In 1987 both states agreed on intrusive verification procedures and total elimination of INF, in 2014-2019 they could not come to the mutual conclusion on verifications alienating from the dialogue, proving that the USA and Russia put forward other tasks regarding their national security and deterrence, which became more important than cooperation in arms control.

5. The post-INF era and the modern nuclear deterrence

In this chapter I present the discussion on the changing notion of nuclear deterrence in the modern international system departing from the Cold War nuclear deterrence based on bi-lateral deterrent line between the USA and USSR and continuing with the analysis of the modern multi-lateral nuclear deterrence, depicting its problematic and challenges, analyzing statements of diverse experts. Further, I discuss the future of global security in the post-INF era and the prospects of a new INF treaty offering standing points of the interviewed experts and researchers with regard to this subject.

5.1. The modern nuclear deterrence

The nuclear deterrence as a theoretical concept and military strategy was developed after WW II and became especially significant when the USA and the Soviet Union gained nuclear weapons parity. The Cold War logic of deterrence presumed that if not deterred, the USSR would inevitably attack the USA. Although from the point of view of the game theory and structural realism, it makes less sense because there was no need in such an attack. The USSR surely wanted to exceed their ideological and geopolitical influence but initiating another devastating war, especially against the USA, even if they had not possessed many weapons, was irrational. The losses the Soviet nations suffered in World War II are incomparable with those of the USA. It was more mutual mistrust and race for power and control that worsened the relations between states rather than a real threat of an attack.

Today war between and against the USA and Russia is even more senseless than before, but the deterrence as a strategy and especially nuclear deterrence have not lost their positions in the national security strategies of both states. Nonetheless, the deterrence nowadays ignores a fundamental question – why anyone should launch an attack on the USA or Russia? (Kristensen *et al*, 2009). In my opinion, the dominant thinking that weapon (nuclear weapon) is the most effective source of retaliation became outdated. Through the time and debates framing, people were persuaded that nuclear weapon contributed to the peace in the world because the USA won the Cold War and became the only superpower; thus, it created the illusion that it could be possible due to successful nuclear deterrence developed by the USA. The only problem is – there is still no peace in the world. There is just no massive war, but proxy wars continue to happen, regional and domestic conflicts are still ongoing in many regions. And as was stated above, with or without nuclear weapons, the possibility of war between the USA and the USSR was rather tiny.

Over time, the nuclear deterrence has altered due to the changes in the international system and shifts in power distribution between states. The bi-lateral deterrence axis has become multi-lateral, where newly emerged nuclear powers are gaining more significance in terms of nuclear retaliation, raising concerns of the USA and Russia. Still, the Cold War state of mind has not changed a lot. The main deterrent line stayed the same – the USA vs Russia, which also was proven in the section analyzing the latest security strategies of both states. Although, the nuclear deterrence between the USA and Russia has more a preventive character of keeping the states away from meddling into each other's foreign affairs and zones of regional influence, rather than considering a real warfare opportunity.

P. Morgan (2012) also claims that the modern understanding of nuclear deterrence is still highly dominated by the Cold War perceptions of a possible nuclear war and that in times of rapid globalization and growing interdependence states are lacking efforts to conclude arms control agreements, which are essential to security management and conflict prevention. Although the interdependence is supposed to increase trust among states, it makes them even more vulnerable to each other's hostile behavior (for example, the USA with its trade war against China), reducing their capabilities for cooperation in questions of security management and pushing governments to grow their deterrence potentials. Thus, the deterrence itself must be adapted to the global changes occurred in the international system and should respond to the needs of the system and not to security issues of individual nation-states (Morgan, 2012). The interdependence and cooperation of states on diverse levels – economic, political, technological, etc. – decreases the prospects of a massive war. The war between democracies is less likely to outbreak because democracies tend to resolve conflicts amicably and the non-democratic states are presented in

the biggest part by the developing countries, which would not dare launch a war against another state (either democratic or not) because weak states are usually bandwagon and chainganging with other states. Therefore, any attack will be retaliated by allies' forces.

Many factors contributed to the changing nature of nuclear deterrence. The number of actors increased manifold - non-state actors, rogue states possessing nuclear weapons, terrorists, guerilla fighters, etc. The technologies moved forward, and cyber-attacks may pose a more significant strategic and tactical threat than nuclear weapons. Conventional weapons are getting more sophisticated, but they still attract less public attention than WMD. In this regard, tailored deterrence should become more reliable nowadays because as Kristensen and his colleagues (2009) stated: "Nuclear weapons have lost many of the missions they once held because they have been superseded by technologically and militarily superior non-nuclear alternatives. In every case where a mission has both a nuclear and non-nuclear solution, the non-nuclear option is clearly preferred on military, technical, cost, and political grounds" (Kristensen *et al*, 2009). More than that, the actual use of nuclear weapons, especially if applied against counter-value targets, contradicts the International Law and violates human rights.

