

{ Advocacy in the US

Physicists' Coalition Conference, ICTP,
24 October 2023

Dr. Tara Drozdenko
Director, Global Security Program
TDrozdenko@ucsusa.org

[Union of
Concerned Scientists



Current Pressures on US Policy

- Fears about China's global intentions and nuclear arsenal expansion
- Russia's war in Ukraine
- Decline of traditional arms control

→ Leading some US nuclear policy professionals to conclude the US must prepare to fight *and win* simultaneous nuclear wars with both Russia and China.

Worst Case Scenarios

- Expansion of the US nuclear arsenal

Congressional SPR

“US strategic force requirements were set more than a decade ago and anticipated a significantly more benign threat environment than the one the United States now faces. Therefore the United States requires an updated strategic posture to address the projected security environment...

Deployed strategic nuclear force requirements will increase for the United States in such a threat environment.” (*Final Report on the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States*, p. 97)

”

Congressional SPR

“The current multi-program, multi-decade U.S. nuclear modernization program is necessary, but not sufficient to enable the nuclear strategy recommended by the Commission to address the unprecedented two-nuclear-peer threat environment. To avoid additional risk and meet emerging challenges, the United States must act now to pursue additional measures and programs. Additional measures beyond the planned modernization of strategic delivery vehicles and warheads may include either or both qualitative and quantitative adjustments in the U.S. strategic posture.” (*Final Report on the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States*, p. 97)

”

Worst Case Scenarios

- Expansion of the US nuclear arsenal
- Development of new types of nuclear weapons
- Return to explosive nuclear testing
- Rapid integration of AI/ML into strategic systems

Opportunities for Advocacy

- Opposing nuclear arsenal expansion and development of new types of weapons
- Opposing resumption of explosive nuclear testing
- Opposing new deployments (UK, Belarus)
- Supporting compensation for victims of the nuclear industrial complex

Opportunities for Analysis

- Alternatives to traditional arms control
- AI/nuclear nexus

A person wearing a grey baseball cap and a bright yellow-green shirt is holding a white sign high above their head. The sign has the word "science" in red lowercase letters, followed by "has your back" in black lowercase letters. Below that, it says "[Union of Concerned Scientists" in black. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with green trees and a clear sky. Other people and signs are visible in the background, including a person in a pink cap and another in a dark cap.

{ Thank You

science
has your back

[Union of
Concerned Scientists

Want to Learn More?

Text **SCIENCE** to **67369** to
receive UCS text messages
directly to your phone.

[Union of
Concerned Scientists