THE PRACTICES OF STRATEGIC ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS: INSIGHTS FROM A DIPLOMACY OF TRUSTING IN THE US-RUSSIAN RELATIONS

By

ANA-ANDREEA ALECSANDRU

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Department of Political Science and International Studies
School of Government
College of Social Sciences
University of Birmingham
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Abstract

This thesis offers a new understanding of the relationship between trust and verification in nuclear arms control negotiations. Combining insights from psychology, sociology, and social constructivism in IR, it develops a new conceptual framework to explain the importance of trust in shaping leaders' decision-making during nuclear arms control negotiations. The key proposition is that trust can be conceived as a practice – the *diplomacy of trusting* – and that only by interrogating the diplomatic process by which actors come to trust through negotiations can a proper understanding be gained of how the verification provisions that make an agreement possible are decided. The concept of the Diplomacy of Trusting is predicated on the idea that trust is created and performed through the practices of both the trustor (the actor who trusts) and the trustee (the actor who is trusted). It is this co-creation of trust that constitutes the diplomacy of trusting. To demonstrate the framework's utility in providing a better understanding of how agreements are reached on verification in strategic nuclear arms control negotiations, it is applied to three case studies: the 1979 SALT II Treaty; the 2002 Moscow Treaty (SORT), and the 2010 New START Treaty.

To my mum, Mariana – you are an inspiration, thank you for your unconditional love and unstinting support, I couldn't have done this without you.

To my wonderful life partner, Paul – you make every day so much better.

Acknowledgements

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List of abbreviations

ABM	Anti-Ballistic Missile
DoD	Department of Defense (U.S.)
DoT	Diplomacy of Trusting
ICBM	Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile
INF	Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces
BMD	Ballistic Missile Defence
MAD	Mutual Assured Destruction
MD	Missile Defence
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Russia)
MIRV	Multiple Independently-targetable Re-entry Vehicle
MoD	Ministry of Defence (Russia)
NTM	National Technical Means
NPR	Nuclear Posture Review
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NSC	National Security Council
NST	New START Treaty
NTM	National Technical Means
OSI	On-Site Inspection
PAA	Phased Adaptive Approach
PPCM	Perimeter Portal Continuous Monitoring
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitation Talks
SLBM	Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile
SORT	Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 The puzzle, the research question, and the main argument

The intellectual foundations of arms control in the nuclear age were laid more than fifty years ago and have hardly been modified since.[1] The purpose of the arms control process is to reduce the likelihood of war. This was particularly true during the Cold War, when the focus was on arms control rather than disarmament, on managing the United States-Soviet Union nuclear relationship, rather than ending it (see Freedman, 2009). Arms control provided the promise of transparency in relations that could minimise the risk of conflict. In their seminal 1961 text, *Strategy and Arms Control*, Schelling and Halperin's defined arms control as follows:

> all the forms of military cooperation between potential enemies in the interest of reducing the likelihood of war, its scope and violence if it occurs, and the political and economic costs of being prepared for it. The essential feature of arms control is the recognition of the common interest, of the possibility of reciprocation and cooperation even between potential enemies with respect to their military establishments (p. 2).

For arms control to be both useful and feasible, this entailed addressing a key challenge – the difficulty in developing an effective system for monitoring compliance with any agreement (Miller, 1984, p. 71; Coe and Vaynman, 2019). Of particular concern was the possibility of deception, especially in the pre-satellite days, when it was not possible to verify, with reasonable accuracy, the military capabilities of an adversary.

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[1] In 1961, four books were published that still constitute the basic core of thought on arms control. The books are: Thomas C. Schelling and Morton H. Halperin, *Strategy and Arms Control*; Hedley Bull, *The Control of the Arms Race: Disarmament and Arms Control in the Missile Age*; Donald G. Brennan, *Arms Control, Disarmament, and National Security*; and Arthur T. Hadley, *The Nation's Safety and Arms Control*.

In his work on verification and trust in arms control, Allan Krass noted that 'no word has suffered more from scepticism and cynicism in superpower diplomacy than "trust"' (1985, p. 285). As I show in the next section, trust has never been seen as a sufficient basis for verification, but at the same time, discussions of verification, both by practitioners, and by scholars of International Relations (IR)[2] frequently invoke the idea of trust. Ronald Reagan's famous phrase, 'Trust, but verify', most recently used in the context of the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and the P5+1, and the talks between the United States and North Korea, is routinely invoked as though it were a meaningful principle of negotiation for the practice of arms control.[3] Trust might be an idea that diplomats and leaders are wary of embracing too closely for fear of being accused of naiveite and weakness, but as I show in the thesis, trust is integral to understanding what types of verification are possible in strategic nuclear arms control negotiations. Specifically, the key focus of the thesis is on the role of trust in shaping what Andrew Coe and Jane Vaynman call the 'transparency-security trade-off' (2019). This concept captures the idea that the verification provisions in a treaty need to be sufficiently transparent to assure an adversary of the other's compliance whilst not, at the same time, revealing too much about one's capabilities to that adversary. This tension in how to frame verification has been at the core of all nuclear arms control negotiations (see Lebovic, 2013; Coe and Vaynman, 2019).[4] Clearly, given the military vulnerability that transparency might reveal through specific verification provisions, the pioneering theorists

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[2] 'International Relations' will be capitalised in the thesis when referring to the discipline and lower-cased when referring to the subject matter.

[3] See Barton Swaim, '*Trust, but verify': An untrustworthy political phrase* (2016) and Ernest Moniz, *On Iran and North Korea: Don't trust, and verify, verify, verify (2018).*

[4] In their article, *Why arms control is so rare* (2019), Coe and Vaynman have developed a model to show empirically that the trade-off between transparency and security is a significant impediment to reaching arms control agreements. Although they briefly acknowledge the role of actors' perceptions about the severity of the trade-off in negotiating the trade-off (p. 11), they do not examine the role decision-makers play in reaching an arms control agreement (Interview with Vaynman, 2019). They solely highlight three factors which may improve the prospects of reaching agreement – third-party monitoring, advances in sensing technology, and more open societies (p. 12).

of arms control gave considerable attention to this challenge to develop adequate means of verification. However, what they did not sufficiently consider was the role of trust in making possible specific resolutions of the 'transparency-security trade-off'.

A good place to start thinking about verification is Maria Rost Rublee and Avner Cohen's claim that 'Verification itself is a socially constructed concept' (2018, p. 334). Echoing this idea in a *Disarmament Forum* for the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, Ola Dahlman has argued that 'Verification is in the eye of the beholder' (2010, p. 3). Dahlman explains that 'Each state, given its political and security situation, has to make its own judgement on what is the adequate verification of a given treaty or agreement' and underlines the subjective nature of the judgement (2010, p. 3). If this is the case, how do policymakers decide on the level of verification in an arms control agreement? Rublee and Cohen claim that 'The level of verification needed for parties to feel assured of compliance is directly related to trust and [the] strength of the relationship between the parties' (2019, p. 334). There are two competing approaches implied in their statement. The first, in the words of Dahlman, 'The more trust, the less need for verification' (2010, p. 3). This 'inverse' approach to conceiving the relationship between trust and verification – that the absence of trust leads decision-makers to demand highly intrusive verification – was the dominant US approach to verification during the Cold War (see also Wheeler *et al.*, 2016).

An alternative approach to understanding the relationship between trust and verification, and the one that guides this thesis, sees verification as being highly reliant on the pre-existence of trust (see Oelrich, 1990; Freedman, 2009; Wheeler *et al.*, 2016). I call this the 'trust first' approach and it is predicated on the contention that it is perceptions of

the other side's trustworthiness that shape how actors resolve the transparency-security trade-off (Larson, 1997a; Lebovic, 2013; Williams, 2017a+b; Wheeler *et al.*, 2016). James Lebovic's 2013 book, *Flawed Logics: Strategic Nuclear Arms Control from Truman to Obama*, makes a persuasive empirical argument that presidential administrations from Truman to Obama negotiated strategic nuclear arms control agreements that were significantly shaped by the US policymakers' perceptions of the Soviet Union or Russia's trustworthiness. Lebovic (2013) shows that both arms control 'hawks' and 'doves' accepted ambiguities in the final agreements they concluded, arguing that a certain level of trust was seen as necessary in order to reach an acceptable level of verification on both sides. Michael Wheeler has actually gone as far as to argue that trust is one of the philosophical underpinnings of nuclear arms control (2012).

Despite some scholars focusing on trust and trustworthiness (the next chapter will explain the difference between these concepts) as preconditions for verification, existing research (with the partial exception of Wheeler *et al.* (2016) in the context of the INF Treaty)[5] has not explained how trust functioned in the context of US-Soviet/Russia arms control negotiations, nor crucially, how it shaped the verification provisions that were agreed to manage the transparency-security trade-off. As such, the two overarching research questions that guide the thesis are the following:

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[5] Wheeler *et al.*'s book chapter (2016) shows the importance of trust in reaching verification in the case of the INF Treaty by exploring different sources of vulnerability. While their work represents a step closer to understanding the relationship between trust and verification, their approach to trust is rather static, focused on unidirectional interpersonal trust (i.e. Gorbachev's vulnerability and his perceptions of Reagan's trustworthiness). That is, it fails to consider the role of the (potential) trustee/trust-taker's performance in the development of trust and the social context in which the two sides interact.

Research Question 1 (RQ1) – What role did trust play in the context of US-Soviet/Russian arms control negotiations?

Research Question 2 (RQ2) – How did trust shape the verification provisions negotiated by the two sides?

The main research objectives are thus to examine and determine the impact of trust on the arms control negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union/Russia, as well as to identify the factors that contribute to reaching agreement on verification in arms control negotiations. In particular, a fundamental objective is to show that the development of trust made a difference relative to other factors at key moments during the negotiations.

Although as the above studies show, trust has been a theme in discussions of nuclear arms control for some time, it has never received the importance it deserves. The roots of this neglect can be traced back to the dominance in early arms control thinking of rationalist bargaining models, in particular game theoretic approaches. The pioneering figure here was Thomas Schelling (1960; see also Schelling and Halperin, 1961). It is true that Schelling did briefly mention the role of trust in *Strategy and Conflict* (1960, p. 45). However, neither he, nor the other early US pioneer, Morton Halperin, with whom Schelling co-authored the book *Strategy and Arms Control* (1961) elevated trust to a key role in their theory of arms control. Instead, they applied rationalist bargaining theory to the challenge of arms control during the Cold War (1961). This traditional framework for arms control, or what I call 'nuclear orthodoxy', underlying most work in this area, is based largely on deductive reasoning and reflects only a narrow view of what arms control is. This approach has offered important insights into how to conceptualise arms control, but it has predominantly advanced technical

assessments devoid of any political or cultural context. Traditional nuclear arms control theory became strongly associated with rationalist approaches that neglected the political environment within which negotiations and agreements took place. In doing so, it has missed many of the complexities of the actual decision-making process during arms control negotiations, including the relationships between actors and the political issues. In particular, I argue that the negotiation of the verification aspects of an agreement – namely, the transparency-security trade-off – needs to be widened beyond technical considerations to encompass wider political structures and relationships, and crucially the role of trust.

The theoretical contribution of this thesis is the claim that trust can be conceived as a practice involving both the trustor (i.e. the trust-giver) and the trustee (i.e. the trust-taker). I call this the *diplomacy of trusting* and argue that only by interrogating the process by which actors come to trust during a negotiation can a proper understanding be reached of how the bargains are struck to manage the transparency-security trade-off. Bargaining theory remains important in this analysis, but I argue that how actors understand their interests – and hence the bargains they make in relation to the transparency-security trade-off – is shaped, in significant ways, by the diplomacy of trusting (DoT).

Combining insights from psychology, sociology, and social constructivism in IR, this study advances a new conceptual framework to examine how trust shapes leaders' decision-making during arms control negotiations. The core of the framework to be developed in the following chapter distinguishes between two types of trust – 'symmetric'/ 'mutual' and 'asymmetric' – that can help to constitute leaders' preferences in arms control negotiations. The thesis concentrates on the practices of the top political leaders during nuclear arms

control negotiations, in particular on the transparency-security trade-off (I will expand on the level of analysis in section 1.4). To explore the framework's analytic utility, it is applied to three case studies of nuclear arms control agreements: the 1979 Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) II; the 2002 Treaty Between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Strategic Offensive Reductions (SORT), also known as the Treaty of Moscow; and the 2010 New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START).

Why does this research matter? Despite numerous technological advancements since the end of the Cold War (both advanced conventional and nuclear) and the significant challenges posed to the long-established nuclear order to accommodate changing global power dynamics, the theory of arms control has not really changed since the pioneering efforts of Schelling and Halperin, Bull, and others in the early 1960s. The powerful intellectual architecture on nuclear arms control created by these transatlantic strategists is dominated by the US perspective, 'the high priest of nuclear orthodoxy' (Meyer, 2019), which may have obscured the experiences of other countries in arms control. The crucial challenge for the analysis of nuclear arms control negotiations is thus to disentangle the history of how knowledge and thought about arms control was developed from the actual history of how decisions during arms control negotiations were made. As Francis Gavin explains, 'In the past, the powerful allure of these deductive theories, which were meant to describe what scholars thought *should* happen, were inserted as explanations for what *did* happen' (2018, p. 11). Given the erosion of the nuclear arms control architecture in the last few years,[6] it is important to examine the practice of past arms control negotiations, often

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[6] The 1987 Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union was abandoned following the US withdrawal in August 2019. The 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), commonly known as the Iran nuclear deal reached between Iran and the P5+1 (the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council – the United States, the United Kingdom, Russia, France, and

mistakenly conflated with the intellectual history of nuclear arms control. As the thesis will show, a key part of this practice involves studying how actors developed trust through a process of negotiation. Thus, identifying and explaining the role of trust in how US-Soviet/Russia nuclear arms control negotiations led to successful agreements is an important task.

1.2 Literature review

1.2.1 What do we talk about when we talk about verification and trust in arms control?

In Raymond Carver's short story 'What We Talk About When We Talk About Love' (1981), two couples have a gin-soaked conversation about the meaning of love. As the gin flows, the four characters try again and again to explain the nature of love, but their examples never build up to a coherent definition. For example, Mel seems to be more certain about what love is *not* than what it actually means. Laura and Nick believe they know what love is though neither of them can articulate it or explain why their beliefs are so strong. They try to define it, but they merely end up demonstrating their love for each other by touching knees, holding hands, and blushing, actions which support the elusiveness of love rather than unmask it. The story is about the incapacity of language on its own to capture the meaning of love in one overarching definition. It illustrates the various meanings love can have in different contexts.

This section is about verification in nuclear arms control. Or perhaps it is better to say that this section is about what both IR scholars and practitioners talk about when they

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China + Germany), is in jeopardy after the US withdrawal in 2018. Also, the 2010 New START Treaty, the last major agreement between the United States and Russia, is slated for expiration in February 2021. If the treaty is not extended, there will be no legally binding limits on the two countries' nuclear arsenals for the first time in fifty years.

talk about verification and trust in nuclear arms control agreements. Existing scholarship leaves us with as many questions as answers in our efforts to understand the role trust plays in shaping the verification provisions in an agreement. This thesis seeks to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of that role through a systematic analysis of three empirical case studies. This means clarifying how trust has been discussed in the literature on verification in nuclear arms control and disentangling the theory from the diplomatic practices of arms control.

Verification is challenging in any security context and can never be perfect or absolute (Bowen, Elbahtimy, Hobbs, and Moran, 2018). Wyn Bowen *et al.*'s book (2018), in an extensive empirical examination of the role of trust in the practice of nuclear warhead dismantlement verification, sheds light on the tension between evidence and perceptions that lies at the heart of the verification inspection process. According to them, trust 'seems to capture perfectly the grey area of verification, this space where evidence is in short supply and inspectors may become more susceptible to being influenced or directed by their perceptions of the host party's intentions' (Bowen *et al.*, 2018, p. 150). In the book, the authors' focus is on the human factors, in particular the subtle but powerful role of trust at the operational level of the verification process. Policymakers must decide whether the information collected by the monitoring systems provides evidence to confirm compliance or identify a violation. The answers are almost never obvious (Woolf, 2011; Bowen *et al.*, 2018). In some cases, however, the language itself in the treaty or the agreement may not clearly specify the activities that comply with or violate the agreement (Woolf, 2011). Krass has argued, for instance, that 'some initial trust must be present if a verification system is to preserve arms control agreements' (1985, p. 750; see also Larson, 1997a, p. 12).

Understanding where the blind spots of verification, or the gaps in knowledge, are, is not something that can be done with certainty, meaning that assessing what the transparency-security trade-off should look like in an agreement is ultimately a political, rather than technical, decision.

There are five key steps in a verification regime: treaty language, monitoring, analysis, evaluation, and resolution (Woolf, 2011). This thesis focuses on bilateral agreements and is interested in how the verification provisions are negotiated and thus how actors decide on what the transparency-security trade-off should be.[7] The *treaty language* aspect of negotiating the transparency-security trade-off involves defining the limits and obligations that the two countries must observe and identifying the forces and activities that comply with the provisions of the treaty (Woolf, 2011). Turning to *monitoring*, the United States and Russia use various monitoring systems, usually referred to as national technical means (NTM) of verification which can include photoreconnaissance satellites, radar installations, and electronic surveillance capabilities (Wheeler, 2012, p. 69). Telemetric information – the technical data generated during missile tests – is also collected by NTM and has been a crucial issue in past arms control negotiations. Both countries also operate monitoring systems, usually described as on-site inspections, inside the other country's territory and the number of inspections is usually agreed during the negotiations.

The *analysis* process involves refining the data collected by the monitoring systems to determine whether it is relevant and reliable to develop a broad picture of the other country's forces and activities (Woolf, 2011). The *evaluation* part of the verification regime is a

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[7] Unless I specify, the thesis only refers to bilateral nuclear arms control.

political rather than technical process which assesses whether the information about the other country's activities 'satisfies the limits and obligations defined by the treaty language' (Woolf, 2011, p. 5). The *resolution* phase occurs if a country identifies a violation of the treaty and decides to raise its concern with the other country through normal diplomatic channels (Woolf, 2011). The verification regime in an arms control treaty cannot provide 100% certainty that no violations will occur and each treaty carries some risk that some non-compliant activities may go unnoticed (Woolf, 2011; see also Ifft, 2010, p. 5; Bowen *et al.*, 2018, pp. 75-77). However, it might help build confidence by detecting possible violations and providing each country with enhanced understanding of the other country's forces and activities (Woolf, 2011).

In the field of nuclear arms control verification, a few terms are often conflated with trust and they need to be clarified because they are significant to the discussion. Those terms are: confidence, risk, and cooperation. With regard to the first term, as Bowen *et al.* argue, 'the fluidity with which the terms are deployed is an indication of their ontological proximity – trust and confidence should be viewed as points on a spectrum rather than entirely distinct concepts' (2018, p. 79). Making explicit the differences between the two words is especially important because both academics and practitioners tend to use trust and confidence interchangeably in the context of verification in arms control (Keating and Ruzicka, 2014; Michel, 2012; Wheeler, 2018).