In this regard, Lieber and Press (2017) argue that the classic nuclear deterrence, which was based on the destruction capability of the opponent's nuclear arsenal, so the opponent could not launch the second-strike, was rather hard to accomplish during the Cold War because the technologies were much more simple and less precise. Today, counter-force targets consisting of nuclear weapons can be easily traced, attacked, and completely destroyed with the help of the high precision navigation systems. It poses the meaningfulness and real utility of nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence under question. The authors raise the issue of the technological arms race, where states invest in the development of more advanced and sophisticated technologies that can be used in warfare and also protect their nuclear arsenal (Lieber/ Press, 2017).

Nonetheless, nuclear weapons continue to stay an important strategic weapon that can be turned to in nuclear warfare. According to Kristensen *et al* (2009), nuclear arms have two main missions: 1) to attack hard and deeply buried targets; 2) first-strike counter-force capability against nuclear facilities of an enemy as it is the only weapon yet that can plausibly destroy the nuclear potential of an opponent. These missions must be accomplished only in case of nuclear war because, as was stated above, other military tasks can be solved with conventional weapons. Although the Russian and the American nuclear strategies have blurred the threshold of nuclear weapons use, it seems highly improbable that either of states dares to attack other states with nuclear bombs. The main reason is that a nuclear attack on a non-nuclear state will be condemned by the international community and thus sanctioned because the damages of such an attack cannot be justified. Still, as long yet one nation possesses atomic weapons, others will also keep their

nuclear arsenal stocked. Here we return to the game theory and prisoner's dilemma, neorealism with might maximization and absence of the highest authority and security spiral with stability-instability paradox, making the whole system trapped in a vicious circle, which reproduces itself and causes the emergence of new actors in the arms race. The problem could be solved by the complete nuclear disarmament that proves to be a utopic suggestion for the current situation in international politics and global security management. Nevertheless, the total nuclear disarmament with thorough verification procedures is more rational than investments in the development and production of nuclear weapons. These weapons possess the strongest destructive potential of all the weapons known and probably will be anyway partially eliminated if another arms control agreement comes into force, as it was the case with the USA and the USSR after the signing of the INF agreement.

A. Arbatov considers that in the context of modern international politics, the concept of nuclear deterrence became highly relevant; it is more pronounced and became more high profile. Nuclear deterrence is back in the domain of the foreign defence policy. *"The EU, China, bilateral deterrence of India with Pakistan, nuclear deterrence from the part of Israel regarding its Islamic neighbours, North Korea and the USA – so the nuclear deterrence is very much back."* However, the principal difference between the nuclear deterrence in the times of the Cold War and modern nuclear deterrence are new weapons system for nuclear deterrence in offensive nuclear domain, and also new technologies for nuclear defense including mid-range and intercontinental ballistic missiles, space warfare and cyber weapon.

The expert B assumes that the importance of nuclear weapons for state's security derives from the Cold War thinking and rivalry of the USA with the USSR. In the modern world, investing in the development and stockpiling nuclear weapons seems to be somewhat irrational because of advanced technologies applied in the military sector and ethic restrictions on the usage of nuclear forces in warfare. Also, newly emerged axes of deterrence between nuclear powers make less sense from the point of real utility. The very existence of nuclear weapon and its possession by some states only contributes to the escalation of relations and growing mistrust between governments, especially if they have different political models and regimes. Nonetheless, the possession of nuclear weapons and discrepancies in relations between some nuclear powers created new deterrent lines based on atomic weapons. Thus, modern nuclear deterrence attracts much attention today and has become a crucial topic in political debates again.

In the book "Security without nuclear deterrence", Robert Green (2018), a former Navy forces officer responsible for preparation of possible nuclear attacks, thoroughly describes diverse strategies of effective military de-escalation and security planning with minimum reliance on nuclear deterrence. He advocates for the total elimination of nuclear weapons arguing that it

proved to be ineffective in conflict management and prevention, inapplicable in the face of new threats (terrorism, climate change, etc.), costly for the economy and more dangerous than useful for national security. The author offers another security strategy, which he calls “non-provocative defense” based on defensive cooperation and diplomatic methods of conflict resolution. The transition to new security planning includes several crucial steps/measures – a proclamation of no-first-use principle regarding nuclear weapons, promotion of nuclear-free zones, starting negotiations to ban nuclear weapons, reliance exclusively on conventional weapons for defense (Green, 2018).

The position of Green may prove utopic as it seems rather unrealistic that nuclear power governments decide to eliminate and destroy all their nuclear arsenal, especially rogue states. For the meantime, with the constant nuclear tests provocations from the side of the North Korea, the uncertainties about Iranian nuclear program, the silent nuclear rise of China, the lowering nuclear threshold in warfare by President Trump, the continuing investments in nuclear programs by the Russian government, the end of the INF treaty, etc. nuclear deterrence has returned into national security planning with the new strength. Still, the increased importance and concept of tailored deterrence relying both on advanced conventional and nuclear weapons, which is more flexible and better applicable to deter threats posed by modern environment, gives a chance to the total nuclear disarmament in the future.

