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McGroarty/Bunton
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[START2]

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: START II SIGNING CEREMONY
SOCHI, RUSSIA
JANUARY 2, 1992
TIME -- TBD

[Introductory acknowledgements.] Mr. President, representatives of the Russian and American delegations, distinguished guests: We meet at the beginning of a New Year -- at a moment that is also a new era for our two nations and for the world.

For half this century, the Soviet Union and United States stood locked in nuclear standoff. For our two nations -- and for the world -- Cold War, hot words and the constant threat of war seemed imminent -- indeed, inevitable. The time that we might meet as friends, the time that we might meet in freedom, seemed distant -- indeed, a dream.

Today, the Cold War is over. / For the first time in history, an American President sets foot in a democratic Russia. / Together, we are now embarked on what must be the noblest mission of all: To turn an enemy into a friend. //

We stand at the threshold of a new world of hope -- a widening circle of freedom for us and for our children. This historic opportunity would simply not have been possible without a combined, common effort. Mr. President, I salute you for your unwavering commitment to democratic reform. The history you have written since the heroic day in August 91 when you climbed atop a

tank to defend Russia's democratic destiny. I also want to salute the heroism of the Russian people themselves -- for it is they who will determine that Russia's democratic course is irreversible. //

Today, as we meet on Russian soil, home to a thousand years of heritage and history, to a people rich in creative talent -- I want to assure the Russian people on behalf of all Americans: We understand that Russia faces a difficult passage. We are with you in your struggle to strengthen and secure democratic rights, to reform your economy, to bring to every Russian city and village a new sense of hope and the prospect of a future forever free.

And let me say clearly: We seek no special advantage from Russia's transformation. Yes, broader and deeper economic ties, expanded trade with Russia -- all are in the interest of my country. But it is the nature of trade that it is equally in the interest of the Russian people -- that our future is one of mutual advantage.

We seek a new relationship of trust between our two military forces. They once confronted each other across Europe's great divide. Let them now come together in the cause of peace.

We seek full cooperation to employ our collective capabilities to help resolve crises in Somalia, in the former Yugoslavia, the Middle East, Iraq and elsewhere.

Finally, the world looks to us to consign the Cold War to history. To put the days of the Doomsday Clock behind us -- to

ratify our new relationship by reducing the weapons that concentrate the most destructive power known to man.

The treaty we sign today builds on the strong beginning we made with START I. START II will reduce by more than 2/3 the strategic arsenals in place today. And just as important, it will completely eliminate the most dangerous and destabilizing of all strategic nuclear arms: Land-based multiple warhead ICBMs.

This agreement represents a common effort to overcome the contentious differences and complexities that surround nuclear weapons. In the face of many who doubted our intentions and our energy -- it vindicates our insistence that arms control could do more than simply freeze the arms race in place. START II will reduce a quarter-century of growth in our nuclear arsenals -- and reverse the course that caused many to fear that conflagration was inevitable.

In that spirit, let me tell you what this treaty means -- not for Presidents or Premiers, not for historians or heads of state, but for parents -- and for their children: It means a future free from fear. //

So as we sign today this treaty, let us pledge also to move forward together toward common aims. For Russia, a democratic peace. For our two nations, a strong partnership between our people / and the lasting friendship that springs from a common love of freedom. //