Confidence has acquired a special meaning in international relations in the form of the term of Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs) which refer to measures taken by states to avert escalation and reduce military tension. Niklas Luhmann argues that both

trust and confidence 'refer to expectations which may lapse into disappointments' (1988, p. 97).[8] However, as Bowen *et al.* contend, the available empirical evidence represents a key variable that shapes an individual's expectations (2018). Bowen *et al.* define confidence as 'an evidence-based judgement on the part of an informed actor with relevant experience and competency' (2018, p. 81). Talking about trust, David Lewis and Andrew Weigert argue that 'trust begins where prediction ends' (1985, p. 976). Highlighting the departure from an evidence-based approach to the development of beliefs, Bowen *et al.* assert that trust relates much more to 'the perception of intentions in a situation of mutual vulnerability where evidence is lacking or ambiguous' (2018, p. 81). Also, confidence plays an essential role in building trust and creating positive expectations (Bowen *et al.*, 2018; see also Wheeler, 2018, p. 4). In the context of political negotiations of arms control, as Lebovic (2013) has argued, an evidence-based approach does not necessarily increase accuracy. Individuals are not clean slates meaning that the interpretation of new information is affected by prior beliefs and perceptions of trustworthiness (Nye, 1991; Lebovic, 2013). Following Wheeler's (2018) approach, this thesis employs and examines the term 'confidence' only when the actors use it themselves.

The second term related to trust in the context of verification is risk. The possibility of cheating when stakes are high is what makes the negotiation of the transparency-security trade-off so challenging. The politico-military risks and costs of potential sensitive disclosures must be weighed against the politico-military risks and costs of not negotiating

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[8] Luhmann distinguishes between the two terms in the following way: 'You are confident that your expectations will not be disappointed . . . that cars will not break down or suddenly leave the street and hit you on your Sunday afternoon walk. You cannot live without forming expectations with respect to contingent events and you have to neglect, more or less, the possibility of disappointment . . . Trust, on the other hand, presupposes a situation of risk . . . You can avoid taking the risk, but only if you are willing to waive the associated advantages' (1988, p. 97).

constraints on arming. One important note is that while trust always incorporates an element of risk, it cannot be reduced to risk-taking behaviour (Bowen *et al.*, 2018, p. 86; Ruzicka and Keating, 2015, p. 13; Hoffman, 2002). As such, trust is more than risk-taking behaviour. My approach to trust is built on the acceptance that trust implies a calculation to a certain extent as well as positive expectations, risk, and a willingness to accept vulnerability (the following chapter will expand on all these concepts). The thesis assumes that positive expectations lead a trustor (i.e. the person who trusts) to make themselves vulnerable to a trustee (i.e. the person they trust) who has the potential to harm them as a result of the trust bestowed, meaning risk and vulnerability occur (see Möllering *et al.*, 2004).

The third distinction that needs to be made is between trust and cooperation. Andrew Kydd's work on trust is a clear example of conflation of the two terms. His scholarship suggests that the presence of cooperation represents the existence of a trusting relationship (Keating and Ruzicka, 2014). Kydd claims that 'cooperation requires a certain degree of trust between states' (2005, p. 4) and that 'mutual trust is necessary for cooperation' (2005, p. 39). As Vincent Keating and Jan Ruzicka explain, cooperative behaviour can be a consequence of rational payoffs, meaning that 'Trust, understood in its social dimension, is not needed to explain the behaviour' (2014, p. 758). As David Good has summarised, 'while cooperation and trust are intimately related in that the former is a central manifestation of the latter, the former cannot provide, for either the actor or the analyst, a simple redefinition of trust' (1988, p. 33).

1.2.2 Bargaining theory and nuclear arms control

Nuclear arms control negotiations have generally been analysed from a bargaining perspective anchored in rationalist explanations through the application of mathematical game theory. Game theory is focused on actor preferences and assumes each participant has a set of well-defined interests and will always choose policies in accordance with them (Fest, 2012). Given that negotiations in international relations take place at multiple levels, with policymakers having to consider both the interests of international actors and those of different domestic actors, Robert Putnam's two-level game theory (1988) has enriched the literature on bargaining (see also Evans, Jackson, and Putnam, 1993). Putnam conceptualised his model in the following way:

> The politics of many international negotiations can usefully be conceived as a two-level game. At the national level, domestic groups pursue their interests by pressuring the government to adopt favourable policies, and politicians seek power by constructing coalitions among those groups. At the international level, national governments seek to maximise their own ability to satisfy domestic pressures, while minimising the adverse consequences of foreign developments. Neither of the two games can be ignored by central decision-makers, so long as their countries remain interdependent, yet sovereign (1988, p. 434).

Putnam defines the international level (Level I) as, 'Bargaining between the negotiators, leading to a tentative agreement'; and the domestic level as 'Separate discussions within each group of constituents about whether to ratify the agreement' (Level II) (1988, p. 459). Lloyd Jensen (1984), in a quantitative study of SALT I and II agreements, argues that the United States tended to make concessions earlier in the process of negotiations compared to the Soviet Union, largely because of domestic conditions. Drawing on Jensen's work, Richard Stoll and William McAndrew (1986) investigate the concessions made by the two sides during the negotiations of the same agreements and emphasise the importance of reciprocity to bargaining. However, while some concessions on one side

seemed to make a difference to the other, cooperation was not achieved in all cases (Stoll and McAndrew, 1986). Despite the mixed evidence, Stoll and McAndrew argue that, 'the US-Soviet interactions were characterised more often by cooperative reciprocity (various forms of tit for tat) than by inverse reciprocity (various forms of exploitation)' (1986, p. 325). Both Jensen's and Stoll and McAndrew's studies highlight the role of reciprocity in concessions but more work on reciprocity is needed to understand how social interactions between actors shape their decision-making.

Bilateral negotiation is an interactive, dyadic process and thus both parties require attention. As Jensen's (1984) and Stoll and McAndrew's (1986) analyses of nuclear arms control negotiations seem to suggest, American and Soviet negotiators have different approaches to negotiations. A few studies have examined systematically the negotiating styles of the two sides in an attempt to identify national negotiating practices. Richard Solomon and Nigel Quinney (2010) argue that four distinctive mind-sets have combined to shape US negotiating behaviour: 'a businessperson's pragmatism and interest in securing concrete results from a negotiation; a lawyer's concern with careful preparation, precision, and binding commitments; a superpower's inclination to dictate terms, adopt take-it-or-leave-it attitudes, and flex its muscle in pursuit of national interests; and a moralizer's sense of mission, self-worth, and inclination to sermonize' (p. 5; see also Quinney, 2002). In the case of Russia, Paul Whelan's (1983) book analyses the major characteristics of Soviet negotiating behaviour as they have evolved over time. Hiroshi Kimura's (1996) discussion of Russian approaches to negotiation is a more recent (i.e. post-Soviet) study that focuses predominantly on the process of negotiation as a 'struggle' (p. 369). Most post-Soviet analyses of Russian negotiating styles (Kimura, 1996; Bennett, 1997; Schecter, 1998),

however, call for an empirical exploration of present practices to offer new insights and revisit past hypotheses. It is important to recognise, as Daniel Druckman (1996) argues, that negotiating styles must always be analysed in 'a broader framework of influences and processes' so that we can understand their 'impacts in relation to other factors that also drive negotiations toward or away from agreements' (p. 332).

Abram Chayes suggests that the negotiations at the two levels – international and domestic – represent the key reason for the relatively long duration to reach agreement because of 'the need for each side to generate a broad base of agreement and acceptance within its own and allied policymaking establishments' (1972, p. 920). Heather Williams, in her recent research, advocates for the need to integrate the role of the individual in the two-level-game approach to enable a more comprehensive analysis of the role of trust in nuclear arms control (2017a). Putnam himself recognises that 'the chief negotiator is the only formal link between Level I and Level II' (1988, p. 456). Introducing the terms of 'trust entrepreneur' and 'trust champion', Williams emphasises the role of top policymakers as a cross-cutting factor in the levels of analysis (2017a+b). Her study, however, does not seek to examine the way trust shapes negotiations, but instead focuses on exploring when trust is in the national interest in the context of nuclear arms control.

Many scholars have considered two-level games more as a 'metaphor than a full-fledged theory' (Moravcsik, 1993, p. 23; Martin Randin, 2006, p. 22).[9] Putnam's analysis in terms of win-sets assumes that an actual national win-set exists. As Rebecca Adler-Nissen notes, 'Putnam needs a priori assumptions and win-sets to make his theory work. On many

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[9] Putnam himself introduced the concept of 'two-level game' as a 'metaphor for domestic-international interactions' (1988, p. 433).

occasions, however, a negotiation has no clear beginning' (2015, p. 289). Putnam has actually acknowledged that:

> formally speaking, game-theoretic analysis requires that the structure of issues and payoffs be specified in advance. In reality, however, much of what happens in any bargaining situation involves attempts by the players to restructure the game and to alter one another's perceptions of the costs of no-agreement and the benefits of proposed agreement (1988, p. 454).

Diplomatic practices allow negotiators and leaders to communicate and exchange their views to understand the policies that are acceptable for both parties. In this environment, it becomes possible for rivals to understand each other's concerns and interests:

> negotiations require a certain degree of subtleness in terms of presentation of positions, timing, and an ability to make compromises. Moreover, national interests may change in the course of the negotiation process as the involved parties learn more about the issue and their opponents and as the negotiations gain their own momentum (Adler-Nissen, 2015, p. 289).

Adler-Nissen and Pouliot's (2014) work on the influence of power in diplomatic negotiations has emphasised the key role of micro-level diplomatic dynamics in explaining the negotiation process. In particular, in line with the so-called 'practice turn' in IR, the two authors underline the importance of:

> the negotiation of *competence* as the fundamental social process of power emergence. Most performances of a practice contain an implicit claim of authority – that "this is how things are done." Power plays out in the clash of practices and their authority claims (2014, p. 893).

In other words, at the level of practice, power involves a certain competence that is socially recognised by an audience within a particular context. This seems to conceptualise what Samantha Power, former US Ambassador the United Nations and adviser to President Barack Obama, describes as 'procedural wisdom and textual creativity' in her memoir where she recognises the skills of one of her colleagues whom she considers to be a talented negotiator (2019, p. 405). This idea is important for this thesis because, in performing a

practice with or without competence, individuals also produce an image of trustworthiness (Beckert 2005, 2006; Frederiksen, 2014). I argue that the social practices of leaders during arms control negotiations can create images of trustworthiness that produce the basis for trust. It is thus through the diplomatic practices of arms control negotiations that trust develops and gets revealed. In Elena Svetlova's words, the 'willingness to trust' 'is produced in the process of theatrical persuasion: the trust-givers willingly slip into the role of believers – they behave as if they believe in the trust-taker's story that the latter is trustworthy' (2016, p. 194).

For Robert Jervis, mostly all moves in international relations involve 'a degree of theatre' (2019). As he puts it, 'We call states and leaders "actors" not only as a handy figure of speech but because they need to perform for various audiences and may implicitly work with adversaries to generate desired impressions' (Jervis, 2019). The next section presents a brief overview of the *diplomacy of trusting* (DoT) framework that is fully developed in Chapter 2. The framework seeks to capture how the social practices of leaders facilitate or prevent the development of trust in arms control negotiations by creating impressions of trustworthiness.

1.3 The diplomacy of trusting framework

The summary of research on trust and verification in the previous sections has shown that the conventional literature on arms control is not equipped to explain how trust shapes the actors' decision-making with regard to verification. What I offer here is a first step to enrich the existing scholarship on nuclear arms control by developing a theoretical framework and a set of analytic tools capable of capturing the process of trusting revealed by the diplomatic

practices of arms control negotiations. The DoT developed in this study serves as an analytic guide to challenge rationalistic, game-theoretic and to supplement social constructivist bargaining approaches to arms control. The term 'diplomacy of trusting' recognises the processual nature of trust which does include momentary, explicit decisions about whom to trust but also acknowledges the need to take into account the time and context dependence of trust (more on this in Chapter 2). DoT is defined in this thesis as *the formal, informal, and secret diplomatic practices during negotiations which, in combination, reveal and constitute the trust between the actors.* In other words, DoT encompasses the social practices of nuclear arms control that may hinder or facilitate the development of trust throughout the negotiations.

Although there is a fair amount of agreement on certain aspects of trust, there is no universally accepted definition of trust. For instance, Harrison McKnight and Norman Chervany note that trust can be defined as both a noun and a verb, it can characterise a social structure, or it can be both a personality trait and a belief (2001). In a review of widely used definitions of trust in social sciences, Neve Isaeva has identified various common themes (2019, see Appendix B). There seems to be a substantial consensus that trust represents a way to deal with social uncertainty and imperfect information (Lewis and Weigert, 1985; Mayer *et al*., 1995; Luhmann, 2000; Heimer, 2001; Hardin, 2002). Also, most trust researchers agree on treating trust as a mental phenomenon, although there is less agreement on what exactly characterises this state of mind (Bigley and Pearce, 1998). Many scholars highlight that both an intentional acceptance of vulnerability and voluntary risk-taking are essential in order to be able to speak of trust (Luhmann, 1988; Mayer *et al*, 1995; Rousseau *et al*., 1998). Trust would not be needed if there was 'complete certainty' without any risk

(Lewis and Weigert, 1985, p. 970). As Denise Rousseau, Sim Sitkin, Ronald Burt, and Colin Camerer explain, 'risk creates an opportunity for trust, which leads to risk-taking . . . Uncertainty regarding whether the other intends to and will act appropriately is the source of risk' (1998, p. 395). Wheeler (2018, p. 58) distinguishes between trust as a mental state of expectation – what Roger Mayer, James Davis and David Schoorman (1995, p. 724) call a 'willingness to assume risk' – and 'trusting behaviour', what Mayer *et al.* (1995, p. 724) identify as 'behavioural trust, which is 'the [actual] assuming of risk' (see also Dietz, 2011, p. 215). Although these aspects of trust can be distinguished analytically, the experience of trust includes both of them.

For the purposes of this thesis, trust is defined as *a willingness to accept vulnerability in the expectation of no harm in a situation of risk* (more on this in Chapter 2). While broad, this definition incorporates the key elements of trust. Trust must thus include positive expectations concerning another and a willingness to accept vulnerability under conditions of risk. The characteristics of a trustee, or the trustworthiness dimensions, inspire trust (Flores and Solomon, 1998). It is important to note, however, that even when situations lead to an actor's willingness to accept vulnerability based on positive expectations, the actor will not necessarily act on it. The DoT thus restricts itself to explaining and predicting the influence of trust on decision-making in a probabilistic fashion. As Robin Markwica points out, these probabilistic predictions are 'a middle path between enduring covering laws and mere historical description' (2018, p. 18).

Following Mark Raymond's (2019) work, this study conceptualises bargaining as a function of procedural practices which 'provide an instruction manual' (p.18) that enables

actors to engage in negotiations. Raymond's work clarifies how political actors know which procedural rules to engage in a certain context (2019). As the author explains, 'In order to competently perform any social practice, agents must know what they should do in that context; that is, they must know the rules applicable to the practice they are attempting to enact' (2019, p. 13). Raymond argues that, in order to advance their interests, all political actors engage in these procedural rules which he regards as a particular set of social practices (2019, p. 13). As Harald Müller (2004) has shown, actors determine when to engage in the practice of bargaining based on rules that tell them whether it is appropriate to do so. However, this does not mean that practices of bargaining get reduced to rule-following (Raymond, 2019, p. 13). For analytic purposes, the author distinguishes between three types of procedural rules:

> *instruction* rules might establish the existence of a category of actor, such as states or international organizations, and specify criteria for identifying members of that class. *Directive* rules and *commitment* rules addressed to particular kinds of actors enumerate the various rights and responsibilities of different agents in making, interpreting, and applying rules. Additional instruction rules may provide relevant details about appropriate modalities for exercising and fulfilling these rights and responsibilities. Accordingly, this typology of rules is for the most part orthogonal to the argument I am making. As a result, I distinguish among instruction, directive, and commitment rules only where my argument specifically requires it (Raymond, 2019, p. 11).

The concept of *procedural practices* is important for this thesis because actors engage in bargaining during arms control negotiations without clearly defined rules on *how* to reach a mutually acceptable agreement. Procedural practices allow them to navigate the space within which the two sides can negotiate what an agreement might look like. For instance, any case of criticising another actor's behaviour as inappropriate implies that an accepted standard of appropriate behaviour (i.e. rule) exists against which the behaviour is being evaluated (Raymond, 2019, p. 13). The relationship between the social practices of

bargaining and the procedural practices which constitute them are ultimately empirical questions (Raymond, 2019, p. 14). Essentially, the ways actors engage in bargaining are 'profoundly political' practices which require examination within a certain context. For example, in one of his case studies, Raymond identifies unilateralism and multilateralism as procedural practices that actors might want to advance and support depending on their interests and how competent their performances are (2019, pp. 153-166).

Competent performances of any social practice leave room for agency and creativity (Adler and Pouliot, 2011; Raymond, 2019). According to Raymond, more procedurally competent proposals and interpretations should generate agreement more frequently than less procedurally competent proposals and interpretations (2019, p. 8). What this implies is that actors are expected to use their knowledge and skills, or their procedural talent – what Adler-Nissen and Pouliot call 'endogenous resources' (2014) – to influence which practices are recognised as competent. This process rests on the actors' competent performances of social practices which can be described in the following way: 'By framing issues in certain ways or through initiative taking, players strive to establish their ways of doing things as competent practice' (Adler-Nissen and Pouliot, 2014, p. 895). I argue that the development of trust is contingent on the actors' entangled performances of procedural practices which create impressions of trustworthiness. By acknowledging the importance of performative power in creating trust, I distinguish between mutual and asymmetric trust to explain different outcomes with regards to the transparency-security trade-off. This is done in Chapter 2, where I compare different approaches to dyadic trust which take into account the impact both the trustor and the trustee have on co-creating trust.

1.4 The level of analysis

The nature and role of trust can be studied at various levels of analysis including individuals, groups, and states, as well as international and transnational organisations. In concentrating on the performances of top political leaders, the thesis assumes these individuals play a key role in shaping the transparency-security trade-off during nuclear arms control negotiations. The dominance of structural-level theorising in IR has led to a focus on the second and third images (i.e. domestic and international levels) rather than the first (i.e. individual level) (see Waltz, 1959), with individuals generally conceived 'as being "epiphenomenal to power," along for a ride in a vehicle they have little control over' (Holmes and Wheeler, 2019, p. 6). As Solomon and Steele state, 'there is continuing broad dissatisfaction with grand or structural theory's value without "going down" to "lower levels" of analysis where structures are enacted and contested' (2017, p. 267).