Following the discussion on the nuclear deterrence, it became vivid that researchers and some arms control/ non-proliferation experts consider that nowadays the nuclear weapon became less critical in terms of its implementation in warfare as it was during the Cold War when the USA and the Soviet Union were ready to launch nuclear attacks in case needed. The reliance on nuclear weapons decreased because of several reasons. First, rapidly developed technologies led to the modification of conventional weapons, which have overtaken almost all tactic missions initially prescribed to nuclear weapons. The second reason is the changing nature of war. Today, military conflicts between states are very unlikely, and countries are mostly torn by intra-states wars, which usually result from *coup d'état* and revolutions against authoritative governments. The third reason is the altered nature of threats to state's security, such as cyber-attacks, terrorists, pandemic, high commodity interdependence between states (food deliveries), etc. The grown importance of human rights and the leading role of IGOs/NGOs in guarding and promoting human right also diminish the potential of a nuclear exchange between states. All these factors prove that in the modern international context the nuclear weapons are useless and thus, national deterrence strategies based on nuclear weapons should be abandoned. Nonetheless, the decision-makers continue to underline the role of the nuclear weapons in their security planning and

increase budget spending on nuclear weapons being caught by the prisoner's dilemma – the situation that hinders states from effective cooperation with each other.

5.2. The post INF era and the prospects of a new INF treaty

The INF treaty signed in 1987 became a turning point in relations between the USA and USSR/Russia opening the door to cooperation in global security issues and paving the way to multiple agreements in the domain of arms control, which proved that even two rival superpowers with conflicting interests and ideological standpoints could find common solutions that contribute to the international security. The termination of the INF treaty in 2019 has marked the deterioration in US-Russian relations but also designated the demise of willingness to continue the positive development of arms control. It raised serious concerns about the future of international security (especially in Europe), and there are several dominant opinions regarding the effects of the INF termination on the current global security situation.

The coverage of the issue by Mass Media and the experts/researchers discussion on the consequences of the INF vividly depicts that both Russia and the USA/NATO blame each other of the demise of the treaty and both sides are growing mistrust and concerned with the future actions of the opposite side calculating possible threats it may pose to national and regional security in the nearest future. Another problem is the framing tools of this discussion used by Mass Media, which are aggravating the perception of the INF end between actors and civil population. The US/European sources are creating an enemy's picture of Russia and everything that the Russian government does, is presented negatively. The Russian media is more tolerant regarding the EU but frames a negative image of the USA. It proves that the mutual perception of the USA and Russia has barely changed since the Cold War and the dominant public opinion stayed the same. This situation perfectly responds to the basic principles of structural realism – might-maximization and pursuing self-interests despite cooperation that is profitable for both partners.

Jacek Durkalec (2019) from the Center of Global Security research states that the end of the INF is critical for the European and global security. Therefore, NATO must adapt its military planning to the changing security environment and technological shifts in the military sector, in order to effectively respond to the emerging threats from Russia and Asia-Pacific. For the moment, Russia possesses missiles, which can easily reach and destroy every capital in Europe and other important strategic facilities including the SSC-8/9M729 missile, which became the official reason of the INF demise: "What makes the SSC-8/9M729 missile unique is that, compared with Russia's other intermediate-range missiles, ground-launched cruise missiles are more capable of avoiding launch detection and tracking during flight, thus striking their distant targets with little

or no warning” (Durkalec, 2019). Still, the author underlines that NATO should not try to overhaul Russia in arms stockpiling neither quantitatively nor qualitatively because the Alliance is capable of deterring and retaliating possible Russian aggression with those technologies they already have in its disposal. There is also no need to deploy intermediate nuclear missiles in Europe to ensure the credibility of nuclear deterrence of NATO against Russia as an attack on any of Alliance members will be responded with collective measures, which is already considerable leverage. Thus, in the post-INF era, NATO must continue developing its security planning regarding the shifts in international security posture and invest in new technologies to timely respond possible threats and avoid unnecessary military escalations (ibid., 2019)

Simon and Lanoszka (2020) discuss the post-INF security in Europe from a less optimistic perspective. The authors suppose that there is a high possibility Russia would partially deploy missiles in the Baltic states trying to undermine the deterrent capabilities of NATO and the USA because the Russian government under Vladimir Putin invested a lot in the development and production of high precision strike technologies just to leave them stoked. Thus, NATO has to increase its deterrence and be ready for the rapid response to any attack. The Alliance must deploy diverse types of conventional missiles in Europe, but the deployment scales should be proportional and should not escalate relations between Russia and NATO further on. The authors consider it may also increase pressure on Russia to return to negotiations on arms control (Simon/Lanoszka, 2020). I contradict the opinion of the authors because Russia has no real interest to escalate the situation in Europe, especially while dealing with the wars in the Ukraine and Syria and economic isolation due to sanctions. Nonetheless, Russia reacts very sensitively on every change in the American and NATO’s policies and behaviour, therefore, every provocative step towards Russia, will be retaliated and it may cause the deployment of INF targeting European states.

