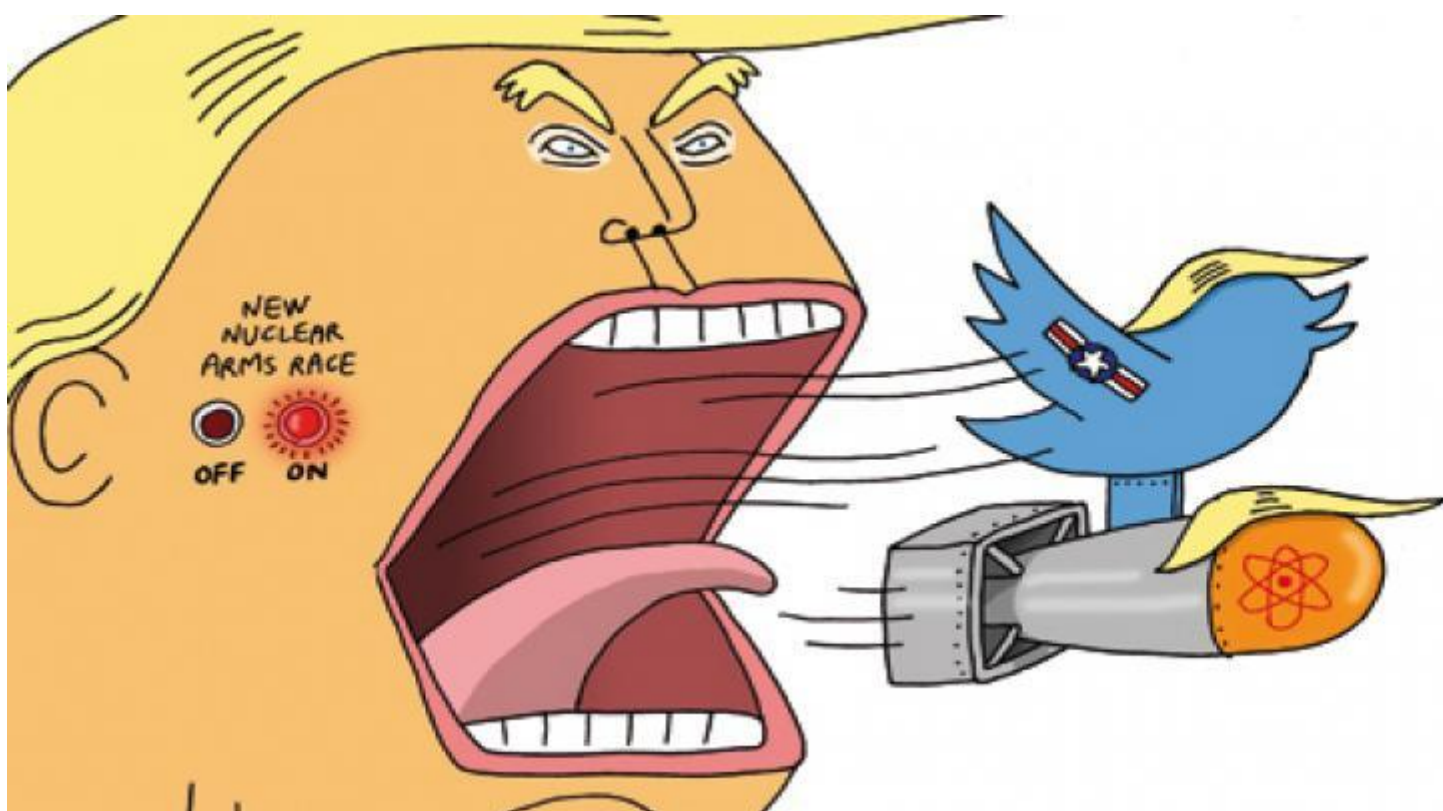


Russia says new U.S. missile strategy will spark space arms race



Moscow, January 21 (RHC)-- Russia says Washington's newly unveiled space-based military strategy will unleash a dangerous arms race, urging the U.S. to settle arms treaty disputes "before it's too late."

"The implementation of these ideas will inevitably lead to the start of an arms race in space, which will have the most negative consequences for international security and stability," read the statement released by the Russian Foreign Ministry.

The statement came after U.S. President Donald Trump unveiled a space missile defense layer that seeks to develop space-based sensors to detect incoming missiles.

The project will also explore other ways to intercept missiles, including space-based weapons, a development Russia describes as confrontational and damaging to international stability.

"We would like to call on the U.S. administration to think again and walk away from this irresponsible attempt to re-launch, on a new and more high-tech basis, the still-remembered Reagan-era 'Star Wars' program," added the Russian statement.

The ministry urged Washington to engage in constructive talks about the disputed arms developments “before it’s too late.”

The newly announced space-based program comes as the White House has been repeatedly accusing the Kremlin of violating the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF). Moscow, for its part, has strongly rejected such allegations, calling them completely unfounded.

Washington said last month it would withdraw from the INF within 60 days if Russia did not dismantle missiles that the US claims breach the deal.

The INF banned all land-based missiles with ranges of 310 to 3,420 miles and included missiles carrying both nuclear and conventional warheads. The original ban between Moscow and Washington led to the elimination of 2,692 missiles.

Tensions have boiled over the fate of the INF, with Russian President Vladimir Putin threatening a new arms race if the agreement collapses.

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