Rationalist accounts which, as previous sections have shown, are predominant in the literature on arms control, typically consider that any leader would make similar decisions in response to the same constraints and opportunities generated by the domestic and international conditions. More recent work has paid attention to the role of individuals in international relations, moving away from assumptions of unitary actors and stable preferences, seeking to advance knowledge on how national interests are reformulated.[10]

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[10] After the end of the Cold War, many IR scholars have contributed to a re-examination of approaches and the role of individuals and there is now much wider acceptance that leaders matter. For accounts about the importance of individual leaders in international relations, see Daniel L. Byman and Kenneth M. Pollack, *Let Us Now Praise Great Men: Bringing the Statesman Back In* (2001); Richard Ned Lebow, *Forbidden Fruit: Counterfactuals and International Relations* (2010); Elizabeth N. Saunders, *Leaders at War: How Presidents Shape Military Intervention* (2011); Todd Hall and Keren Yarhi-Milo, *The Personal Touch: Leaders' Impressions, Costly Signalling, and Assessments of Sincerity in International Affairs* (2012); Robert Jervis, *Do Leaders Matter and How Would We Know?* (2013); Michael C. Horowitz, Allan C. Stam and Cali M. Ellis, *Why Leaders Fight?* (2015). See also Nicholas Wheeler, *Trusting Enemies* (2018) and Marcus Holmes, *Face-to-Face Diplomacy: Social Neuroscience and International Relations* (2018) for the role of interpersonal relationships and face-to-face interactions between leaders.

This thesis takes into account the neglected role of trust in the literature on arms control and seeks to contribute to this body of knowledge by considering the role trust plays in leaders' decision-making during nuclear arms control negotiations, in particular on the transparency-security trade-off.

That the thesis focuses on top political leaders does not mean that it subscribes to an individualist ontology, however. Rather, as I explain in Chapter 2 at length, it assumes that trust is ontologically relational and processual. Consequently, the examination of the process of trusting needs to pay attention to actors' performances that they present in social interactions with others and how these performances facilitate another actor's willingness to trust. Scholars working in the three main IR paradigms – realism, liberalism, and constructivism – have tended to rely heavily on cognition and reason to explain world politics (Markwica, 2018, p. 37). My approach follows Emanuel Adler's argument that social cognition does not focus on the individual mind (2019). For Adler, social cognition emerges out of social interaction through social practices (2019, p. 2). It follows that 'intentions are not predetermined and the directions they take are constituted in situations in and by practice; they are propensities until they become actualised' (Adler, 2019, p. 208). Or, as Wendt explains intentional states in a similar manner: 'the actual reason for why an agent does X does not exist before doing X, but emerges with the latter' (2015, p. 181). This is not to say that actors cannot perform with desire or intention, but the reasons associated with doing are sensitive to interpretation and the expression of an intention is subject to contingency and indeterminacy (Adler, 2019, p. 201). In other words,

> […] people's reasons and their intentional acts should be traced back to their actions and thus their background knowledge. While background knowledge does not determine action, it can nevertheless provide agents with meaning,

purpose, direction, and function. Performativity adds to the contingency and indeterminacy of human action (Adler, 2019, p. 201).

This is important for the study of trust in this thesis because both what I call *asymmetric* and *mutual trust* are contingent on the actors' entangled performances. What this means is that the examination of the process of trusting implies tracing changes in actors' intentions or reasons for their actions by taking into account their behaviour in the context of their relationship. For example, as Olli Lagerspetz, a trust philosopher, notes, even momentary, explicit decisions about whom to trust require an examination of 'the background that confers on the situation the character of a meaningful choice' (2015, p. 78).

The focus on the top leaders is also significant because of the selected case studies of US-Russian nuclear arms control. According to Angela Stent, an expert on Russian foreign policy, the leaders have always been 'disproportionately important' in the US-Russian relations (Stent, 2014a, p. 19). Stent has argued that the absence of strong institutional ties between the two countries makes the relationship between the two leaders significant (2014a). In her words, 'Unlike China, we [United States] don't do a lot of business with Russia, we don't have a lot of business contacts there. So when the relationship works, then things are much better' (Stent, 2014a). Political leaders rarely develop policies without the help of their advisers, of course. Even in small groups that are involved in the nuclear arms control negotiations, the group dynamic and the advisers' performances can shape a leader's decision-making (Saunders, 2017; Markwica, 2019, p. 33).

The focus of this thesis is restricted to the perspectives of the leaders with one notable caveat: if the documentary record reveals a tension between what Adler calls 'deontic power'

and 'performative power' (2019, p. 27) between leaders and their advisers, the empirical case studies will take this into account. Deontic power results primarily from 'the enactment of socially recognised functions, status, or rights that practitioners are normatively entitled to as practitioners' (Adler, 2019, p. 27). Performative power 'brings in audiences that affect the practices' eventual capacity to be selectively retained' and 'can enhance practitioners' competence status and functions, or because of malperformance it can weaken the meanings of practitioners who others may see as incompetent' (Adler, 2019, p. 27). Most importantly, performative power is contingent, 'dependent on whether audiences accept practitioners' performances' (Adler, 2019, p. 27). For example, former President Barack Obama's ability to negotiate with his Russian counterpart the verification provisions in the New START Treaty 'rests on the imposition of status functions' on Obama's persona as US president which represents his deontic power (Adler, 2019, p. 67). It is Obama's performative power – the fact that he manages through his performative 'act' to persuade President Medvedev of his genuine desire to take into account Russian interests – that produces the impression of trustworthiness necessary for the development of trust.

Todd Hall draws on Erving Goffman's work to highlight the power asymmetry in small groups (2015). Hall notes that certain actors 'may occupy positions with more "directive dominance", meaning the ability to orchestrate the performance in which a team engages' (2015, p. 23). Hall then highlights that this directive dominance is usually exercised by top leaders like presidents, prime ministers, or 'supreme leaders' (2015, p. 24). However, whilst top leaders might enjoy what Goffman labels 'dramatic dominance' (1959, p. 79) – individuals who are more central to the performance – they might not exercise directive dominance or influence over the actual negotiations. For instance, I argue that, during the

SALT II negotiations, General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev and President Jimmy Carter enjoyed 'dramatic dominance' and 'deontic power' due to their leadership positions, but Secretary of State Cyrus Vance on the US side and Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrei Gromyko on the Soviet side enjoyed 'directive dominance' and 'performative power' due to their significant influence on shaping the negotiations through their practices.

1.5 Research design

Research on trust and its influence on decision-making can be a daunting task. The complexity of the concept has prompted Rousseau *et al.* to claim that to study trust 'is to ride the organisational elevator up and down a variety of conceptual levels' since trust 'is at once related to dispositions, decisions, behaviours, social networks, and institutions' (1998, p. 394; see also Dietz and Den Hartog, 2006).[11] Given the richness of the literature on trust that has not been examined in the field of International Relations, I adopted a deductive approach (i.e. moving from theory to analysing data) in this thesis to develop the conceptual framework. To start with, I constructed the framework and the key concepts from the reading of prior research and theories on the topic to provide new insights and broaden our understanding of the phenomenon of trust. The concepts included in the framework and the proposed relationships between them stem from my ontological approach to trust (I expand on this in Chapter 2). As Joseph Maxwell explains, the conceptual framework 'is not simply a framework, although it can provide that, but a story about what you think is happening and why' (2005, p. 49).

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[11] See Fergus Lyon, Guido Möllering, and Mark NK Saunders *Handbook of Research Methods on Trust* (2015) for an authoritative in-depth consideration of both qualitative and quantitative methods for the empirical study of trust in social sciences.

The empirical study of trust in this thesis involves various methodological challenges which are primarily dealt with in Chapter 2 where I explain my ontological approach to trust and give more clarity on why and how I propose conceptualisation and operationalisation of trust as a process. Here, therefore, I will focus on the case selection, sources of the project, and methodological challenges. This section is divided into three parts. The first part outlines the criteria for the selection of cases. The second part gives an overview of the sources on which the case studies are based, while the last part discusses my positionality as a researcher.

1.5.1 Case selection

The value of DoT as a conceptual framework ultimately depends on whether it enhances our understanding of decision-making during arms control negotiations. The thesis primarily adopts a version of process tracing over three longitudinal case studies of arms control negotiations. While such a qualitative small-N research design is not able to generate any estimates about how frequently trust has an impact on decision-making, it permits an in-depth examination of its role in each case, as well as exploring existing theoretical concepts and developing new ones (George and Bennett, 2005). Trust researchers tend to agree that trust has a temporal dimension: 'it connects past, present and future; and it should best be studied longitudinally' (Nikolova *et al*., 2014, p. 234; see also Möllering, 2006, p. 152; Lagerspetz, 2015, pp. 69-89; Lyon *et al*., 2015, p. 11). The method of process tracing employed in this thesis, as Lebow notes, works best at the individual level when evidence can be cross-checked to document the various factors that can influence decision-making (2010, p. 74). Through its focus on within-case causal mechanisms, process tracing can help address endogeneity problems by showing the process connecting key variables and taking

into account alternative explanations in the empirical analysis (Vennesson and Wiesner, 2014, pp. 97-98).

The specific reasons for selecting United States/Soviet Union and United States/Russia case studies of nuclear arms control negotiations relate to the fact that the dominant literature on arms control has developed with the US-Soviet rivalry at its core. First, as Soviet nuclear capabilities increased during the 1950s, so did the number of US experts who came to focus on the challenge of arms control. The United States, in Gavin's words, has been 'the proverbial "eight-hundred-pound gorilla" on nuclear issues' (2018, p. 20). This means that the majority of arms control studies either do not present the Soviet or Russian perspective (Rusten, 2010; Lebovic, 2013), or they do but based on little evidence (Krass, 1985; Caldwell, 1991; Larson, 1997a). This will be addressed in this thesis by including and treating both perspectives equally in the analysis. Second, the selected case studies are different enough from each other to provide both in-case and across-case variation. They are drawn from both the Cold War and post-Cold War environments, they occurred during different US administrations and different Soviet or Russian leadership, and they include examples of both successful and failed negotiations, such as SALT II which was never ratified.

The cases chosen are both difficult and important for my argument. They are difficult because nuclear arms control negotiations deal centrally with issues pertaining to the security of the state, which is usually regarded in IR theory as an area in which considerations of material power are most likely to prevail. While I do not argue that either material factors, or in particular, issues of interest more broadly conceived are absent from the cases, I show

that a diplomacy of trusting constrained and enabled leaders engaged in negotiations, shaping how they interpreted their interests especially regarding the transparency-security trade-off. Specifically, the actors' performances are more likely to induce trustworthiness and lead to trust-building if they comply with the procedural rules of bargaining which need to be identified empirically. Further, these cases stand out because, over the years, scholars as well as practitioners, have examined them as key examples of arms control bargaining.

The first case study is the 1979 SALT II agreement signed between US president Jimmy Carter and Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev that was not ratified. This aspect is not seen as a limitation, however, given that the focus of this thesis is on analysing how and to what extent trust shapes the verification provisions negotiated, not on whether trust leads to ratification which can be constrained by a set of intervening structural factors. The second case study is the 2002 Moscow Treaty or SORT signed between the US president George W. Bush and Russian president Vladimir Putin, one of the most under-examined examples of recent arms control. While this treaty was ratified by both countries, it did not include any provisions for assessing compliance that had become common in treaties signed since the late 1980s (Woolf, 2011; see also Lebovic, 2013, p. 209). This case is highly pertinent for this thesis to examine whether the absence of mutual trust leads to no verification mechanism in a treaty. The more recent case study of the 2010 New START between US president Barack Obama and Russian president Dmitry Medvedev may be seen as an 'easier' case because existing accounts seem to suggest that trust between the two leaders was important (Burns, 2011; Stent, 2014b; Roberts, 2016; McFaul, 2018, p. 145). This would, indeed, be so if the aim of this thesis were to explain *whether* trust matters in nuclear arms control. The

primary goal, however, is to show *how* and to *what extent* it shapes the verification provisions during the negotiations.

Harry Eckstein has argued that a theory can be shown to be strong if its hypotheses are tested in 'tough cases' (1992) in which the posited theory is unlikely to provide good explanation. The case studies of SALT I (1972), the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty (1987), as well as the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) I (1991) and START II (1993) were considered but not selected due to various reasons. The case study of SALT II was selected over the case of SALT I because it is an example of 'failed arms control' (i.e. treaties that were signed but never entered into force) and helps to provide across-case variation. The INF Treaty was not selected because the relationship between the two leaders that signed the treaty, Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev, has been examined extensively in the IR literature, especially the role of trust between them in dissolving the US-Soviet enmity (Wheeler *et al*., 2016; Wheeler, 2018; Wheeler and Holmes, 2018). While an important case study, some readers may regard the case of the INF Treaty as an 'easy' test for a theoretical framework examining the role of trust in reaching agreement on verification. The New START Treaty case study was selected over the cases of START I and START II as an example of post-Cold War arms control because the case has received significantly less attention in the literature on arms control although more materials have become available for examination in recent years. Therefore, the case study provides new insights about bilateral nuclear arms control negotiations.

1.5.2 Sources

As outlined earlier, trust is a dynamic process and tracing its impact on leaders' decision-making requires a substantial base that incorporates not only eyewitness accounts but also records of confidential deliberations at the time of the nuclear arms control negotiations. The form of process tracing employed in the thesis requires a variety of evidence to allow for extensive cross-checking. As John Gerring has noted, process tracing implies that 'multiple types of evidence are employed for the verification of a single inference – bits and pieces of evidence that embody different units of analysis' (2007, p. 173). Unfortunately, it is generally difficult to obtain this material partly due to two main challenges. First, conducting research on recent international treaties means that the vast majority of documentary material remains classified. Nuclear decision-making is one of the most secret activities. Second, while accessing declassified documents has become an easier task, it is still a significant undertaking to piece together documents to shed light on the role of trust. This challenge is best explained by Gavin's following statement:

> Even when nuclear weapons are discussed, the language employed often is sanitised and drained of meaning, the horrors of thermonuclear use replaced by colourless euphemisms through a process Reid Pauley has aptly described as "rhetorical evaporation" (2018, p. 10).

Notwithstanding these difficulties, this thesis has drawn on twenty-three semi-structured elite-interviews and documents published by Wikileaks (especially for the New START case study), alongside archival records, oral history interviews, memoirs, biographies, and other histories of the events. According to Lagerspetz, the 'less visible or tacit forms of trust' are more difficult to identify as they may not be expressed clearly by actors (2015, p. 106). To gain an understanding of the role of trust in decision-making, the thesis addresses these challenges by paying attention to the historical context, to a

'background larger than the individual agent' (Lagerspetz, 2015, p. 89). The case studies will, therefore, start with an in-depth analysis of the developments leading up to the beginning of the formal arms control negotiations. My approach to reconstructing the historical context is underlined by Jack Snyder's summary: 'Good qualitative research depends on two opposite skills: unearthing valuable bits of evidence and assembling those bits into a mosaic that forms a meaningful picture' (2014, p. 711). It is important that these two activities interact because:

> Rarely does any single bit of evidence make or break the picture as a whole. More often, each bit is interpreted in light of the pieces that have already been assembled in the mosaic. It is only when the placement of many pieces looks wrong that the assembler decides to start over on a new picture (Snyder, 2014, p. 711).

I approached the process of collecting data with these ideas in mind. Each case study has presented its unique set of methodological challenges. In the case of SALT II, there were multiple sources available on both the US and the Russian sides, including declassified documents but the analysis relies almost entirely on archival documents, memoirs, and speeches. The oral history interview transcripts made available by the Carter-Brezhnev Project provided a unique opportunity to explore the thinking of the top decision-makers during the arms control negotiations. The Moscow Treaty and the New START Treaty, being more recent cases with most of the materials still classified, have not been the subject of many studies so the analysis has made use of mostly elite interviews with US and Russian experts and policymakers, memoirs, Wikileaks documents, and other first-hand accounts. There were relatively fewer sources on the Moscow Treaty because of the small number of individuals involved in the decision-making concerning the treaty due to the short duration of the negotiations. The extensive interview transcripts from the 2011 'Putin, Russia and the West' television documentary at the King's College London Archives have been a rich body

of sources for the analysis of the last two cases studies, providing information to draw upon in my own interviews with US and Russian experts and policymakers.

1.5.3 Reflexivity and positionality

Research involves making numerous decisions from the way the initial question is constructed and designed, to case selection, used methods, sources to draw upon, questions to ask interviewees, and presentation of the findings to an audience, amongst others. The position adopted by a researcher affects all stages of the research process. As Mark Salter notes, 'the researcher plays a serious role in both the activity of investigation and the narration of results' (2012, p. 20). Therefore, the researcher must be cognisant of how their own background influences their beliefs and approach to research. In reflecting on my research experience, two key related challenges need to be highlighted.

First, maintaining objectivity throughout this qualitative research project has required practising reflexivity throughout the duration of the project. There were multiple times during data collection when capturing the Russian perspective proved difficult. In a book chapter (2020) about my experiences as a PhD researcher trying to gain access to interview people, I expanded on my fieldwork challenges in the context of my positionality.[12] Reflecting as a researcher upon my interviews with Russian experts and policymakers, I noted that 'The reasons for not gaining access to interviewees and my personal stories were just as important as the interviews themselves. I was able to experience

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[12] I used a research diary during my fieldwork to trace my own development and research choices. As Catherine Cassell notes, such a diary is 'one way of developing reflexive practice' and 'it can help you remember why your interview study went into a particular direction or why a methodological choice was made at a particular time' (2015, p. 52).

some of the inherent lack of trust that I'm actually researching in my thesis' (Alecsandru, 2020).

For example, several Russian interviewees were reluctant to express their opinions and one told me that, as a Western researcher on the topic of nuclear arms control, I would most certainly 'discard the Russian concerns' in my narrative (Interview 10, 2018). One next generation interviewee (under 35) highlighted issues concerning respect for Russia and Russia's prestige that, they said, tend to get sidelined in discussions on arms control negotiations (Interview 11, 2018). These issues are but a few that need be raised when trying to disentangle the history of the intellectual underpinnings of nuclear arms control dominated by US experts and the history of the actual practice of nuclear arms control mentioned in the first section of this chapter. In order to address this first challenge and provide a balanced analysis of both the American and the Russian sides, I followed Jim Blight and Janet Lang's (2010) approach to interviews which involved trying to challenge the interviewees at specific times. If interviewees offered a narrative of an event or issue that was significantly different from other sources, I would mention the sources and ask them to reflect upon these interpretations provided by others. The aim was to elicit answers that could provide a richer context and also serve as a way of data triangulation to align multiple perspectives (see Flick, 2018).

The second challenge concerning my research experience relates to how the language of trust was employed by my interviewees. Most of my interviews with policymakers highlighted a clear discrepancy between *how they thought* about nuclear weapons and nuclear arms control, in particular, and *what they did* or what actually happened during

negotiations to reach an agreement. The contrast was stark; in our talks it was strikingly apparent that the almost sterile way of talking about negotiating the level of verification in an agreement – highly technical, self-evidently 'realist', and devoid of any emotions – was quite different from their practice of nuclear arms control negotiations. Although the focus during my interviews was on the important factors for reaching agreement on arms control during negotiations, in particular, on the verification provisions, the majority of the interviewees touched upon the role of personal relationships and sometimes trust in shaping the outcome of arms control negotiations.