While the end of the INF treaty concerns NATO and the EU because of Russia’s military planning, the USA’s debate is dominated by the deterrence of China and possibility of deployment of the short and intermediate missiles in East Asia. However, the American allies in the region are not willing to escalate the situation with neighbour states deploying American missiles, and the bases, where the USA already have its military presence, cannot provide it with solid deterrence as they are mostly island grounded and can be easily destroyed. The USA express intentions to confront the rise of China, and the Trump Administration has already started an anti-Chinese campaign attacking its economy with new import tariffs, which violate the WTO regulations. The second step is a military competition. The Chinese government stated that the deployment of the American short- and intermediate-range missiles in the region would destabilize the security of Asia Pacific as China will undertake retaliation measures, which include not only military

targeting but also economic pressure and sanctions against states, which will host the US-missiles (Simon/ Lanoszka, 2020), (the expert A, 2020), (Kuczyński, 2020). Thus, the damages from the efforts to deter Chinese military growth will be bigger than possible gains. Undoubtedly, the USA might care little about the deterioration of the regional security for its Asian-Pacific allies as well as its NATO partners because it does not directly influence the USA neither military nor economically. However, the European states and the US allies in Asia the deployment of short and intermediate range missiles will have long-term consequences.

The Russian government regrets the termination of the INF treaty and is concerned with the new technologies at the US disposal. Konstantin Makienko (2019), a military expert, argues that the post-INF era creates serious threats to the Russian national security because the geopolitical situation changed a lot since the Cold War. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the loss of the East-European states means that in case of missiles deployment by NATO, they will be much closer to the Russian borders and its strategically important objects. It means that the arrival time will be shrunk from 6-8 minutes to tens of seconds. It undermines the credibility of Russian deterrence manifold diminishing the capability of the second-strike. The expert states that neither Russia nor Europe is interested in escalation of the situation as both realize that a renewed confrontation will have severe consequences for them, and once again underlined that Russia sent a clear message to the NATO states – the deployment of Russian missiles happens only as a retaliation counter-measure. Nonetheless, Russia has one important profit in the demise of the INF: if Russia deploys short and intermediate nuclear missiles targeting European states, NATO will inevitably lose its superiority in conventional weapons. In case of deployment of American missiles in Europe, Russia must increase the production of ICBM to deter the USA and deploy them in the areas, where the American missiles will not be able to reach them. If the situation in Europe really escalates, Russia must also consider transferring its capital and the administrative, political, and economic activity to Siberia and the Far East, where it cannot be easily targeted from Europe and the USA. More than that, Russia may not adhere the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) anymore for two main reasons - it hinders country's commercial potential, and if Russia and the USA commence a missile arms race, Russia is interested in making it multi-lateral rather than bi-lateral in order to disorientate the opponent (Makienko, 2019).

N. Sokov (2019) writes that even without a treaty, it is still possible to exercise arms control on a unilateral basis. As NATO declared that they did not intend on deploying short- and medium-range missiles and Russia stated that it would deploy missiles only as a response measure, there is a feasibility of unilateral arms control from each side. The expert offered an example of parallel PNIs – Presidential Nuclear Initiatives, once undertaken by H. W. Bush and M. Gorbachev that

led to reductions in tactical nuclear weapons. The advantage of such initiatives is the absence of negotiations. These are declared policies, which can be suspended anytime needed (N. Sokov, 2019). Thus, if the Russian and American government applied this strategy, it would still keep the right to produce and stockpile missiles but would reduce the arms race potential between states.

I. Ivanov (2019) considers that the end of the INF demarcated the era of political and military uncertainties that might be regulated unilaterally by Russia, the USA and other actors regarding their own national security interests. The serious problem of the post-INF logic is that it reminds the Cold War thinking based on military might-maximization and pressure that arises from it. It will lead to the new arms race with advanced technologies and unpredictable consequences. The erosion of international dialogue and decision-making in questions of international security contributes to the growing destabilization of the international system and the expanding nature of regional conflicts (Syria, Ukraine, etc.) that implicates both Russia and the USA aggravates the situation even more. The expert sees the only way out of this situation – the renewal of negotiations between the USA and Russia, which must initiate the dialogue and show the international community the will to restore trustful relations. Then these negotiations must include as many states as possible (Ivanov, 2019).

Some experts raised concerns that due to escalation in relations between the USA and Russia, the demise of the INF and President Trump's critics of the Obama politics regarding arms control agreements, the new START may not be prolonged after its expiration in 2021. It will be another severe downgrade of the international security and may only encourage the USA and Russia, but also other nuclear powers, to increase its stocks of atomic and conventional weapons.

