

RUSSIA OFFERS U.S. FREEZE ON N-WARHEAD NUMBERS

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Russia said on Tuesday it was ready to offer the U.S. a mutual one-year freeze on the number of nuclear warheads held by both countries in order to extend a landmark arms reduction deal due to expire next year.

“Russia offers to extend the New START by one year and is ready to take on a political commitment with the United States to freeze the number of nuclear warheads both sides have for this period,” the Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

Russian President Vladimir Putin last week proposed extending by one year the New START treaty, which caps the number of nuclear warheads held by Washington and Moscow and expires on February 5, 2021.

The White House described the proposal as a “non-starter” unless accompanied by a freeze on the number of nuclear warheads.

The Ministry said the suspension could only take place on the understanding that there were no “additional” demands from the U.S.

But it added the extra time gained could be used for talks on the future control of nuclear weapons.

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