For instance, Ambassador Linton Brooks, US lead negotiator for the first START Treaty under George H.W. Bush administration, told me that, while both sides were trying to advance their national interests during negotiations, the personal relationships between negotiators and the trust between them were an important factor in identifying compromises and mutually acceptable solutions (Interview, 2017). Namely, this relationship enables the creation of a space between them within which they can be more creative and explore solutions that can be mutually beneficial even in the absence of trust between the two countries (Brooks, Interview, 2017). To better understand the dynamics of nuclear arms control negotiations, it is thus essential to examine the practices of arms control as distinct from the intellectual theory of arms control.

1.6 The contribution to knowledge

The overall contribution of this thesis is that it produces a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between trust and verification in nuclear arms control negotiations. The DoT framework does not seek to reject the bargaining theory in IR, solely the rationalist

approaches to it. It aims to complement and enrich the existing literature on bargaining by turning the spotlight on the influence of trust on the leaders' decision-making. This overall contribution can be divided into its theoretical, methodological, and empirical components. Theoretically, the thesis contributes to both the IR literature on trust and the IR literature on nuclear arms control. It makes explicit the role that trust has played in existing understandings of how verification provisions are negotiated in nuclear arms control agreements.

As I have alluded to in this introduction, the literature on verification in arms control has, in several ways, made trust an important vehicle for explaining how agreements are concluded. But the conventional arms control theory has neglected the conceptual and methodological tools to explore the role of trust. I develop the DoT framework to capture both the temporal and contextual nature of trust and address the limitations of rationalist bargaining theory with regard to explaining how leaders decide on the transparency-security trade-off. I draw upon a vast multidisciplinary literature on trust in order to develop a conceptualisation of trust which can allow me to examine empirically the practices of arms control negotiations. This has entailed surveying the literature on trust to identify which concepts and approaches to trust are best suited for this task, and of course, which are not. The DoT also makes a contribution to the analytic relationship between trust and power by introducing the distinction between asymmetric and mutual trust and discussing the role of performative power in creating an actor's willingness to trust.

Methodologically, the thesis contributes to the trust literature by being one of, if not the first to study trust as a process in IR. In using practice-tracing to examine the process of

trusting, the thesis seeks to capture both the visible/articulate and the inarticulate aspects of trust and its role in shaping the construction of the leaders' choices. In addition, the thesis investigates the contribution of the trust-taker/trustee in the process of trusting. Conceptualisations of trust in IR have focused mainly on the decision-making process of the trustor/trust-giver, neglecting the role of the trustee's actions in producing the trustor's willingness to trust in a situation. The study also introduces new data to the case studies in the form of elite interviews with important players.

Empirically, this is one of the first projects to apply a processual conception of trust to understanding how verification is negotiated in three key nuclear arms control negotiations. By examining diplomatic practices, the thesis challenges the rationalist literature on bargaining in nuclear arms control and reveals the discrepancy between the intellectual underpinnings and the actual practice of nuclear arms control negotiations. In doing so, it supplements social constructivist approaches to bargaining and adds to our understanding of trust in IR and, in particular, the role of trust in nuclear arms control negotiations.

1.7 Overview of the thesis

The remainder of the thesis proceeds as follows: Chapter 2 develops in detail the DoT framework. After a review of the literature on trust in IR, the chapter charts the ontological ground to capture the relational and processual nature of trust. By distinguishing between asymmetric and mutual trust, the framework allows for an empirical examination of the role of power imbalances in the emergence and maintenance of trust. The procedural practices that constitute the bargaining during the negotiations do more than help actors understand

how to engage in negotiations. They also play a vital role in shaping the leaders' perceptions of their counterpart's trustworthiness due to the actors' performative power. The chapter posits that trust-building is contingent on the process of aligning procedural practices during which actors' performances negotiate an acceptable shared practice. Shared procedural practices are expected to facilitate mutual trust, whereas distinct procedural practices are expected to create asymmetric levels of trust. The empirical study of the phenomenon of trust raises thorny methodological challenges which are also addressed.

The framework is then applied to three case studies. Chapter 3 presents the SALT II case study. The case is an important yet a challenging one for the DoT framework. While verification represented a key part of the negotiation process, the leaders did not enjoy the performative power that their chief negotiators displayed throughout the negotiations of the treaty. The chapter thus examines the chief negotiators' performances and argues that levels of asymmetric trust developed through their practices that were sufficient to reach agreement on verification.

Chapter 4 evaluates the DoT's propositions in the case of the Moscow Treaty (SORT) negotiations. In particular, it looks at the performing power of both the US President George W. Bush and the Russian President Vladimir Putin. This case differs significantly from the other two because it reveals a distinct set of procedural practices the two sides operate with that obstructs the development of mutual trust. The chapter argues that both Bush and Putin displayed different levels of asymmetric trust throughout the negotiations. It asserts that Putin's relatively greater performative power at procedural practices influenced

Bush's perception of Putin's trustworthiness, leading to his decision to agree to a legally binding treaty with Russia.

Chapter 5 applies the DoT to the most recent case of bilateral nuclear arms control between the United States and Russia, the New START Treaty. It argues that the NST negotiations cannot be understood outside the separate secret discussions on the issue of missile defence. It shows that the process through which the two sides align their procedural practices is highly determinative of the mutual trust which results between US President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev. The chapter shows this mutual trust between the two leaders influences every key decision on the transparency-security trade-off.

Finally, the concluding chapter assesses the explanatory power of the DoT. It suggests that the framework is able to illuminate some decisions that are difficult to grasp using the traditional bargaining approaches to nuclear arms control. This results in a more comprehensive understanding of how verification provisions are negotiated. The chapter summarises the principal findings of the study, sketches their policy implications for the practice of nuclear arms control and maps out some avenues for future research that build on the theoretical and empirical work of the thesis.

Chapter 2. The Practices of Nuclear Arms Control Negotiations: Conceptualising a Diplomacy of Trusting

Seven decades ago, Morton Deutsch (1949, 1958) underlined the significance of trust in negotiations and social relationships. Despite Deutsch's acknowledgement and the existing rich body of literature on trust, as the last chapter has indicated, 'only in recent decades have negotiation researchers begun a systematic exploration of trust in the contexts of negotiations and repeated bargaining' (Kong *et al*., 2017). Drawing on the multidisciplinary research on trust and insights from the so-called 'practice turn' in International Relations, this chapter develops a conceptual framework to analyse the ways in which trust shapes leaders' decision-making during nuclear arms control negotiations, especially in the context of the transparency-security trade-off. The *diplomacy of trusting* is developed in six steps, which move from the general to the specific: Sections 1 to 3 provide the foundation of the framework. The first section focuses on reviewing the literature on trust in the field of IR, while the second section reviews the general literature on the impact of trust on negotiations. The third section lays the ontological ground for a form of social constructivism based on process and relationalism.

Sections 4 to 6 encompass the core of the framework. Drawing on trust research from outside the field of IR, the fourth section clarifies the terms necessary to develop the practice-based approach to trust. The section also summarises the characteristics of dyadic trust, sketching out the differences between mutual and asymmetric trust. The fifth section explains the practice-based approach used in this thesis to examine the process of trusting. The section establishes the links between the findings in the literature on trust and the role

of performative power and procedural practices in both the emergence and maintenance[13] of trust. By introducing the notion of a 'shared vulnerability', this section differentiates between asymmetric and mutual trust, acknowledging the role of the (potential) trustee/trust-taker in co-creating the trust together with the (potential) trustor/trust-giver. The final section of the chapter discusses the practice-tracing approach employed to explore empirically the process of trusting and whether and how trust shapes actors' decision-making, in particular concerning the transparency-security trade-off.

2.1 Trust research in International Relations

Traditionally, the concept of trust in the field of International Relations was overlooked as a central variable in international politics. Some scholars, such as John Mearsheimer (1990), argue that the nature of the international system leads to 'little room for trust among states because a state may be unable to recover if its trust is betrayed' (p. 12), hence the realist assumption that 'trusting is a dangerous strategy in the international system' (Gralnick, 1988, p. 176; Mearsheimer, 1990, p. 12; 1994/1995, p. 11). However, as Ruzicka and Keating point out, 'even Mearsheimer's sceptical assessment does not completely rule out the possibility of trust among states. It merely implies that it is rarely present' (2015, p. 9). In the last two decades, IR scholars have come to pay greater attention to the role trust might play in international affairs and have started to criticise the realist, state-centric, conceptualisations of trust (Hoffman, 2002, 2006; Booth and Wheeler, 2008; Ruzicka and Wheeler, 2010;

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[13] Although many competing definitions of the notion of emergence in the sciences exist, I conceptualise it in the thesis as the result of interactions between units, with collective properties its units do not have on their own: 'there are system effects that are different from their parts' (Urry, 2005, p. 5). The social world consists of emergent structures and processes: 'From the interaction of the individual components [of a system] . . . emerges some kind of property . . . something you couldn't have predicted from what you know of the component parts . . . And the global property, thus emergent behaviour, feeds back to influence the behaviour of the individuals that produced it' (Langton, 1993, pp. 12-13, quoted in Adler, 2019, p. 104).

Rathbun, 2011a+b, 2012a+b; Wheeler, 2018). Nevertheless, as I will argue below, the three categories of trust research in international relations – rationalist, psychological, and social (as described by Ruzicka and Keating, 2015; see also Haukkala *et al.*, 2018) – present limitations for the study of trust in arms control negotiations.

Rational choice approaches to trust in IR, drawn predominantly from economics, have dominated the discipline and, in particular, strategic studies. The most prominent trust theorist who introduced this approach to IR drawing on game theory is Andrew Kydd (2005). Kydd's model regards trust as a cost-benefit analysis of the potential risks and opportunities associated with cooperation (2005). Kydd distinguishes between states that have Assurance game preferences who are potentially trustworthy and states that have Prisoner's Dilemma preferences who are judged untrustworthy (2005; Ruzicka and Keating, 2015, p. 7). For Kydd, states seek to obtain information about each other's type through their interactions. In his 'Reassurance game' theoretical model (2005), states choose whether to reciprocate the cooperation of another state or exploit it; the resulting decisions revealing whether the other state in the dyad is an Assurance or Prisoner's Dilemma player. For Kydd, trust is a belief about the other's preferences and he argues that if trust builds, then actors will seek to send costly signals that reveal further their trustworthy preferences (2000). He defines a costly signal as one that is 'designed to persuade the other side that one is trustworthy by virtue of the fact that they are so costly that one would hesitate to send them if one were untrustworthy' (Kydd, 2000, p. 326; see also 2005, pp. 5-6; Glaser, 2010, p. 7). Kydd operationalises his conceptualisation of trust in his analysis of the end of the Cold War, where the United States and the Soviet Union managed to 'get cooperation going by setting up an initial round to test the waters' (Kydd, 2005, p. 204). His approach, however, as

described in the previous chapter, appears to conflate trust with cooperation which leads to the risk of misunderstanding the role of trust in interstate relations. Perhaps more importantly, rationalist approaches to trust like Kydd's model presume that states can convey and interpret signals accurately. As Wheeler points out, 'it is only a costly signal in the eye of the sender. It depends on the perceiver of the signal to interpret it as a costly signal for it to convey the information that the sender intends' (2018, p. 10; see also Holmes, 2018; p. 23).

Another example of attempting to address the challenge of building trust based on the accurate interpretation of signals is Charles Osgood's (1962) 'Graduated Reciprocation in Tension Reduction' (GRIT) social–psychological approach to de-escalation. Although Osgood's work is less cited in the field of IR on security cooperation, there is strong support for the GRIT proposal in studies on conflict resolution (for example, Lindskold 1978; see Wheeler, 2018 for an examination of Osgood's GRIT approach). Osgood (1962) argues that the purpose of a strategy of GRIT is to establish trust through a series of small and unilateral concessions to an opponent. This perspective that a pattern of concessions can lead to trust has been regarded as a form of trust stemming from predictability (Ross and Lacroix, 1996; Wheeler, 2018). The fundamental problem with GRIT, as Wheeler argues, is that past and current gestures that indicate trustworthiness are not reliable evidence to predict future trustworthiness (2018).

Psychological approaches to trust seek to shed light on the role of individual beliefs and attitudes. Deborah Welch Larson (1997a), influenced by work in political psychology, was the first scholar to develop a social-psychological approach to trust in IR in her study of

the US-Soviet relations during the Cold War (Keating and Ruzicka, 2015). Although, as Keating and Ruzicka (2015) emphasise, she borrows her conceptualisation of trust from the field of economics – trust is the 'subjective probability that the other will perform an action upon which the success of one's *own* decision depends and in a context where one must decide before the other's behaviour can be monitored' (Larson, 1997a, p. 12; see also 1997b) – she introduces a psychological dimension. Larson underlines the salience of psychological factors such as beliefs and images about the other side's intentions that shape the decision-makers' interpretations of the other side's actions (1997a). 'Defining trust as a probability judgement,' Larson argues, 'suggests that trust is not an either-or matter, and that the amount of trust required for an agreement varies' (1997b, p. 709). That is to say, trust is subjective and contextual.

Another key psychological approach to trust in IR is that of Brian Rathbun (2012b) who argues that psychology plays an important role because it shapes individuals' disposition to trust[14] in others. Drawing on Eric Uslaner's distinction between moralistic and strategic trust (2002), Rathbun (2012b) differentiates between generally trusting individuals who tend to support multilateralism and individuals who are naturally less trusting who are predisposed to favouring unilateralism (see also Kertzer and Rathbun, 2015; Rathbun *et al*., 2016). Moralistic trust, which can be divided into generalised trust and particularised trust, is defined as a dispositional approach to trust that is based on the presumption 'that other people are honourable' (Uslaner, 2002, p. 15). As expressed by Uslaner, 'The central idea distinguishing generalised trust from particularised trust is how inclusive your moral community is' (2002, pp. 26-27). Whereas the latter indicates trust towards members who

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[14] Mayer *et al*. (1995) use the term 'disposition to trust' to refer to stable personality traits which impact on how much trust one has 'prior to data on that particular party being available' (1995, p. 715).

share a common set of values with the trustors, the former implies that generalised trustors are predisposed to assume strangers share their values, and hence they are worthy of being treated as trustworthy (Rathbun, 2012b; Uslaner, 2002, p. 25). This argument is important to explain variation in the origins of cooperation in multilateral settings. However, what requires further research is 'whether the psychological approaches discount too much the structural constraints' that can limit decision-makers' choices both domestically and internationally (Ruzicka and Keating, 2015, p. 21).

Social approaches to trust in IR are more varied and argue that rational choice approaches ignore the social dynamics of trust and the importance of obligation (Hoffman, 2002; Ruzicka and Wheeler, 2010; Ruzicka and Keating, 2015). This differs significantly from how rationalist perspectives conceptualise trust. The trustor is not simply a rational actor taking a risk, but acts instead believing that 'trustees have a responsibility to fulfil the trust placed in them even if it means sacrificing some of their own benefits' (Hoffman, 2002, p. 379; Ruzicka and Keating, 2015). Aaron Hoffman calls this perspective the *fiduciary approach* (2002). His approach to trust as a belief that the other will 'do what is right' is noteworthy. Considering both risk and obligation, Hoffman sees a 'trusting relationship' as the 'behavioural manifestations of trust' (2006, p. 17). As Hoffman explains, 'trust implies risk, but risk-taking does not necessarily imply trust' (2002, p. 381). By introducing the notions of obligation or bond, researchers can distinguish between trust and the broader concept of risk (Ruzicka and Keating, 2015). Hoffman's book, despite its core claim that trust requires the establishment of institutional safeguards, highlights the importance 'before any effort is made establishing institutional safeguards', that 'leaders must trust one another on a personal level' (2006, p. 153; see also Wheeler, 2018, p. 44). Wheeler points out this

contradiction in Hoffman's book and the need to examine how the personal interactions between leaders might build personal relationships of trust (2018, p. 44).

In a similar fashion to Hoffman, Ruzicka and Wheeler (2010) have developed what they call a 'binding' approach to trust which focuses on the key role of promises in establishing and maintaining a trusting relationship. According to them, 'without at least some degree of trust, concluding and maintaining an international treaty such as the NPT [The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons] would be impossible' (Ruzicka and Wheeler, 2010, p. 70). They explain the persistence of the NPT by arguing that, in a binding relationship, states will work on maintaining the relationship independently of the pay-off structure, 'based on the fact that they value both its existence and continuation' (Ruzicka and Wheeler, 2010, p. 73; see also Ruzicka and Keating, 2015, p. 17). Wheeler builds on his prior work on trust in the last decade and, in his most recent book (2018), he develops a systematic way to examine interpersonal interactions of leaders of countries in adversarial relationships and how they can lead to trust. He argues that face-to-face interaction is a necessary condition for two leaders 'to reach a point where they both hold a mental state of expectation of no harm in contexts where betrayal is always a possibility' (Wheeler, 2018, p. 51). In Wheeler's account, when trust is formed, it can grow from calculative to what he terms a relationship of 'bonded trust'. For calculative trust to occur, actors expect, in a rational-choice manner, 'that they will not be harmed based on a calculation of the risks involved' (Wheeler, 2018, p. 4). When a relationship of what he calls 'bonded trust' evolves, the 'two leaders are so secure in their trust with each other that neither calculates the risks of defection' (Wheeler, 2018, p. 8). Wheeler argues that two conditions are necessary for the process of bonding and trust emergence: that the two leaders empathise

with each other; and that they acquire an index of the other's trustworthiness through their face-to-face interaction (2018).

Wheeler has argued that empathy is an important antecedent to the development of interpersonal trust between adversaries (2013, 2018; see also Baker, 2017). Empathising, or what Booth and Wheeler call 'security dilemma sensibility' refers to 'an actor's intention and capacity to perceive the motives behind, and to show responsiveness towards the potential complexity of the military intentions of others' (2008, p. 7). Booth and Wheeler acknowledge that 'trust requires empathy' because 'a capacity to empathise with the fear and suffering of one's adversaries is a critical precondition for building trust' (2008, p. 237). Likewise, Holmes and Yarhi-Milo have claimed that empathy is 'critical to the process and outcomes of diplomatic negotiations' (2017, p. 1). Drawing on Wheeler in his most recent book, Holmes contends that empathy requires 'the ability to understand what the other is feeling', noting that empathy may be a necessary but not sufficient condition for trust (2018, p. 247). Put into the terms used in this thesis, an empathic process of aligning procedural practices by seeking to understand the other side's concerns and motivations is more likely to lead to mutual trust.

Wheeler's book provides a thorough and intricate analysis of how the concept of trust has been studied in IR and is a major contribution to the development of our understanding of trust at the interpersonal level. His theory of bonded trust between leaders of adversarial states seeks to show that a relationship of bonded trust can overcome the ambiguity of signal interpretation 'for both actors and outside observers' (Wheeler, 2018, p. 2). This, however, appears to imply that trust is a lens through which actors clarify the signals between them.