Is there is a future for a new INF treaty? Regarding these questions, the considerations of interviewed experts were not unanimous, but mostly they doubt the feasibility of the INF revival.

A. Arbatov thinks that there is a possibility of a new INF treaty, but it has to start with a new treaty between Russia and the USA. Moreover, it strongly depends on a new generation of political elites who should understand that there is still a high prospect of nuclear war and they should prioritize arms control in their foreign policy. However, a multi-lateral treaty is much more difficult to stipulate and conclude. Involving China would already be a success. But it still seems unrealistic today. Russia and the USA should revive the treaty on bi-lateral level proceeding with a moratorium on the deployment of missiles in Europe, revive verification instruments and also continue with a START treaty.

N. Sokov argues that there are no prospects for a new INF-treaty. The framework that was used in the INF, START, etc. is outdated today. Thus, the repetition of the same conceptual ground is impossible. But there should be something new and different. There are variants, and they are

being discussed. Although it is always complicated because a person who is developing arms control concepts and treaties clashes against opposition not only from opponents of increased weapons' deployment but also from people who advocate the complete nuclear disarmament. Therefore, it is difficult to stay between these two poles. Still, it is important and necessary to move towards arms control. Furthermore, there should be different treaties for two warfare theatres - for Asia and Europe (N. Sokov, 2020).

Further N. Sokov discussed other problems within the INF treaty itself, which contributed to its demise massively. First, it was a bilateral treaty and second, it had an unlimited term. Nowadays, many countries have missiles that Russia and the USA could not possess as they were restricted by the INF. The unlimited term of the treaty deprives it of ameliorations and adjustments to the changing international context. Thus, the treaty came into collision with the modern world realities. Therefore, the treaty has several main problems, which have to be solved in future arms control agreements: 1) disregarding and different interpretation of formalities in implementation of the treaty, 2) the unlimited term of the treaty - it became outdated, 3) it was a bi-lateral treaty restricting capacities of only two states, 4) the military elites in USSR/Russia never supported the treaty, 5) the decrease of professional level in conducting negotiations in arms control had a negative impact on the future of the treaty (ibid., 2020).

The expert A also barely supports the possibility of a new INF treaty, although the expert further elaborated factors that may bring states to negotiations. First of all, the new treaty must be three-lateral between the USA, Russia and China. The USA has already stated that further negotiations regarding short-and intermediate-range missiles can only be held if China becomes the part of a new treaty. For the moment, China has no incentive and no reasons to do so. However, there is a scenario under which China can join the treaty. This scenario should include the quantity ceiling on short- and intermediate-range missiles and the ceiling should be oriented on the numbers of missiles in China's possession. Such a ceiling will also allow Russia and the USA produce a certain quantity of short- and intermediate-range missiles and China may reduce their missiles. Therefore, the treaty could be profitable for all the sides. Nonetheless, in this case the USA must offer China the reduction or restriction on the American strategic weapon, which can be used against China, otherwise China may not be interested in a new INF treaty. Another possibility to embed short and intermediate range missiles is to include them in other treaties, which introduce ceilings on certain types of weapons. But the decision on exact types of weapons and restrictions on its quantities will be taken domestically. It will help states to uphold the monopoly over military planning, where they can decide how, where and what quantity of weapons to deploy within the established ceiling (the expert A, 2020).

M. O’Hanlon wrote the following regarding the future of the INF and nuclear arms control in common:

“I think the prospects for a new treaty are very poor. It’s hard to see how China can be brought into it, even if the Russia compliance matter can be solved (which is itself unlikely). As for nuclear stability and security, yes I believe they remain central concepts in modern politics. I hope that at a minimum, therefore, New START can be extended and the CTBT can continue to be respected (and someday ratified). Also, the NPT is hugely important, as are realistic compromises with North Korea and Iran on their nuclear programs, as is some kind of restraint between India and Pakistan on their nuclear and strategic competition.” (M. O’Hanlon, 2020).

The expert B supported the statements of colleagues saying that the INF cannot be bi-lateral anymore, because the main reason for the withdrawal of both states was the rising nuclear might of China. Thus, without the third party at the negotiation table, the prospects of a new INF are exceptionally low, and for today, China has no real reasons to join the treaty. Nonetheless, with the demise of the INF, the USA and Russia will definitely start rapid production and deployment of short- and medium-range nuclear missiles. It will change the military balance among states and in this regard, there is a possibility that after a certain time all the three states launch a new project of a new INF (the expert B, 2020).

The demise of the INF treaty paved the way to a renewed nuclear escalation between Russia and the USA, which first of all, massively affects the EU and NATO and undermines European security. Despite all the positive effects of the nuclear arms control, there is exceedingly small feasibility that the USA and Russia return to negotiations regarding a new INF treaty. Still, Russia would join a bi-lateral treaty more willingly than the USA because of the American strategic security concerns with the Chinese nuclear and missile programs. Therefore, even if a new INF has a chance, it has to become at least three-lateral for the USA to participate in the agreement.

