



# Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and US withdrawal

***The US officially withdrew on 13 June 2002***

**"Ivanov said Russia prefers to see the reductions presented in treaty form. Bush has opposed such a move in the past, suggesting that the reductions should be put on less formal grounds." AP 11 December 2001**

## ***Talking points from IPPNW***

### **ABM Treaty withdrawal**

President Bush should not withdraw from the ABM Treaty. Such a unilateral action could negatively affect relations with allies, could cause Russia to reconsider previous arms control agreements, and is an unnecessary risk.

### **Unilateralism in a Multilateral World**

At a time in which we are working with a broad-based coalition of nations in the fight against terrorism, unilateral withdrawal from an international treaty sends a bad signal to the rest of the world. Now, more than ever, the US should be working with the international community to confront global security threats, not walking away from treaty obligations.

### **Russia**

Withdrawal from the ABM Treaty could hurt relations with Russia. While the Bush Administration should be praised for its past efforts to improve U.S.-Russian relations, withdrawing from the ABM Treaty could wipe out all of the progress so far made.

President Bush's decision on the ABM Treaty may cause Russia to re-evaluate its commitment to previous arms control agreements, including its recent statements on reducing its strategic nuclear arsenal to below 2,000 warheads.

If, by withdrawing from the ABM Treaty, Russia is encouraged to maintain more warheads than they can safely manage, all people will be less safe.

### **An Unnecessary Risk**

Withdrawing from the ABM Treaty at this time is simply an unnecessary risk and won't get the US any closer to a working National Missile Defence System.

The ABM Treaty does not keep the United States from continuing to research and test a missile defence system. In fact, the biggest impediments to a national missile defence system are unproven technologies and cost, not the ABM Treaty.

National missile defence—the last line of defence against a nuclear threat—should not be allowed to undercut the first line of defence, namely, *the reduction of the threat itself*. No decision to deploy a missile defence system should be made until that system has been proven to be reliably effective against realistic threats, including countermeasures.