In Larson's review of Wheeler's book, she notes: 'This raises questions about the direction of the causal relationship – does trust lead to accurate signal interpretation? Or does accurate signal interpretation lead to trust?' (2018, p. 1436). Wheeler's view of trust as a signal clarifier is thus problematic considering that trust, once developed, is something enmeshed in the cognitive and affective pursuits of actors and can be seen by one as either rational or potentially harmful bias (see Lagerspetz, 2015, p. 82). Misinterpretation of signals can take place at any time, regardless of whether trust is present or not (Van de Wetering, 2018). Moreover, Wheeler's framework does not indicate how exactly the bonded trust between two actors can lead to accurate signal interpretation for the outside observers as well. In other words, there is no bird's eye view on signals – actors interpret them through the social relations they are embedded in.

Wheeler's theory of interpersonal trust (2018) brings much needed attention to the role of relations in the context of trust in IR. However, his theoretical framework (2018) acts as a straitjacket that hinders an examination of the dynamic, relational, and often inarticulate nature of trust by giving ontological significance to the role of face-to-face encounters 'as a key site by which a relationship of trust can develop between state leaders' (Wheeler, 2018, p. 36). Though it is likely the case that face-to-face interactions play a solid role in building trust between adversaries at the interpersonal level, it remains disputed precisely how trust development occurs (see Holmes, 2018, p. 249). Wheeler's approach to trust, as well as that of Rathbun's, can be grouped together in what Holmes has called 'trust as belief' perspectives that 'privilege a cognitive approach to understanding what trust is: trust is something we think about consciously and is represented by a discrete mental state' (Holmes, 2018, p. 248). Trust, however, is not 'for the most part manifested as a particular

state that occupies one's mind' (Lagerspetz, 2015, p. 95). According to Lagerspetz, 'trust is often unself-conscious and shows itself precisely in the fact that I am not thinking of my attitude as one of trust' (p. 106). He explains that:

> The presence of trust must be established by looking for an overall pattern in a person's thinking and acting – a pattern in the weave of life. … Someone's trust in another may show itself in her being relaxed in his company, as well as in things she does *not* do, such as not taking certain precautions (2015, p. 95).

At first, this conceptualisation of trust might sound completely different from the perspective of 'trust as belief' since it proposes that trust may be more habitual in nature and social practices can lead to trust without individuals necessarily consciously thinking about it (see Pouliot, 2008; Holmes, 2018, p. 248). Closer attention to events where trust is articulated, or when individuals think about it consciously, however, may suggest that 'this may be simply an indicator of far broader changes, for better or worse' (Möllering, 2013, p. 295). As Guido Möllering explains, 'We can only know if this is the case if we study processes of trusting instead of just the outcome of "trust" at a given point in time' (2013, p. 297). Lagerspetz's work on trust supports and aims for this richer and thicker study of the phenomenon of trust: 'it is important to think of trust not mainly as the result of some one-off decision by which the agent places herself in the power of someone else, but as one of the characteristic aspects of our usually unchallenged background activities, contacts and commitments' (2015, p. 89). Building on all this body of work on trust, the conceptualisation of trust presented in this chapter brings together both the conscious and the articulate, as well as the tacit and the inarticulate aspects of the process of trusting. It develops a practice-based framework to examine the process of trusting in nuclear arms control negotiations as continuously forming and reforming the mental attitudes that static studies of trust have measured so far.

2.2 Trust in the context of arms control negotiations

There is an irony that the two literatures on trust and negotiations 'share similar "DNA" – Deutsch's work on trust and cooperation' (1949; 1958) – although 'they have evolved in different directions and, surprisingly, they have evolved almost in isolation from each other' (Kong *et al.*, 2014; Kong *et al.*, 2017). In IR, in particular, the bargaining approach has been the dominant paradigm in international negotiations through the 1960s and 1970s. Nobel prize winner Thomas Schelling, whose game theory has provided the theoretical basis for interstate bargaining and negotiating strategy, contributed, together with Morton Halperin (1961) to the theoretical foundations of nuclear arms control. Schelling and Halperin's key argument that arms control arises out of the periodic intersection of the national interests of states has remained the dominant approach to the study of strategic arms control negotiations. Various IR scholars have made the case that 'arms control is an act of self-interest, that even the bitterest of antagonists might share an interest in avoiding war,' downplaying the role of diplomatic negotiations in shaping the terms of an arms control agreement between two or more actors (Miller, 1984, p. 71; see also Schelling and Halperin, 1961, p. 2; Bull, 1961; Doty, 1991, p. 33; Gray, 1992, p. 6).

According to Michael Williams, this approach to strategy 'which has grown up during the Cold War is deeply indebted to (perhaps quintessentially representative of) the neo-realist tradition of international relations theory' (1993, p. 103) discussed in the previous chapter. Barry Buzan and Lene Hansen consider strategy to be 'the specialist military-technical wing of the Realist approach to IR' (2009, p. 16). This mainstream approach to the national interest, however, does not concern itself with how common interests become binding, nor with how diplomatic negotiations can contribute to shaping these interests. In

the words of Patrick Morgan, 'We should be able to do better. It's not as if arms control hasn't been around for a long time or that we haven't had much experience with it – it has and we have' (2012, p. 16).

Richard Ned Lebow, for example, considers that Schelling's work 'illustrate the intellectual and policy dangers of ignoring politics, culture and morality in search of deductive, rational understanding' (2007, p. 255). Schelling actually sought to distance himself from the rationalist conceptions of game theory given his aversions to mathematical solutions (Ayson, 2004, p. 130). According to Robert Ayson, Schelling was heavily criticised in the 1960s 'for not using, or not properly using, game theory' (2004, p. 128). Schelling as a practising economist was probably expected to focus on material capabilities in his strategic analysis (Ayson, 2004). For instance, in his later influential book, *Arms and Influence*, a classic of IR literature, he observes that 'with enough military force a country may not need to bargain' (Schelling, 1966, p. 1). For Schelling, however, unless the material capabilities are significantly asymmetric, bargaining is necessary and includes a mixture of material and non-material factors (1966; see also Lebow, 1996, p. 556). He argued that:

> Diplomacy is bargaining; it seeks outcomes that, though not ideal for either party, are better for both than some of the alternatives. In diplomacy each somewhat controls what the other wants, and can get more by compromise, exchange, or collaboration than by taking things in his own hands and ignoring the other's wishes … Whether or not there is a basis for trust and goodwill, there must be some common interest, if only in the avoidance of mutual damage, and an awareness of the need to make the other party prefer an outcome acceptable to oneself (Schelling, 1966, p. 1).

Unfortunately, the sophistication behind Schelling's approach to rationality and arms control has mostly been reduced to the mathematical grid of the prisoner's dilemma in studies in the traditional literature on nuclear arms control. It is precisely because of his

awareness of the limits of rationality that Schelling, for purposes of bargaining, notes that that the focus should be on the 'psychological process by which particular things become identified with courage or appeasement or how particular things get included in or left out of a diplomatic package' (1966, pp. 93-94). Nevertheless, as Lebow argues, Schelling's writings fail to empirically account for the role of context in strategic bargaining (2007, p. 255). Lebow's discussion of Schelling's empirical applications of his theory shows the problem of disregarding the social construction of every element of context:

> The examples Schelling mobilises to illustrate his arguments demonstrate the absurdity of his quest. They make clear – although not to him and his disciples – that tactics, signals, noise and reference points only take on meaning in context, and that context is a function of the history, culture and the prior experience of actors with each other (2007, p. 255).

The assumptions Schelling makes about bargaining ultimately 'misrepresent the dynamics of the bargaining encounters he uses to justify his approach' (Lebow, 2007, p. 255). These insights help to put into question the notion that interests and material capabilities represent the core of bargaining. Nuclear arms control negotiations are intimately connected to the social practices of political actors and these should be recognised and understood in their cultural and strategic context. There are no systematic studies of nuclear arms control negotiations to inform and test the conventional theory although there is now more available data to analyse than ever before. I contend that the main reason we lack an understanding of the role of trust in arms control is because diplomatic bargaining is not the zero-sum game of mainstream IR strategic thinking but consists of building relationships which change the way each bargainer interprets information and assesses the costs and benefits of their actions. Such a shift in thinking about diplomatic bargaining is not necessarily easier to examine empirically but can capture the significance of trust. As Corneliu Bjola highlights, 'At the heart of the problem of theorising about processes of

relationship-building is a question about trust' (Bjola, 2012, p. 13). Bjola identifies a key challenge for the three mainstream approaches in IR theory – structural realism, neo-liberal institutionalism, and structural constructivism – with regard to the examination of the notion of trust. These theories, he points out, rest 'on a notion of trust as an end state rather than a process' (Bjola, 2012, p. 14). As indicated briefly in the previous section of this chapter and in Chapter 1, trust in IR has been examined as a relatively static phenomenon, rather than a continuous process that is always evolving and shaped by the social context. Bjola maintains that a diplomatic perspective is better suited to examine the process of relations-making given the 'rather elusive question about trust' (2012, p. 14).

I argue it is precisely the many facets of trust that make the study of this concept so fascinating and important for the study of relations-making in world politics and, in particular, the diplomatic negotiations of nuclear arms control treaties. The accounts reviewed in this section shed light on the challenge to escape traditional strategic thinking which has hindered the study of the process of trusting. What distinguishes this thesis from the existing accounts is that it presents a conceptualisation and operationalisation of trust as a process and it empirically explores this conceptualisation through three case studies of nuclear arms control negotiations.

2.3 Laying the ontological ground

The structure and make-up of the theoretical framework developed here is contingent on how trust is conceptualised. As suggested in the previous sections, a dynamic approach to capture the social process of trusting requires a processual and relational ontology. A processual or 'becoming' ontology is necessary to move away from conceptualising trust as

an end state. Also, although there seems to be a consensus that trust is a relational phenomenon (Garfinkel, 1963; Lewis and Weigert, 2012; Luhmann, 1979; Möllering, 2006; Frederiksen, 2014; Wheeler, 2018), it will be evident in the discussion below that some just loosely characterise trust as 'relational', while others expand on the ontological and epistemological assumptions of a relational notion of trust.

2.3.1 Models of trust: snapshots versus process

A number of models of trust have been developed outside the field of IR that offer important insights into the factors contributing to the development of dyadic trust. In various parts of the trust research community, both within and outside the field of IR, a process approach has been advocated but not very often operationalised explicitly (Möllering, 2013). Key contributions such as those by Blau (1964), Zand (1972), Luhmann (1979), Sabel (1993), and Nooteboom (1996) have contended that trust is a result as well as a condition of social interaction processes. Roy Lewicki and Barbara Bunker (1996) have viewed trust as an evolutionary process that changes the quality of trust over time as actors learn more about each other in their relationships. Andrew Ross and Jessica LaCroix's (1996) build on Lewicki and Bunker's work in their proposed model of trust in an attempt to integrate the previously considered models into a comprehensive framework. Reviewing the literature on trust, Ross and LaCroix point out that most models are 'firmly rooted in the state perspective of trust' (1996, p. 329), which consider trust to be 'a temporary state of mind that guides action with respect to a particular situation' (1996, p. 321). Ross and Lacroix's model (1996) differentiate between the antecedents (i.e. the factors or determinants) of trust, trust itself, and consequences of trust that, in turn, can become an antecedent of trust in further interactions.

While Lewicki and Bunker's evolutionary trust model (1996), Ross and LaCroix's integrated model, or Graham Dietz and Deanne Den Hartog's process view of trust (2006) seek to capture the temporal dimension of trust, their conception remains remain rather passive as they imply that trust develops between the trustor and the trustee when the basis for the following stage develops. As Child and Möllering highlight, 'Only when trust needs to be repaired do Lewicki and Bunker expect the trustors to actively "work on" trust' (2003, p. 71). They point out that, whereas the trustor can draw on 'given' contextual variables, more research is needed to examine 'whether the trustor can play a more (pro)active role in trust production, perhaps especially where the contextual foundations for trust are weak' (Child and Möllering, 2003, p. 71). This opens up the idea that both the trustor and the trustee are equally important in co-creating trust through a process of trusting (Kroeger, 2018, p. 11; see also Kong *et. al.*, 2017). The notion of reciprocity remains underexamined in the existing trust models.

The processual and temporal character of trust could be captured much better by speaking of the verb '*trusting*' instead of the noun 'trust' (Wright and Ehnert, 2010, p. 116; Möllering, 2013, p. 288). As Möllering explains, using the verb 'trusting' recognises 'that the "product" of trust is always unfinished and needs to be worked upon continuously' (2013, p. 288). This means that the object of study is not solely a measurable outcome (i.e. attitude or behaviour) but the ways and patterns which lead to these results (see Möllering, 2013). The recent work of Emanuel Adler on a 'social theory of cognitive evolution' highlights the importance of not taking the dichotomy between the 'being' and 'becoming' ontologies as fundamental and mutually exclusive (2019, p. 49). According to Yosef Lapid,

'despite their insistence on process and change, process philosophers in no way deny the reality of substances and nouns; they merely re-conceptualise them as temporarily stabilised moments in the implicate movement of flux and transformation' (2001, p. 19).

The *trust* snapshot in the *process of trusting* is a bit of a Schrödinger's cat, a classic paradox in quantum physics[15]: like the state of the cat which is undetermined until the box is open, trust is not for the most part a particular state of mind. Instead, it becomes 'visible', or 'collapses' in one mental state only 'in the face of a challenge' (Lagerspetz, 2015, p. 106). This means that we are not likely to *think about* the trust we harbour towards others except in a context which brings to the foreground the need to reflect upon the attribution of trust: 'I am no longer taking it as self-evident, but now I contrast it against your imaginable suspicion' (Lagerspetz, 2015, p. 104). Hence why I argue that trust is an instantiation of the diplomacy of trusting, i.e. a snapshot within a process of trusting. For instance, a US leader can talk about their trust in their Russian counterpart as a result of their advisers' questions who want to discuss certain risks concerning the trustful relationship. Lagerspetz's notion of a 'challenge' allows an interrogation of trust and language which is not antithetical to the 'unself-conscious' nature of trust. What becomes important to examine here is the context in which trust is raised as an issue and the meaning associated with trust: 'utterances about trust are not descriptive statements in the narrow sense, but they place facts into a reasoning context; and the context will change depending on who is speaking and what the current situation is' (Lagerspetz, 2015, p. 106). In the example above, the advisers' suspicion and

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[15] Erwin Schrödinger, an Austrian quantum physicist, is widely known for the "Schrödinger's Cat" thought experiment, sometimes described as a paradox, which involved placing a cat in a sealed box and giving it equal chances of being exposed to poison gas. Until the box is opened, an observer does not know whether the cat is dead or alive. Immediately upon looking at the cat, an observer would know if the cat was dead or alive, meaning that the idea that the cat could be in both states at the same time 'collapses' into either 'dead' or 'alive' (see Kramer, 2013). Schrödinger developed the paradox to illustrate the nature of wave particles.

questions reflect their own perspectives as opposed to that of their leader who might either choose to reassess their trustful relationship or engage in justifying their trust. According to Lagerspetz, this is 'not to say I must now also be suspicious; only that I understand that others may, for good or bad reasons, harbour suspicions that are alien to *me*' (2015, p. 104).

Lagerspetz's notion of 'challenge' sheds light on the importance of both time and context for examining trust as a psychological state. A longitudinal examination is better suited than a snapshot because the process of trusting, including 'the questions of how the individual has acquired those preferences and beliefs, and how she has come to see the choice in the particular way she does', requires 'attention to a background larger than the individual agent' (Lagerspetz, 2015, p. 89). John Gottman's analogy of 'sliding door' moments (2011) captures the process of trusting and the role of social practices in enabling or hindering trust-building:

> But how do you build trust? What I've found through research is that trust is built in very small moments, which I call "sliding door" moments, after the movie *Sliding Doors*. In any interaction, there is a possibility of connecting with your partner or turning away from your partner.
> Let me give you an example of that from my own relationship. One night, I really wanted to finish a mystery novel. I thought I knew who the killer was, but I was anxious to find out. At one point in the night, I put the novel on my bedside and walked into the bathroom.
> As I passed the mirror, I saw my wife's face in the reflection, and she looked sad, brushing her hair. There was a sliding door moment.
> I had a choice. I could sneak out of the bathroom and think, "I don't want to deal with her sadness tonight, I want to read my novel." But instead, because I'm a sensitive researcher of relationships, I decided to go into the bathroom. I took the brush from her hair and asked, "What's the matter, baby?" And she told me why she was sad.
> Now, at that moment, I was building trust; I was there for her. I was connecting with her rather than choosing to think only about what I wanted. These are the moments, we've discovered, that build trust.
> One such moment is not that important, but if you're always choosing to turn away, then trust erodes in a relationship—very gradually, very slowly.

Gottman's research focuses on marriages and families but his concepts are essential to understand the invisible practices that can lead to trust-building even in nuclear arms control negotiations. The 'sliding door' analogy for engagement and disengagement allows researchers to move beyond the mainstream view of vulnerability and betrayal that makes trust apparent only when it breaks down. This betrayal usually consists of something terrible such as cheating, lying, or deception and the possibility to experience this betrayal is related to how trust is normally conceptualised (Lagerspetz, 2015, p. 57; Wheeler, 2018, p. 2; see also Booth and Wheeler, 2008, p. 230; Wheeler, 2013, p. 3). For Wheeler (2018), for instance, betrayal is 'an action that breaches a promise a state leader has made to a counterpart' (p. 71). According to Brené Brown, a particular sort of betrayal, the one implied by Gottman's 'sliding doors', is more insidious and equally corrosive to trust – the betrayal of disengagement (2012, p. 51). This type of betrayal refers to not caring or letting the connection go, it is the turning away from rather than connecting with the partner. Clearly, Brown and Gottman are not talking about nuclear arms control theory here, but the notion of 'betrayal of disengagement' upends or at least unsettles the key assumption concerning the intended harm in an act of betrayal. The 'betrayal of disengagement' sheds light on an individual's inactions or silences that can hinder trust-building by missing a sliding-door moment that has the potential to transform a relationship.

2.3.2 Relationalism in the practice of diplomacy

Scholars of diplomatic studies have argued that IR as a field has 'ignored that diplomacy helps constitute world politics' (Adler-Nissen, 2015, p. 285; see also Sending *et al.*, 2015). Mainstream IR, predominantly the three American paradigmatic theories mentioned in section 2.2, seeks to develop theories that focus on factors at the systemic level that influence

the behaviour of the state. Individualistic rationality seems thus to be the ontological core of these mainstream theories (Qin, 2016).[16] Adler-Nissen, for instance, argues that the reason for the estrangement between scholars in diplomatic studies and those in mainstream IR theory lies in the meta-theoretical approaches the two sides subscribe to (2015). She contends that a relational approach, as opposed to the mainstream substantialism in IR, is better suited to capture the 'embodied but often unarticulated sense, that world politics is deeply relational' (2015, p. 286).