Having lost its military missions, nuclear weapons became a tool of political coercion. Therefore, there is high feasibility of unilateral restrictions on nuclear weapons production and deployment, which were already expressed by NATO officials and President Vladimir Putin. The problem of ineffective communication between the US/European and Russian officials may still force the states to backslide to the situation of 1979. The escalation of the security situation in Asia-Pacific, due to the American military planning and its willingness to deploy short- and medium-range missiles in the region that will inevitably provoke a reaction from China, shows a high necessity of bi-lateral negotiations on the subject of nuclear arms control between the USA and China. Thus, it is essential to increase mutual efforts to build a productive dialogue even in this unstable security situation in order to enter the path of cooperation in arms control and global security that will be profitable for all the actors.

Conclusion

The focus of this master thesis laid on the demise of the INF treaty in the context of the changing notion of nuclear deterrence in international relations and security. The researched aimed at identifying specific features of the INF debates 1979-1987 and 2014-2019 as well as similarities and differences in order to designate the shifts in the nuclear posture of the INF actors over time and its influence on the nuclear deterrence between states in the modern international system.

For answering the research question, I applied three different theoretical approaches – political neorealism (structuralism), deterrence with a closer focus on rational and nuclear deterrence, and arms control literature. The combination of these theories gave a solid ground on the phenomena researched in the thesis. Structuralism tends to explain the nature and rules in inter-states relations claiming that the international system is anarchic with no highest authority upon states. The lack of authority, which can resolve the disputes between states increases mistrust and makes states pursue the path of might-maximization to maintain the *status quo*. However, might-maximization by certain states causes *security dilemma* and *prisoner's dilemma* and intimidates other states, forcing them to search for the ways to balance the system again. Another claim of political neorealism relevant for this research is that the most stable system occurs when two superpowers oppose each other. Uni-lateral and multi-lateral systems are less sustainable and more harmful to the international community. The deterrence theory is at a certain level related with structuralism as it relies on the rationality of decision-making actors and might-maximization as a means to deter an opponent from possible aggression; thus, creating a military balance and rendering peace to the states, which deter each other and their allies. The nuclear deterrence extends the classic one to the nuclear powers, specifically explaining the strategies these powers use to dissuade potential aggressors with the atomic weapons. The arms control literature tries to settle trust and might-maximization issues between states by the promotion of arms limitation. According to this theory, arms control agreements help to establish peaceful and cooperative relations in the international community. Although the total disarmament on the global level is utopic, arms control mechanisms make global peace sustainable.

This research represents a comparative study based on four criteria I developed specifically for this thesis: 1) the international order and the political context of the debates, 2) the INF actors and their national security strategies, 3) arguments pro- and against the treaty, 4) the reasons for the signing of the treaty and its demise and demands from both sides. These criteria were essential for obtaining structured and relevant information and conduct a reliable comparison of the data. The data analysed in this research stemmed from primary and secondary sources and expert interviews. The comparison had three dimensions: 1) temporal - 1979-1987 and 2014-2019; 2)

spatial – the USA vs the USSR/Russia, and 3) contextual – the changing nature of nuclear deterrence.

The INF treaty (1987) became one of the most significant arms control agreements in the world for several reasons. First, it was signed between two sworn enemies – the USA and the USSR, which were leading an intensified nuclear arms race with each other. It demarcated a new phase in their relations, proving that even in such a rivalry, there was a place for cooperation and rationality. Second, under the treaty, both states had to eliminate the entire class of weapons - short- and intermediate-range missiles. Third, although these missiles could be fitted with conventional warheads and not exclusively nuclear ones, the decision-makers still decided to destroy the nuclear warheads, which fitted intermediate-range and missiles with a prohibited range as well. The INF treaty was of great importance for Europe as it put an end to the US-Soviet rivalry, where European states were caught in between and in case of war, they would be first in danger. The termination of the INF treaty in 2019 became a turning point in international politics and in the US-Russian relations showing that the era of cooperation in arms control was over and a new arms race might commence any time.

The comparison of the INF debates of 1979-1987 and 2014-2019 based on four criteria vividly depicts the factors, which influenced the fate of this agreement.

The international order and the political context. The international order and the political context of the Cold War and the modern ones differ manifold as well as the position of the INF actors in both periods. The bi-lateral rivalry of the Cold War between two superpowers – the USA and the Soviet Union, where each wanted to become a hegemon and establish its international order, ended with the relatively sudden collapse of the USSR. The modern political system is multi-lateral and according to Waltz, not viable. This system creates many uncertainties and destabilizes inter-states relations. Nowadays, Russia cannot be an equal rival of the USA because the Americans have both - military and economic strength. Russia can compete only on the military level.

Nonetheless, the rising might of China and its close strategic cooperation with Russia became a real point of concern for the American government. It once again proves the Waltzian point of view that the more centres of power the international system has, the less balanced it is. The notion of nuclear deterrence has also changed over time. If in the Cold War there was only one serious deterrent line the USA vs the USSR, today there are many deterrent lines, which influence the strategic thinking of decision-makers. The emergence of new threats due to rapid technological development and globalization also have an impact on the behavior of state's leaders and decrease their will to cooperate.

The actors and their security strategies. The grand and security strategies of the USA and Russia have changed since the Cold War. In 1979-1987 the ideological rivalry was absolute as the USA promulgated liberalism and democracy, and the USSR was an authoritative state, which aimed at communism expansion. The opposition between both states determined their security strategies because they both wanted to retaliate the opponent by all possible means and at the same time, continue the race to the top. The nuclear weapon as the most destructive weapon ever known, became the main tool of dissuasion. Thus, the USA went from the strategy of mutual assured destruction to flexible response and the USSR from the Sokolovski's doctrine to the proclamation of the no-first-use principle. Both the USA and the USSR strongly embedded nuclear weapons in their security strategies. The collapse of the Soviet Union led to the appeasement of nuclear policies as the international power distribution changed, and the grand strategies of Russia and the USA changed as well. The modern security strategies depict the return of the nuclear stand-off and increase of reliance on nuclear deterrence among states. Both states lowered the threshold of nuclear weapons use. However, nuclear weapons became a tool of political coercion and lost many of their military functions because due to the technological progress conventional weapons have almost the same destructive capabilities, but they are not prohibited and not condemned by the international community. Nonetheless, the USA and Russia needed short- and intermediate-range missiles to strengthen their security and make their deterrence more credible to alleged aggressors. Russia has concerns that the USA will continue to meddle in its regional politics and to have just a possibility of deployment of intermediate-range missiles directed to Europe would solidify Russian deterrence. The USA is worried about the rise of China – military and economic. Therefore, the deployment of mid-range missiles in East-Asia is one of the main priorities of the US foreign politics under Trump.

Arguments pro and con. The comparison of the INF debates showed that the arguments supporting the treaty stayed almost unchanged through the time. The advantages of the INF treaty are apparent: 1) it guaranteed peace in Europe, 2) it reduced the potential of a nuclear exchange between two leading nuclear powers, 3) it reduced the number of nuclear weapons massively, 4) it gave a solid positive example to other states to move in the direction of arms control and cooperation, 5) the modern anti-nuclear movement fears that terrorists and non-state actors might obtain nuclear weapon; thus, it demands the total nuclear disarmament and praises every arms control treaty, which tends to reduce the number of atomic arms.

The arguments against the treaty in the Cold War differ from the modern ones at several points. Soviet military elites were against the treaty in the initial stages of negotiations because the USA profited more from the treaty. After all, the Soviet Union mostly had land-based missile systems, which were covered by the agreement, and the USA relied on sea-launched systems. The high

level of mistrust contributed to the negative attitude from both sides at the beginning of talks. Nonetheless, the advantages were weightier, and the treaty was signed. The modern debates were more negatively loaded. First, after the implementation, the treaty proved to have many shortcomings and the most important one - its bi-lateral character. The discontent with the treaty by Russia and the USA are evident – the international system is changing, new threats appear, and all other states have an opportunity to produce and deploy short- and intermediate-range missiles but the two signees of an outdated INF treaty. The mutual accusation of noncompliance discredited the spirit of trust and hope for cooperation, which were created by Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev and the constellation of these factors led to the termination of the agreement.

The reasons and demands. In the Cold War, the reasons for the signing of the INF treaty were simple - NATO pressured the USA to react on the deployment of the Soviet missiles directed to Europe (1979), and the USSR agreed to sign in because the deployment of Pershing II posed too much threat to the state. The reasons for the demise of the treaty were more complex. The Western version claims that Russia continually violated the treaty. The Russian version claims that the USA blamed Russia only to withdraw from treaty defaming its counterpart and enjoy a newly acquired possibility to produce short- and intermediate-range missiles. The experts consider that both sides were not interested in the treaty anymore as it did not respond to reality. The shifts in the power distribution, the changes in the international order and multi-lateral international system made the treaty restrictive for two states, which are not in the same might configuration as forty years ago. The lack of will to save the INF was vivid as, despite all the issues between the USA and the USSR the treaty was signed, the talks were very dynamic, and the actors were very active discussing the agreement. In the debates 2014-2019, the USA and Russia were reluctant to negotiate. They did not initiate any considerable talks about the future of the treaty, proving that the latter became redundant to both.