Yaqing Qin's attempt to build a 'relational theory of world politics' (2016) centres around the concept of 'relationality' and brings attention to traditions outside mainstream IR, such as Chinese thinking. For example, Xiaotong Fei, a late Chinese sociologist, argues that 'the Chinese view a social world as ripples in a lake, interconnected with one another and forming concentric circles' (2005, quoted in Qin, 2016, p. 36). Fei argues that this view differs from the Western approaches that conceptualise the social world 'like bundles of rice stalks in the fields, standing on their own and independent of one another' (Fei, 2015, quoted in Qin, 2016, p. 37). Anne-Marie Slaughter, a foreign-policy analyst and former policymaker in the US State Department between 2009 and 2011, advocates for the need to reconsider the IR tools and frameworks to capture the relationality that defines our interconnected world (2017). In her recent book, *The Chessboard and the Web: Strategies of Connection in a Networked World* (2017), she upends the traditional view of the world as a chessboard and offers a different image stemming also from the Chinese relational way of thinking: a world

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[16] Some constructivists and post-structuralists do not consider actors to be autonomous agents. Nevertheless, this section aims to criticise the three systemic theories which have significantly shaped the field of strategic studies and which take for granted the autonomy of actors. I will come back to constructivism in section 2.5.

made of networks and connections 'where games are played not through bargaining but by building connections and relationships' (Ikenberry, 2017, p. 154).

The influential and hawkish US former Secretary of State and National Security Adviser and also a veteran arms control negotiator, Henry Kissinger has broadened the chessboard metaphor by distinguishing between the game of chess played by Americans and the game of Weiqi – often known in the West by its Japanese name, Go – played by the Chinese (2011, pp. 23-25). Whereas chess 'is about total victory' and 'produces single-mindedness', Weiqi 'implies a concept of strategic encirclement' and 'generates strategic flexibility' (Kissinger, 2011, pp. 23-35). David Lai argues that 'This game bears striking resemblance to the Chinese way of war and diplomacy. Its concepts and tactics are living reflections of Chinese philosophy, strategic thinking, stratagems, and tactical interactions. This game, in turn, influences the way the Chinese think and act' (2004; see also, Lai and Hamby, 2002; Pan, 2016). The game analogy sheds light on Qin's relational theory of world politics that views relations as the key component in the social world:

> Actors are related to each other and also to the context, or the totality of their relational circles. It indicates a context-oriented society: Things, persons, and events coexist in the complex relational context, without which none of them would exist at all. There is no such a thing as a transcendental being or principle that is above this interrelated whole and decides for actors entangled in the relational context therein. Accordingly, there is no such a thing as an absolute rational mind that transcends the human relational complexity (2016, p. 36).

Several sociologists, in particular, Pierre Bourdieu, Erving Goffman, and Niklas Luhmann, contributed to the development of a relational sociology that relies on a processual ontology and has inspired the trust research in this area (see Frederiksen, 2014; Adler, 2019, pp. 56-63) and this chapter builds on their work. To characterise a social reality as relational, Bourdieu abandons the dualistic alternatives of structure or agency and system or actor and

approaches social phenomena as relations rather than substances: 'the real is relational', the theorist writes (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 3). However, as Morten Frederiksen argues, Bourdieu rarely 'practised relationalism in his empirical studies' (2014, p. 172). Drawing on Bourdieu's work, Frederiksen conceptualises the dynamic process of trusting as a social practice in which trust as disposition and trust as relationship merge (2014). While this approach to trust encourages researchers to seek integration of the disposition to trust, trust decisions, and trust development, which are currently separately spheres of research, the Bourdieusian framework has its limitations. As Adler points out, Bourdieu's conception of 'field' is insufficient to understand where practices come from (2019, p. 57). Bourdieu's approach implies that agents compete for symbolic and social positions in a clear, specified 'field' but does not produce a general theory of fields (Fligstein and McAdam, 2012; Schmitt, 2019, p. 5).

Luhmann's central work on the topic, *Trust and Power* (1979; revised translation 2017), can serve as a 'treasure trove' for trust research (Kroeger, 2018). Despite the accusation that, as a systems theorist, he did not value the individual and their agency, Luhmann emphasised 'how trust is conditioned by the social partners, situations, and circumstances' (2017, p. 37; see Kroeger, 2018). His account reveals that 'all individual trust is embedded into and conditioned by the social' (Kroeger, 2018, p. 10). By drawing attention to Luhmann's separate works on trust and power, Kroeger advocates for the study of the two concepts in conjunction to explore 'the conditions under which they impede or amplify one another' (2018, p. 12). Goffman's dramaturgical perspective to describe the social dynamics of self-presentation also expressed processual and relational ideas when discussing how 'impression management' in social interactions helps create, maintain, defend, and often

enhance our social identities (1959, p. 208). Goffman used the theatre as an analogy for social interaction, recognising that people played their roles and engaged in interaction theatrically.

As Adler-Nissen notes, Goffman 'consistently thought of social life from a diplomatic perspective, i.e. as centred on social skills and the ability to take commanding positions in encounters' (2012a, p. 8). His reflections on society and human interactions offer valuable insights into social dynamics in world politics. Goffman's unique perspective explores how social life involves, to a large degree, the individuals' performative acts, i.e. the ongoing performance they present in interaction with others (1959). Jens Beckert (2005), in line with Goffman's work, argues that 'performative acts' of the trustee which are apparent before the trustor's choice are a vital means of engendering the willingness to trust in the situation. This, of course, means that before a trustor trusts a trustee, the trustee is merely a *potential* trustee and his/her actions shape the *potential* trustor's willingness to trust. Applying Goffman's concept of dramaturgic action, Beckert contends that 'self-presentations not only have the function of producing the impression of trustworthiness, but they also offer a common definition of the situation that prejudices the trust-giver's action' (2005, p. 20). This means that both the trustor and the trustee participate in creating the 'willingness to trust' in the process of trusting and, as Möllering emphasises, 'the trustee plays a very important role in creating the trustor's fiction' (2006, p. 113).

Subsequent sections build on the processual and relational ontology and draw on insights from trust research outside the field of IR to help explain how diplomatic practices enable or hinder the process of trusting. The value of a practice-based approach to trust is

illustrated by discussing how a conceptualisation of practices as performances of varying competences (see Adler and Pouliot, 2011; Adler-Nissen and Pouliot, 2014) facilitates a more holistic understanding of the relationship between the disposition to trust, trustworthiness, and the willingness to trust.

2.4 The process of trusting

The concept of trust has been the focus of a considerable body of literature outside the field of International Relations. Trust is a complex, dynamic, and multifaceted phenomenon (Lewis and Weigert, 1985; Rousseau *et al*., 1998; Khodyakov, 2007; Möllering, 2013), as well as an elusive construct (Williamson, 1993; Kramer and Cook, 2004; Möllering *et al.*, 2004; Lyon *et al*., 2015; Lagerspetz, 2015; Welter and Alex, 2015). Or, as Martin Hollis put it, 'although trust is an obvious fact of life, it is an exasperating one. Like the flight of the bumblebee, it works in practice but not in theory' (1998, p. 1). As the previous sections have suggested so far, there is no single, coherent, and consistent meaning for the concept of trust, although certain similarities can be traced across definitions and uses. To comprehend how trust influences decision-making, it is necessary to gain an understanding of the process of trusting.

2.4.1 Vulnerability and trust

As a starting point, a conceptualisation of trust requires, in the words of Mayer *et al.*, 'a willingness of a party to be vulnerable' (1995, p. 712). Rousseau *et al*. offer a widely supported definition of trust as 'a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behaviour of another' (1998, p. 395; see also Möllering *et al.*, 2004, p. 560; Möllering, 2006, pp. 7-9; Colquitt *et*

al., 2007, p. 909; Lyon *et al.*, 2012, p. 2; Lewicki and Brinsfield, 2012, p. 31; Wheeler, 2018, p. 65). The trust researchers emphasise the importance of the subjective perception of vulnerability for trust. This thesis adopts Lai Si Tsui-Auch and Guido Möllering's definition of vulnerability: 'the perceived magnitude of the potential loss, mediated by the ability to cope, and not the expected likelihood that any harm will occur' (2010, p. 1019). This means that the same situation can be interpreted differently by different political leaders in terms of vulnerability.

It is worth interrogating the relationship between vulnerability and trust given the widespread agreement on the significance of this linkage. As early as the 1950s, Deutsch hinted at the role of vulnerability in his definition of trust:

> An individual may be said to have trust in the occurrence of an event if he expects its occurrence and his expectation leads to behaviour which he perceives to have greater negative motivational consequences if the expectation is not confirmed than positive motivational consequences if it is confirmed (1958, p. 266).

Another influential study, in 1986, came to a similar conclusion:

> Where one depends on another's good will, one is necessarily vulnerable to the limits of that good will. One leaves others an opportunity to harm one when one trusts … Trust then, on this first approximation, is accepted vulnerability to another's possible but not accepted ill will (or lack of good will) towards one (Baier, 1986, p. 235).

Rathbun, for example, argues that trust 'entails a combination of uncertainty and vulnerability' (2011, p. 349). Ruzicka and Wheeler, drawing on Annette Baier's definition, focus on acceptance of vulnerability to harm (2010, p. 72; see also Wheeler, 2013, p. 479). Möllering notes that 'the relevance of trust is due to the principal vulnerability and uncertainty of the trustor towards the trustee' (2006, p. 7; see also Luhmann, 1979; Bigley and Pearce, 1998; Lane, 1998; Rousseau *et al.*, 1998; Heimer, 2001). Essentially, without an

element of vulnerability, there is no need for trust (Bowen *et al.*, 2018, p. 86). The two concepts are thus connected in important ways, but the definitions so far do not articulate the significance of vulnerability for both the trustor and the trustee. The term is generally used only with regard to the trustor's experience, neglecting the role of the trustee in the development of trust. According to Stephan Rompf, 'From this perspective, vulnerability simply means that something must be "at stake" for the trustor' (2014, p. 38). That is, trust research tends to emphasise solely the vulnerability of the trustor in a dyadic relationship without really exploring whether a shared vulnerability for the trustor and the trustee might ever be an emergent attribute of the relationship.

Wheeler, drawing on Lagerspetz, points out the problems of equating vulnerability with risk in Baier's definition: 'Baier's conception of trust here operates in terms of a risk calculation where there is some risk of that trust being broken, but this risk has to be set against the benefits and opportunities of engaging in trusting behaviour' (2018, p. 58). Hardin's 'encapsulated interest' model (2002) shares some similarities with Baier's theory of trust as entrusting ('A entrusts B with valued thing C'); he repeatedly argues that a self-interested trustor always needs to consider whom he is supposed to trust and what the trustee is to be trusted with (see Möllering, 2006, p. 21). As Hardin clarifies, 'I trust you because your interest encapsulates mine, which is to say that you have an interest in fulfilling my trust' (2002, p. 3). These rationalist approaches to vulnerability and trust converge on the idea that trustors should only place their trust in trustees that they perceive to be trustworthy in the sense that the trustee 'has no incentives to act in a way that would make the trustor worse off than if he had not placed trust' (Möllering, 2006, p. 43; see also Lagerspetz, 2015, pp. 47-53; I will expand on trust and trustworthiness in section 2.4.2). Lagerspetz argues that

the relationship between trust and vulnerability is the opposite of what Baier suggests and emphasises the need to understand vulnerability in the context of a relationship (2015, p. 60). He sheds light on this explanation by giving the example of a relationship of friendship: 'Our "interest" in friendship – if that is a meaningful phrase – is one *created* by friendship. You understand the sadness of losing a friend once you *have* a friend. Such understanding of trust endows the notion of vulnerability with significance beyond mere risk assessment' (2015, p. 60).

I want to focus on two key points related to the importance of the *relationship* for vulnerability and trust that stem from the previous debate. First, conceptualising vulnerability as something that the trustor elicits towards the trustee implies a potential hierarchical relationship between the trustor and the trustee, which may indeed be the case sometimes, but it is not necessarily always applicable. As Bowen *et al.* emphasise, interdependence between the trustor and the trustee is a significant aspect of trust that often gets overlooked (2018, p. 86; see also Weber *et al.*, 2005, p. 76). Both individuals in a relationship shape how it unfolds over time: not just the trustor, but the trustee as well, shapes the relationship through their interaction (Kroeger, 2018, p. 11; see also Kong *et. al.*, 2017).

Emily Morrison and Mark Saunders' metaphorical 'dance' analogy (2019) seems to capture the subtle, almost imperceptible ways in which trust develops between two actors through their interactions. Examining the relationship between patients and doctors in their study, they highlight the significance of reciprocity for trust when they argue that 'within this dance, both patients and doctors can take the lead; by sharing the lead and responding to one another, they can strengthen or diminish trust and increase or decrease reciprocity'

(2019). The notion of reciprocity is thus key to understanding the impact of the relationship on trust and vulnerability. For instance, Isaeva's work, based on empirical cases, finds that 'The trustee's sharing of their vulnerabilities with the trustor implied that the trustee would be less likely to harm the trustor as they made themselves vulnerable, which in turn would decrease the trustor's vulnerability and facilitate trust development' (2018, p. 206).

Korsgaard, Brower and Lester's (2014) research on dyadic trust differentiates between three approaches – reciprocal trust, mutual trust, and asymmetric trust – which help construct a framework to examine how both the trustor's and the trustee's actions impact on dyadic trust. Considering the dyad, trust is not always reciprocated, meaning that the trustor and the trustee can experience asymmetric levels of perceived trust (Korsgaard *et al.*, 2014). Reciprocal trust is a process, 'whereby the trust one party has in the other, through its effects on trusting or cooperative behaviour, influences the other party's trust' (Korsgaard *et al.*, 2014, p. 50). Both mutual trust and asymmetric trust are emergent attributes of the dyad (Korsgaard *et al.*, 2014, p. 50). Whereas mutual trust implies some degree of convergence in the levels of trust, trust asymmetry 'allows that partners in a dyad may have substantively different levels of trust' (Korsgaard *et al.*, 2014, p. 61; see Tomlinson *et al.*, 2009). These distinctions are of particular importance to this thesis, as they open up the opportunity to consider the role context and time play in the emergence of either mutual trust or asymmetric trust. Korsgaard *et al.* (2014) acknowledge the missing gap in the literature on the process by which context leads to mutual or asymmetric trust. They emphasise in their work the need to examine the role power imbalances play in the emergence of trust asymmetry. Their approach, together with practice-based insights, allows for an examination of the role that

differences in the actors' performative power play in the emergence of mutual or asymmetric trust.

The second key point related to the significance of the relationship for vulnerability and trust concerns the way vulnerability has been conceptualised in IR. The starting point is that the IR's rationalism frames vulnerability as a problem that needs to be solved (Beattie and Schick, 2013; Cohn, 2014, p. 52) by recourse to a certain type of knowledge that depends on acquiring information, what Morgenthau called 'more facts' (1946, p. 215). The way vulnerability is conceived in nuclear security discourses and nuclear arms control theorising normally refers to the military vulnerability of the state, making human vulnerability invisible (Cohn, 2014). There are multiple reasons why this is the case (see Beattie and Schick, 2013; Cohn, 2014) but a key factor I would like to emphasise is the way vulnerability is commonly considered to be a weakness (Brown, 2012, p. 43; Cohn, 2014, p. 54; Lagerspetz, 2015, p. 65) that 'threatens the constructions of rationalist hegemonic masculinity that are built into the entire intellectual project' (Cohn, 2014, p. 54). As discussed in the previous chapter, vulnerability and trust expose an actor to charges of naïveté: 'they also tend to threaten the legitimacy and identity of the speaker who brings them up, because in speaking about them, one assumes the "feminine" (and thus devalued) position in the discourse' (Cohn, 2014, p. 54; see also Cohn, 1987; 1993). Baker and Wheeler, for instance, highlight this issue in the context of Obama's repeated statements in 2015 that trust played no part in reaching agreement with the Islamic Republic of Iran:

> It is an irony of trust that a concept so valued in interpersonal relations is seen by leaders – especially when dealing with adversaries – as being toxic to international relations. This is because they worry that appeals to trust will be seen as a naive and ineffectual basis on which to formulate national security policy (2015).

Feminist and critical security scholars have long emphasised the inherent relationality in the concept of vulnerability (Butler, 2004; 2009; Gilson, 2011; Kirby, 2006a+b; Cohn, 2014). Erinn Gilson regards vulnerability as 'not just a condition that limits us, but one that can *enable* us', as a 'condition of openness, openness to being affected and affecting in turn' (2011, p. 310). Like Gilson, Amanda Russell Beattie argues that 'being human is being relational' and writes about the 'ensuing vulnerable possibilities' which can engender both negative and positive human engagement that can offer opportunities for reflection and can facilitate the development of an individual (2013, p. 81). This notion of relational or shared vulnerability is better suited to understand the impact of reciprocity on the relationship between individuals.

Brown acknowledges the importance of reciprocity for vulnerability: 'Being vulnerable and open is mutual and an integral part of the trust-building process' (2012, p. 45). It is this shared vulnerability that can shed light on the differences between asymmetric and mutual trust by recognising that in trusting, both the trustor and the trustee can have a shared vulnerability that can engender or hinder the development of trust (both dependent on their actions), alongside their individual asymmetric vulnerabilities. It is this 'dance' of reciprocity, the fact that the trustee can become the trustor and vice-versa in a relationship, that can lead to mutual trust (see Figure 2.1).

For instance, I argue the practice of secrecy in diplomatic negotiations can lead to mutual trust by creating shared vulnerabilities.[17] As Bjola explains, secret diplomacy can

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[17] The practice of secret diplomacy is not necessarily a positive feature by default (see Bjola, 2014). As Bjola explains, secrecy in diplomacy covers a wide spectrum of positions ranging from the back-channel diplomacy,

prevent dangerous escalations or normalise adversarial relationships by 'insulating leaders against grandstanding and providing a conducive environment for constructive talk' and 'protecting the reputation of a government from political embarrassment or damage' (2014, p. 87). How actors manage the secrecy of diplomacy, which is characterised as 'the total isolation and exclusion of the media and the public from negotiations and related policy-making' (Gilboa, 1998, p. 213), can impact on the process of trusting. As Brown contends, 'experiencing vulnerability isn't a choice', the only choice we have is how we respond to it (2012, p. 45). Actors have two options: to engage with the other or disengage, both of which are transformational for the relationship (see Brown, 2012). I argue that a trustor's response to a potential trustee's action which makes the potential trustee vulnerable can create a shared vulnerability on which both of them can build mutual trust. The case of the secret agreement between President John F. Kennedy and Chairman Nikita Khrushchev is an example of secret diplomacy which created a shared vulnerability for the two leaders. The Cuban missile crisis of 1962 ended with a deal which involved President Kennedy agreeing to secretly remove the Jupiter intermediate-range ballistic missiles from Turkey, alongside a public pledge not to invade Cuba. In return, the Soviet Premier Khrushchev agreed to remove the missiles from Cuba (see Lebow, 2007, p. 272; Sachs, 2013). Lebow's discussion of the costs associated with the secret deal are indicative of how a shared vulnerability creates mutual trust (2007, p. 267). For Kennedy and Khrushchev, he notes, the deal needed to remain secret because its revelation would have had negative implications for relations with third parties:

> Kennedy agreed to issue a public pledge not to invade Cuba in return for withdrawal of the Soviet missiles. He was also willing to dismantle the American

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removed from public scrutiny which can occur in parallel to acknowledged or 'front-channel' negotiations (2014, p. 86) to clandestine diplomacy conducted by secret intelligence services which participants can deny they are engaging in (Scott, 2004, p. 330). This thesis will examine the effects of the practice of secret diplomacy for trust-building in each case study if the analysis indicates secrecy played an important role.

Jupiter missile that had deployed in Turkey, but he categorically rejected
Khrushchev's demand for a public missile swap because of its expected political
consequences. … Khrushchev, who had been pushing for a public missile swap,
insisted on a private letter from Kennedy acknowledging their understanding.
Kennedy refused and Khrushchev did not push, because he had come to realise
that secrecy was in his interest too. Cuban leader Fidel Castro was furious with
him for agreeing to withdraw the missiles and would have been apoplectic if he
had thought that Khrushchev had cut a deal beneficial to Soviet Union at Cuba's
expense (Lebow, 2007, p. 271).

The case shows how the vulnerability shared by the two leaders created the mutual
trust which informed their subsequent actions and thus diplomatic practices. This is an
example of what I mean by a diplomacy of trusting. According to Jeffrey Sachs, the secret
deal 'established a bond of mutual trust and common understanding' which facilitated the
completion of the first arms control agreement of the Cold War, the Limited Test Ban
Treaty of 1963 (2013). In my argument, it is not the secret deal *per se*, but how the actors
managed and reacted to this shared vulnerability through their practices that enabled the
emergence of mutual trust.

Figure 2.1 The relationship between asymmetric and mutual trust within the DoT
framework
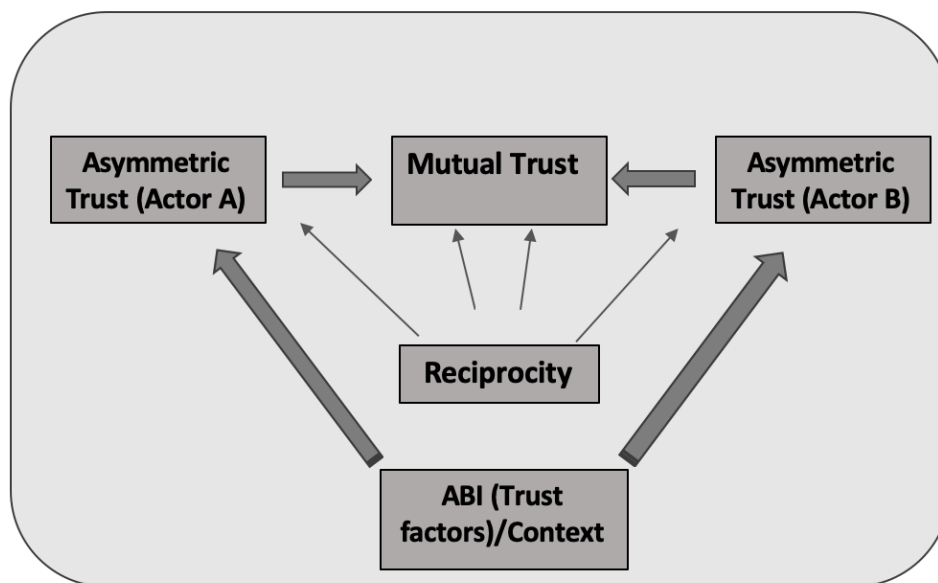
2.4.2 Trustworthiness and trust

The characteristics of a trustee, or the trustworthiness dimensions, represent the antecedents of trust (Mayer *et al*., 1995; Colquitt *et al*., 2007). According to Flores and Solomon (1998, p. 209), 'one trusts someone because she is trustworthy, and one's trustworthiness inspires trust'. Möllering emphasises the need to distinguish between the bases from which trust is reached (its antecedents) and the actions that result from trustful expectations (2006, p. 7). Mayer *et al*.'s model of trust formation (1995) is probably one of the most cited and most well-known (see Figure 2.2). Integrating much of the previous literature, they propose: 'Trust for a trustee will be a function of the trustee's perceived ability, benevolence, and integrity and of the trustor's propensity to trust' (Mayer *et al.*, 1995, p. 720). According to this trust model, the trustor's propensity together with the trustee's characteristic categorised as ABI (ability, benevolence, and integrity) determine trust: 'although [the trustworthiness dimensions] are not trust per se, these variables help build the foundation for the development of trust' (Mayer *et al.*, 1995, p. 717).

Proponents of different models debate, for instance, whether ability is part of the concept of trustworthiness, whether other additional indicators such as empathy, reciprocity, and predictability should be considered, and how all the indicators are related to each other (Möllering, 2006, p. 47). What the available trust models have in common is 'an image of the trustworthy actor as someone who is *able* and *willing* and *consistent* in not exploiting the trustor's vulnerability' (Mollering *et al*., 2004, quoted in Mollering, 2006, p. 48). Isaeva (2018), following a systematic review of the trustworthiness factors in intra-organisational relationships, has found that other factors (apart from ABI) can influence trust development. Drawing on interviews with participants from multinational consulting organisational

settings, she shows how important context is in understanding the factors that can influence trust (Isaeva, 2018). The role of context raises two issues for Mayer *et al.*'s model (1995). First, the model suggests that the perception of trustworthiness rests on available information, presenting 'a purely cognitive approach to trust, viewing it basically as the outcome of a rational inference process' (Rompf, 2014, p. 46). Second, the model focuses on unidirectional interpersonal trust, neglecting the role that both the trustor and the trustee, through their interactions and performances, play in the development of trust. As Rompf explains, 'The model is "dynamic" through feedback from the outcome (the response of the trustee) to the input factors of perceived trustworthiness, and therefore allows for repeated interaction. However, it is "static" in the sense that, in a given trust problem, there is no reference to communication or interactive processes through which the parties involved "define" their perspective to negotiate perceived trustworthiness' (2014, p. 46).

Figure 2.2 Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman's model of trust formation (1995)
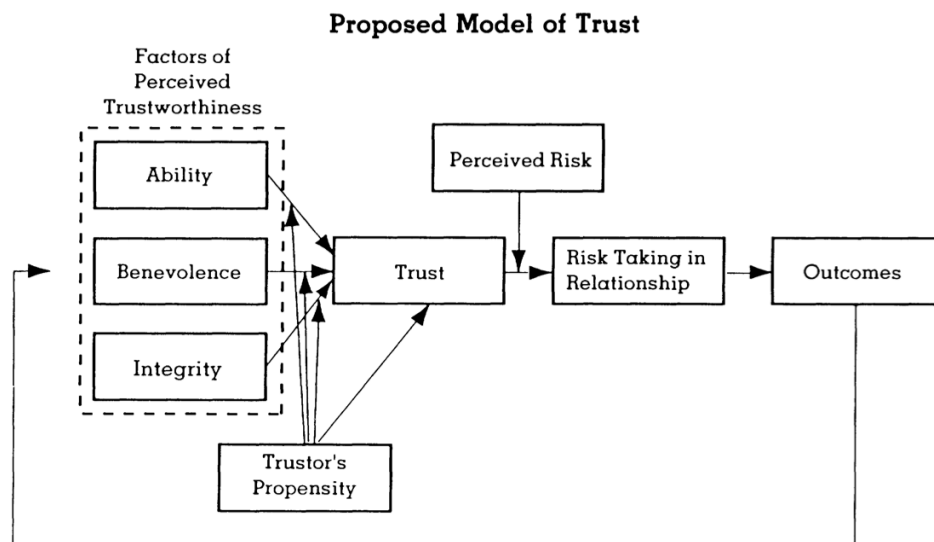
Theoretical work on trust has suggested that there are multiple forms of trust which characterise stages that are evolutionary, such that 'as relationships develop, deeper and

more complex levels of trust are attained' (Lewicki and Brinsfield, 2012, p. 35; see also Mayer *et al.*, 1995; Lewicki and Bunker, 1996). By recognising that the type of trust changes and evolves as two parties interact, five stages of trust have been identified: deterrence-based trust (DBT), calculus-based trust (CBT), knowledge-based trust (KBT), relational-based trust (RBT), and identification-based trust (IBT). In the business context, Shapiro *et al.* (1992) have introduced a distinction between three types of trust: deterrence-based trust, knowledge-based trust, and identification-based trust. Building on this model, Lewicki and Bunker (1995, 1996) proposed three bases of trust: calculus-based trust (CBT), knowledge-based trust (KBT), and identification-based trust (IBT). Dietz and Hartog (2006) 'universal dynamic sequence' of trust recognises the longitudinal and relational dimensions of trust and indicates how trusting relationships might develop over time (see also Dietz, 2011). Within this, various factors, such as the trustor's disposition to trust, the trustee's character, the nature of the relationship between the trustee and the trustor, and the contextual constraints shape the trusting belief. Such beliefs can lead to decisions to trust based on one's willingness to render oneself vulnerable, which then result in risk-taking acts which update the initial assessments allowing the cycle of the sequence to take place again (Dietz, 2011, p. 215; see Figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3 Dietz's depiction of the trust process (2011)
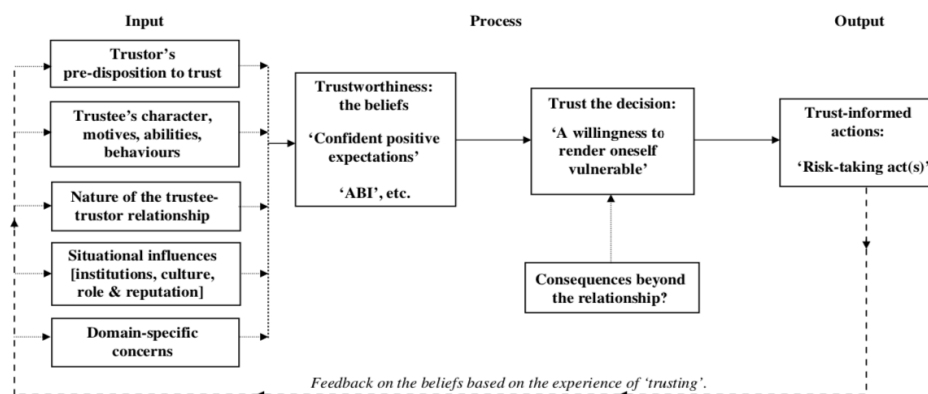
Two points need to be made here. First, the focus on pre-determined trustworthiness indicators is in line with a rationalist approach to trust which assumes that it is rather easy for a trustor to trust as long as they have the information available to assess the trustee's trustworthiness. Möllering warns researchers about over-reliance on indicators of trustworthiness: focusing on the 'trustworthiness' of an actor could actually render the 'act of trusting' superfluous if trust were to denote little or nothing more than a 'perception of trustworthiness' (2006, p. 48). Because trust is dynamic, perceptions of trustworthiness can also change through social practices. This is a key idea for diplomatic negotiations. As argued in the previous chapter, bargaining is not solely about clarifying views and intentions that are defined *ex ante* – perceptions also change through constant interaction, learning and adaption (see Checkel, 2005; Adler, 2019, p. 225). Indicators of trustworthiness might suggest what kind of information trustors use but, unless we reduce the process to a rational, mechanistic model, such indicators do not explain how the interactions between trustors and trustees lead to trust (Möllering, 2006, p. 48).

Second, whereas models of trust development have been used by researchers in rather prescriptive ways, I argue they are useful heuristic tools to capture the temporal dimension of trust. For instance, Lewicki and Bunker's model (1996) can be used as a lens to shed light on how 'the "frame" in which the actors consider trust changes as trust develops', so that issues faced at an early stage in the relationship should be different from those in an established relationship (Möllering, 2006, p. 89). This view seems to be supported by Luhmann: 'Once mutual trust has been safely established, it would be blatantly tactless – if not a quite disastrous lapse – if one of the participants wanted to return to the

learning stage and to use the cautious strategies which were sensible at that early juncture' (1979, pp. 44-45).

2.5 A practice-based approach to trusting

A common definition of practices is that they are 'socially meaningful patterns of action, which, in being performed more or less competently, simultaneously embody, act out, and possibly reify background knowledge and discourse in and on the material world' (Adler and Pouliot, 2011, p. 4). Bourdieu-inspired approaches to social practices, as Olivier Schmitt (2019) shows, dominate the study of diplomacy and the discussion on practice in IR (Pouliot and Mérand, 2012; Adler-Nissen, 2012b; Bueger and Gadinger, 2015). In order to better capture the role of agents and their dispositions using a practice approach, Adler's (2019) theory of world ordering, 'unlike the Bourdieu-based practice literature which considers the habitus/background knowledge as largely tacit' (Schmitt, 2019, p. 6), allows for a more agential perspective. Adler's 'cognitive evolution theory'[18] considers that 'practitioners reflect on their practices much more often than the Bourdieu-based literature concedes' (2019, p. 204).

Providing a summary of Adler's book is not within the remit of this chapter, but three analytic moves are noteworthy. The first analytic move the author makes is to substitute

[18] Under engagement with constructivist literatures in this section, one can point out that my framework reinforces the baseline of mainstream IR theories that I criticise in earlier sections for their focus on individualistic rationality. However, Adler's theory, while distinct from Wendt's (1999) social theory of international politics which clarifies the central claims of his structural constructivist approach, is more in line with Wendt's (2015) recent book, *Quantum Mind and Social Science*, based on a process-oriented ontology (see Adler, 2019, p. 39). In Adler's words, 'Wendt and I now agree that the social world is emergent and contingent, that thinking depends on social relations (Wendt, 2015, p. 254), that agency is always in a state of becoming (Wendt, 2015, p. 207), and that social reality is a set of processes and relationships that practices congeal into entities' (2019, p. 39). Adler adds that, while not subscribing to Wendt's (2015) social quantum theory, he agrees with his argument that 'agents and structures are both emergent effects of practices' (Wendt, 2015, p. 33, quoted in Adler, 2019, p. 39).

Bourdieu's concept of 'field' with 'communities of practice' serving as the vehicle of background knowledge that lead to new social orders (Adler, 2019, p. 25). Adler characterises a community of practice as a 'community of people that creates the social fabric of learning and a shared practice that embodies the knowledge the community develops, shares, and maintains' (2019, p. 20). Adler (2019) draws on Etienne Wenger's (1998) work on communities of practices (CoP). Wenger summarises a community of practice as 'groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly' (1998, p. 1). Three characteristics are crucial for CoP: 1) a shared domain of knowledge; 2) a community of people that interact and learn together; and 3) a shared practice which consists of 'the knowledge the community develops, shares, and maintains' (Wenger, 2002, p. 29). The concept of 'communities of practice' is consistent with Theodore Schatzki's (2002, 2005) 'site' ontology of practices according to which social life is entwined with a context (i.e. 'site') of which it is part. For Schatzki, social order refers to 'arrangements of practices' (2001, p. 43). Essentially, practices make the social order hang together. Practices are thus the context in which actors interact and engage in learning and negotiations over meaning (Adler, 2019, p. 29).

The learning that takes place is not necessarily intentional, it can be an incidental outcome of the shared practice (Wenger, 2002). As Adler explains, 'communities of practice organise differences, *rather than generate uniformity*' (2019, p. 20). Differences in the practitioners' performances contribute to this but it is the interactions between practitioners that give rise to CoP because one cannot reduce the properties of a CoP to those of their individual practitioners (Adler, 2019). In the context of nuclear arms control negotiations, this is important because, as a site of bilateral diplomacy, the negotiations bring together in

a 'community of practice' leaders and diplomats from different countries (in which they develop background knowledge about how to advance and defend the national interest). I am interested here in how actors (i.e. leaders, in particular, but also key policymakers) engage and negotiate their participation in a community of practice and how their social practices can lead to trust-building. Trust can emerge between actors through regular changes in their performances during their social interactions due to both their deontic and performative power.

This relates to the second analytic move – these communities of practice are not static, practices are in a continuous site of negotiation, enabling the 'selective retention over time of collective meanings of reality in practices, thus, also in a community of practice's background knowledge' (Adler, 2019, p. 168). Background knowledge is simultaneously embedded in 'practices and practitioners' subjective dispositions and expectations' (Adler, 2019, p. 166). In Adler's theory, practitioners are reflexive, meaning there is room for agency that can lead to a change in practices (2019, p. 204). The author does not contest that 'people do not think all the time on the rules that constitute their practices or whether they are performing practices competently' (2019, p. 204). Adler argues that people reflect on their practices when there is something that triggers their attention, 'primarily when challenged by the environment' (2019, p. 205). This is useful for the examination of the role trust plays for decision-making because it resonates with Lagerspetz's idea that trust becomes 'visible' in the face of a 'challenge' discussed in section 2.3 (2015, p. 106). From this perspective, such 'challenges' or 'triggers' place an individual's trust towards another into context, perhaps even implying some justification for trusting. However, although trusting incorporates knowledge or reasons, it cannot be reduced to this (Frederisken, 2014, p. 168).

Jones has stressed that trust is similar to a 'lens that changes how agents understand their situation and the reasons it affords' (2013, p. 15). This is an important point because it suggests an idea of trust and knowledge as being co-constitutive, 'trust guides our perception of the facts' (Lagerspetz, 2015, p. 83).

The 'leap of faith', or 'suspension', as Möllering argues, is the essence of trust which combines with reason, routine, and reflexivity (2006, p. 111). Suspension, conceived as 'the process that enables actors to deal with irreducible uncertainty and vulnerability' (Möllering, 2006, p. 110), gives trust its '*unique* explanatory power' (Möllering, 2006, p. 105). Suspension, as Luhmann explains, implies that trust does not rest on objective certainty: 'trust rests on illusion. In actuality, there is less information available than would be required to give assurance of success. The actor willingly surmounts to this deficit of information' (1979, p. 32). This fiction of trust requires both the trustor and the trustee to be created and sustained and it is produced 'through institutionalised practices' (Möllering, 2006, p. 112). Simmel (1950) notes that for the individual actor, trust is 'a hypothesis *certain enough* to serve as a basis for practical conduct' (p. 318, emphasis added). According to Möllering (2006), this implies that 'it is possible to arrive at the state of trust from an imperfect informational basis, if and when actors are able to make the leap from that basis' (p. 112). I differentiate between the leap of faith and suspension (following Wheeler, 2018) – whereas it is impossible to identity the leap (i.e. the moment when an actor suspends uncertainty), a process explanation sheds light on suspension by tracing changes in people's reasons and intentional acts, and their actions, thus in their background knowledge.

The third analytic move useful for this framework is Adler's view of practices as performative, 'where agents act out and interpret social texts and display "performative power" – the capacity to present a dramatic and credible performance on the world stage' (2019, p. 19). The consequence of making this move for the framework is to justify the focus on the practitioners – the leaders and diplomats involved in the negotiations – whose practices can be analysed as performances of varying competence. While Adler mentions particular practices such as arms control and acknowledges the importance of the practitioners' competent performances when they negotiate within their 'community of practice', he is silent on *how* they do so.