The public debates in two periods of time also have weighty distinctions. In the Cold War, the public was much more active, and the debates were more vehement supporting the INF treaty. The modern debates took place mostly among experts and politicians. They were more mediatized, but the public view was barely articulated. The experts assert that in the years 1979-1987, people had one serious concern – a possibility of a nuclear war between the USA and the USSR. Nowadays, there are many newly emerged threats – climate change, terrorism, pandemic, economic crisis, etc., which have dispersed public attention. The lack of public reaction on the demise of the INF treaty can also be considered as a success of the treaty and other nuclear arms control treaties – people stopped fearing nuclear war because of the restriction of nuclear use promoted and guaranteed by various international agreements.

The post-INF era and the modern nuclear deterrence. The termination of the INF has close connections as with self-interests of the signees so with the changing nature of nuclear deterrence. During the Cold War, nuclear weapons were the primary means of deterrence in the axis of the USA-the USSR. Both states in initial stages of nuclear weapons possession were ready to use it in warfare. With the time, as both actors accumulated an excessive atomic arsenal, they stopped relying on nuclear deterrence that strongly because each military provocation in their brinkmanship relations or any technical mistake and miscalculations might have led to a global tragedy. Nowadays, nuclear deterrence has altered manifold. Some experts say that it became more crucial due to the emergence of new nuclear powers and new deterrence axes. Other experts state that nuclear weapons have lost its military functions and are used only as a tool of political coercion in modern politics. Therefore, the total nuclear disarmament might be the right option for everyone. Nonetheless, the end of the INF treaty proves that the growing mistrust between states, the lack of will for further cooperation, and the lowering of the nuclear use threshold, make them turn to a more aggressive nuclear deterrence again – this time on the multiple deterrence lines.

The demise of the INF-treaty raised concerns about the post-INF era among politicians and experts in the international community. There are various predictions on how the situation will develop. On the one hand, finally having the hands untied, the USA and Russia will renew a nuclear arms race and will deploy their short- and intermediate-range missiles to increase their deterrence. On the other hand, for Russia, the deployment of the missiles by NATO will be very unfortunate. President Putin declared many times that he would not deploy missiles until NATO would do the same. NATO also said that the alliance would not provoke Russia and destabilize peace in Europe. If such positions are held, the uni-lateral will to guard relatively good relations in the military domain between Russia and NATO will be a significant success.

The USA, in its turn, is willing to deploy missiles in East Asia to deter China. However, the USA does not have appropriate bases for deployment, and the American allies in the region denied the possibility of the missiles' deployment in their ground as they do not want to spoil relations with China. Considering the rise of China, the USA should find the mechanisms to amicably negotiate the Chinese military program regarding short- and intermediate-range missiles. Russia has already expressed its readiness to take part in a new INF agreement. These negotiations might not be successful at the beginning. However, the INF talks had lasted for eight years, and still the treaty was signed.

There is also a possibility of the EU-Russia INF treaty. Some military experts from both sides consider it as a viable opportunity to maintain the *status quo* between the EU and Russia. Nonetheless, such a treaty has some problematic angles. The USA would not approve such course

of events as most of the EU states are NATO members, they should be ready to host the missiles if the alliance decides that it is necessary. The EU-Russian INF cooperation would increase strategic independence of the Union from the USA, increasing the prospects of the EU army and detachment from NATO, which are being discussed in the EU intellectual circles and the USA will barely let that happen. Still, for the meantime, it is a rather utopic idea.

The fate of the INF proved that the bi-lateral INF could not exist in the modern international system. With the rapid globalisation and augmented level of inter-dependence, which became even more evident during the pandemic, arms control treaties should be as much inclusive as possible. A new multi-lateral INF could be more flexible – not obliging states to eliminate or not produce these systems but to set a quantity ceiling on the possession of short- and intermediate-range missiles. In the nearest future, it seems unlikely that new INF talks will be initiated, but after a certain time, when the leading actors – Russia and the USA – will be ready to negotiate again and consider a new, improved agreement, the new INF might find place in the International Law again.

Appendix

Questionnaire „The INF treaty: the comparison of the debates 1979 and 2019”

Interview questions:

1. Could You please tell a little bit about your job – job- title, field of research, etc.?
2. How long have You been in this field?
3. What are You working on now (projects, research, etc.)?

Group questions

1. On your opinion, what are the reasons for the demise of the INF treaty?
2. In what way did the international political context of both debates influence their outcome?
3. How did the domestic security strategies of INF actors (USA/Russia) influence the outcome of the debates in 1979 and 2019?
4. What are the main differences in the INF treaty debates during the Cold War and 2019?
5. What are the main similarities in the INF treaty debates during the Cold War and 2019?
6. How would you describe specific features of each of the debates, if there are any?
7. Is the concept of nuclear deterrence as a military and security strategy relevant in the modern politics? If the answer is *yes/no*, please elaborate.
8. How would you define the prospects of a new INF treaty? If there is a possibility of such a treaty including more actors and nuclear powers? If the answer is *yes/no*, please elaborate.
9. Maybe there is something else You would like to tell about regarding the topic of conversation?
10. Could you please advise me some research papers or other literature regarding the subject?

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