Borrowing from Raymond's (2019) work on procedural rules is a fruitful way to conceptualise how actors know how and when to use various means to engage in strategic behaviour such as bargaining. In Raymond's study, procedural rules, which can be either formalised, informal or unwritten, are 'the rules for changing the rules' (2019, p. 2). Knowing *how* to bargain, Raymond argues, is a function of additional procedural rules which can be examined as a particular set of social practices (2019, p. 18). These procedural practices are similar to skill 'for the simple reason that it is possible to say that two different actors have performed a set of procedures with varying degrees of skill' (2019, p. 20). Jorg Kustermans notes that 'in international negotiations, practical knowledge means that one exercises power by drawing up "crafty compromises", by "skillfully framing" events,' and 'by "making creative use of procedures"' (2016, p. 12). Nevertheless, acknowledging the role of skill does not deny that practices of arms control are rule-governed (Raymond, 2019, p. 20). Raymond gives the example of jazz improvisation as a form of creative practice to highlight the idea that the competent performance of practice leaves room for agency and

creativity, 'but this space is not infinite and is most effectively exploited with deep understanding of the form in question' (2019, p. 20). Essentially, Raymond explains, procedural rules:

> provide actors with an instruction manual, informing them how to legitimately make, interpret, and apply rules — and how to legitimately respond to others' attempts to do these same things. Indeed, among other functions, such procedural rules shape both the processes by which "fit" is socially constructed and the choices actors make about the tactics they employ (Raymond, 2019, p. 18).

It is possible to mobilise Raymond's concepts to study the process of trusting during nuclear arms control negotiations, especially in cases where access to actors' reflections are not easily available for research as in the case of Russia's policymakers. Raymond's (2019) approach to social practices aims to explain how political actors know which procedural rules to engage in a particular context. If people 'enact their background knowledge, which consists, among other things, of rules' (Adler, 2019, p. 210), procedural rules can be examined as a set of social practices (see Raymond, 2019).

During negotiations, actors are expected to reconcile their national interests with the specific constraints of nuclear negotiations governed by the nuclear arms control regime (i.e. procedural practices). An actor's performance produces an impression of trustworthiness and it is expected that, during the diplomatic practice of bargaining, actors' entangled performances can co-create trust. Whether it is asymmetric or mutual trust, this depends on whether actors attempt to align their procedural practices during the negotiations (see Frederiksen, 2014). In practice, this means that, while the two sides can agree about the need for arms control and thus the need to bargain, they might not share the same ideas about *how*

to achieve this. I argue that trust-building is contingent on the actors' entangled performances in the process of aligning their procedural practices.

The process of aligning procedural practices allows actors from different backgrounds (i.e. different countries) to bring together their material and ideational resources in the community of practice to negotiate a nuclear arms control agreement (see Adler, 2019, p. 225). This process is a source of 'creative variation' (Adler, 2019, p. 225) and, through their performances, actors' practices can generate trustworthiness, leading to trust. Going back to Raymond's example of multilateralism and unilateralism as procedural practices mentioned in Chapter 1, the author suggests that actors are more likely to reach agreement during negotiations if they either have a shared practice or shared ideas about the appropriate procedures to reach agreement (Raymond, p. 234). I argue that a shared practice or, at least, shared ideas about the appropriate procedural practices to reach agreement also make the development of trust more likely. Understanding the other side's concerns and motivations to negotiate in the process of aligning procedural practices can happen, as suggested earlier in the chapter, through exercising empathy.

Two points need to be highlighted. First, identification of procedural rules is critical to evaluating the chapter's claims about the contingency of trust resting on the actors' performances during the process of aligning shared practices – namely, that if actors present and evaluate proposals for bargaining in light of accepted procedural rules, this increases the likelihood of mutual trust. This does not mean that asymmetric trust cannot exist at the same time as mutual trust. Asymmetric trust refers to the levels of individual trust which differ in a dyadic relationship, whereas mutual trust is characterised, I argue, by a shared vulnerability

(see Figure 2.4). In time, asymmetric trust can thus lead to mutual trust through the process

of aligning procedural practices.

Figure 2.4 The Diplomacy of Trusting Framework

If the following indicators are apparent during the
bilateral nuclear arms control negotiations…   …this increases the likelihood
of…

An empathetic process of
aligning procedural practices

A shared vulnerability

MUTUAL TRUST

Different procedural practices
+ no reciprocal empathy

At least one party in the dyad
trusts the other

TRUST ASYMMETRY
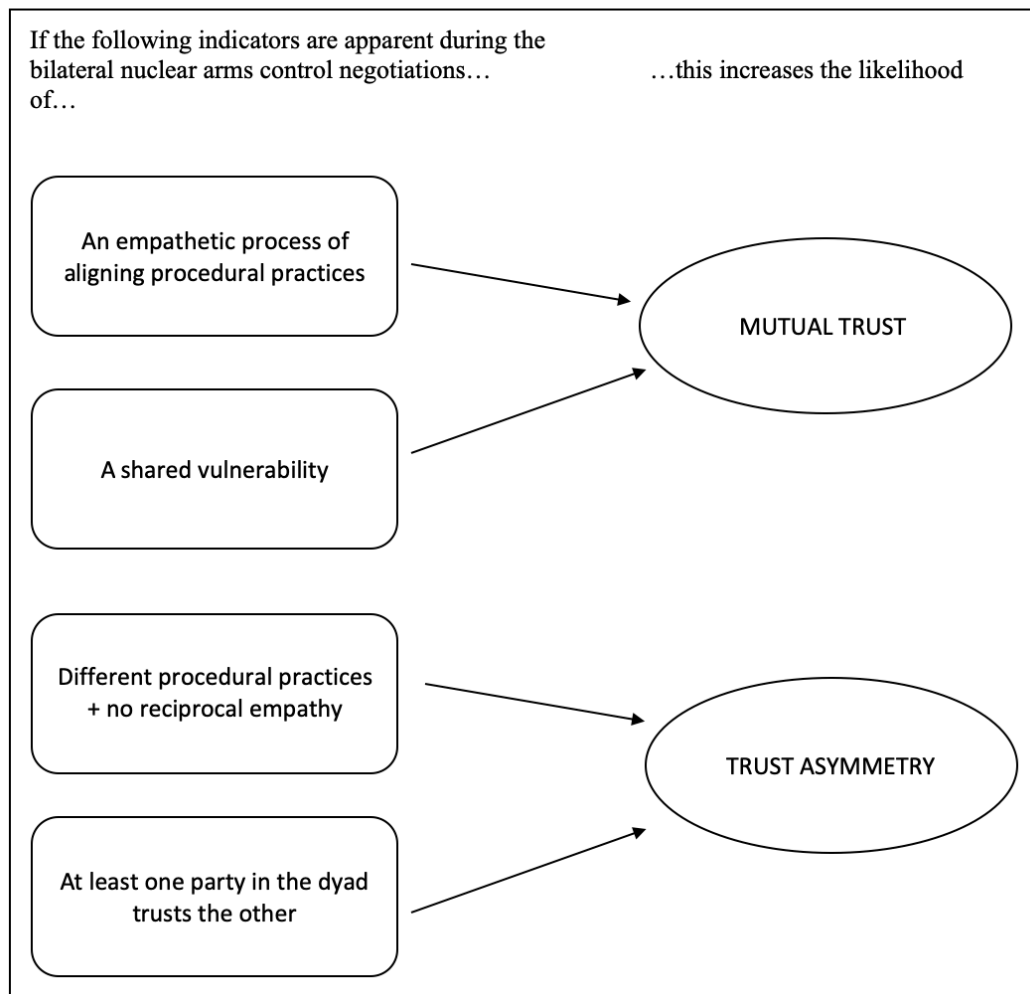
There is no deterministic relationship between shared vulnerability and mutual trust.

An actor can help create, through their actions, a possibility for a shared vulnerability, but it

is up to the other side whether they want to act on this vulnerability or not. By acting on the

shared vulnerability – for instance, a secret deal between them – the second actor facilitates

the co-creation of mutual trust. This mutual trust can continue to inform the actors' decision-

making and their diplomatic practices of bargaining throughout the negotiations or can erode as a result of the actors' practices (for example, the betrayal of disengagement). Mutual trust is expected to be more transformative for negotiations than asymmetric trust (see Korsgaard *et al.*, 2014).

Second, actors' competence at performing procedural practices is dependent on both their deontic and performative power (see Adler, 2019, pp. 228-229). As Adler explains, deontic power 'emerges from the construction of reality' (2019, p. 67). For example, status functions, the fact that Angela Merkel is Germany's chancellor or Donald Trump is the president of United States, carry 'deontic powers', which are 'rights, duties, obligations, entitlements etc.' (Adler, 2019, p. 67). Performative power emerges from an actor's ability to get their competence claims recognised by their counterparts (see Adler-Nissen and Pouliot, 2014, p. 895). The performative power of procedural practices cannot be evaluated in an objective manner which means it remains a matter of empirical analysis, as indicated in Chapter 1. As Adler-Nissen and Pouliot point out, 'It would be wrong, then, to claim that such and such actors are 'really' competent, while others are not' (2014, p. 895). I argue that opportunities and constraints for trust-building are, at least in large part, the product of actors' performances of procedural practices during negotiations. In essence, the argument is that proposals during negotiations are more likely to induce trustworthiness and lead to trust-building if they are pursued in a manner consistent with accepted procedural rules.

2.6 Practice tracing: the relevance of trust for decision-making

This thesis, as suggested in the previous sections, resists a conceptualisation of trust as a causal variable or constitutive component (see Markwica, 2018, pp. 116-119). A process

orientation differs significantly from causal and constitutive explanations, whereas causal explanations assume that an independent variable causes an effect, a process approach describes 'a relationship in which events exert influences over each other by becoming connected with each other while being continuously in motion' (Markwica, 2018, p. 119). According to this logic, cause and influence are intertwined and mutually defining (see Gergen, 2010; Markwica, 2018, p. 119; see also Adler, 2019, p. 208). By conceptualising the relationship between trust and decision-making in such terms, I view trust as a participant process which gives rise to changes in the process of choice behaviour. This thesis employs an interpretive variant of process tracing to examine the relationship between trust and decision-making.

Alexander George and Andrew Bennett's classic process tracing method seeks 'to identify the intervening causal process – the causal chain and causal mechanism – between an independent variable (or variables) and the outcome of the dependent variable' within a single case (2005, p. 206). The goal is to identify an 'uninterrupted causal path' from the alleged cause to the observed outcome to demonstrate that a relationship is causal and not spurious (George and Bennett, 2005, p. 218). This method has proved to be highly popular in the field of IR. Numerous authors have used it to explore qualitative small-N case studies. Interpretivist IR scholarship, however, has mostly avoided process tracing, in part because of different epistemological commitments (Markwica, 2018, p. 120). As Markwica points out, there are various commonalities between process tracers and interpretivists: 'they frequently share a scepticism of law-like statements, for example, and they often engage in the inductive exploration of in-depth case studies' (2018, p. 120; see Pouliot, 2015, pp. 258-259). Pouliot's notion of 'practice tracing' (2015) aims to bring together an interpretive

sensitivity to social contexts with a commitment to gaining cross-case insights. In a similar way to this practice approach, I assume that any account of the workings of trust requires close attention to social dynamics of meaning-making. Trust is both particular – as a locally embedded phenomenon – and general – as instances of broader patterns – to paraphrase Pouliot (2015, p. 258). The aim is 'to uncover as many snippets and snapshots as possible' (Markwica, 2018, p. 121) of the visibility of trust in 'challenges', on the one hand, and the construction of preferences, judgement, and choice selection on the other (see Markwica, 2018, p. 121).

I use this form of practice tracing to explore empirically whether and, if so, under what conditions trust shaped actors' decision-making during negotiations. To examine the process of aligning procedural practices, the identification of procedural rules relies heavily on what actors say about their understanding of applicable rules, as well as on examination of the actors' justification both for compliance and noncompliance (see Raymond, 2019, p. 41). Empathy, as discussed in the previous sections, is an important indicator for trust-building and I use it as a heuristic tool. In this context, empathy as background knowledge enables actors to understand the potential interests and motivations of their adversaries so that, through their procedural practices, they can attempt to make proposals which show willingness to engage with their adversaries' security concerns. Empathy is strongly interlinked with reciprocity so it can be seen as a base for building mutual trust.

To operationalise the DoT framework, the following steps will then be followed. As summarised in Figure 2.4, the case studies will examine two key indicators: 1) whether the two sides engage in a process of aligning their procedural practices by empathising with

each other's security interests, and 2) whether the actors' performances engender trustworthiness that can lead to either asymmetric or mutual trust. The presence of asymmetric trust does not exclude the possibility of reaching mutual trust. Asymmetric trust refers to the levels of individual trust which differ in a dyadic relationship, whereas mutual trust is characterised, I argue, by a shared vulnerability (see Figure 2.4) and it is more difficult to achieve. In time, asymmetric trust can thus lead to mutual trust through the process of aligning procedural practices.

Actors' key decisions will be examined to understand their motivations and the role of trust in decision-making. In doing so, I will search for trust 'challenges' as defined in this chapter as a starting point. I will identify the actor's reasoning and preferences at the time of the 'challenge'. I will then compare these reasons and preferences with those before interactions between the actors and trace the changes from one interaction to another. The analytic tools of 'sliding door' moments and 'betrayal of disengagement' will help capture the 'unself-conscious' moments of trust by making explicit actions that can facilitate or hinder trust-building. If mutual trust is identified, the leaders' decisions as a result of their acting on this trust are expected to bring more significant transformations to their relationship and, in particular, the transparency-security trade-off, than decisions influenced by asymmetric trust. If the analysis shows that actors do not engage in a process of aligning their procedural practices, I will examine if the actors display asymmetric trust and whether this trust shapes their negotiations in any way. Alternative explanations will also be identified at the beginning of each case study and examined throughout the chapters to evaluate the strength of the diplomacy of trusting arguments.

2.7 Conclusion

Scholars of nuclear arms control have refrained from examining systematically the role of trust because of the challenges of accounting for this intangible phenomenon. Drawing on various approaches to trust in social sciences, this chapter developed a qualitative method for tracing the process of trusting and identifying its influence on decision-making during nuclear arms control negotiations. The chapter started out by summarising the most important approaches to trust in IR, criticising mainstream IR theories for their core focus on individualistic rationality which fails to capture the relational and processual nature of trust. In response, I drew upon a variety of different literatures in order to present a conceptualisation of trust that was able to address these limitations and could be utilised by nuclear arms control theorists.

The core of the DoT framework outlined a practice-based approach, focused on the role of procedural practices and actors' performative power in enabling or hindering the process of trusting. Next, the chapter introduced the concepts of 'challenges', 'sliding door' moments, and 'the betrayal of disengagement' to help examine how trust manifests itself without actors noticing it. I then distinguished between asymmetric and mutual trust by introducing the concept of a 'shared vulnerability' to provide a more comprehensive view of dyadic trust and to acknowledge the role of the (potential) trustee/trust-taker in co-creating trust with the (potential) trustor/trust-giver. A relationship based on mutual trust is expected to bring more transformative (i.e. significant) changes to decision-making than asymmetric trust, especially in the context of the transparency-security trade-off. The last part of the chapter presented a variant of process tracing for social practices which will be used to examine empirically the role of trust throughout negotiations. The next three chapters will

employ this method to determine how well the framework developed in this chapter accounts for actors' decision-making in case studies on SALT II, The Moscow Treaty, and New START, respectively.

Chapter 3. Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT II), 1977-1979

3.1 Introduction

The completed Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT) II agreement was signed by President Jimmy Carter and General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev in Vienna on 18 June 1979. Many past accounts emphasise the lack of trust overshadowing the treaty negotiations and the sole importance of national interest in reaching agreement on verification (Gray, 1992; Caldwell, 1991; see also Lebovic, 2013 for a summary of these accounts). A careful reading of the declassified documents together with the retrospective accounts of some of the main players offers a better understanding of the complexities of US-Soviet relations which shaped the SALT II negotiations. In line with the DoT framework, actors' performances are examined to identify whether they engaged in a process of aligning their procedural practices and whether trust became possible during the negotiations.

The first part of the chapter provides the necessary background to reaching an agreement on SALT II, to underline the challenging context within which the negotiations between the two sides took place. The second part focuses on the actors' memoirs and recollections of the key moments which shaped the negotiations with regard to verification. Considering the lack of trust and grievances accumulated on both sides as a result of Carter's decision, as soon as he settled into office, to bypass all the earlier agreements painstakingly negotiated between Brezhnev and the Nixon and Ford administrations, the case is important but a difficult one for the DoT framework. The case remains important even though SALT II, with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan at the end of 1979 that destroyed the last remnants of détente, was never ratified. Both sides, however, regarded the limits it set important

enough to their own national security and the balance of power that they agreed to abide by the treaty's limits and did so for most of the 1980s.

3.2 Background

At 78 pages, the SALT II Treaty was long and complex by prior standards (Lebovic, 2013); it was composed of a Treaty that would remain in effect until the end of 1985; a Protocol (consisting of 4 articles) that would remain in effect until the end of 1981; 98 Agreed Statements and Common Understandings that applied to the Treaty and the Protocol; a Joint Statement of Principles and Basic Guidelines for the next round of negotiations (SALT III); a Memorandum of Understanding on an agreed database for various types of offensive strategic arms; and statements by Brezhnev and Carter related to the Soviet Backfire bomber (US Senate, 1979, p. 3). The second round of SALT negotiations commenced in late 1972. Unlike the first round which had concentrated on the limitation of the number of nuclear missiles in the two countries' arsenals, SALT II focused first on limiting, and then initiating reductions on the number of Multiple Independently Targeted Re-Entry Vehicles (MIRVs) (Office of the Historian, 2017; see also NTI, 2011). The negotiations of the treaty were also aimed at preventing the two countries from making qualitative improvements that would negatively impact on their strategic relationship (NTI, 2011).

At the November 1974 Vladivostok Summit, President Gerald Ford and Secretary General Brezhnev were able to reach agreement on the basic framework of a SALT II treaty. The ceiling for each side would have been 2,400 strategic nuclear delivery vehicles (ICBMs, SLBMs, and heavy bombers), 1,320 on the total number of MIRVed systems, and a ban on the construction of new land-based ICBM launchers (NTI, 2011). The Soviet Union also

agreed to leave out US nuclear weapons that were based in Europe from the negotiations in exchange for a US concession that the Russians alone were allowed heavy missiles (Talbott, 1980, pp. 279-280). Unresolved even after the Vladivostok agreements were two issues: whether to restrict the Soviet Backfire bomber which the US negotiators believed could reach their country but which the Russians din not want to include in the negotiations, and how to count cruise missiles (Lebovic, 2013, p. 90). Verification also divided the two sides, in particular the telemetry encryption – the exchange of data generated during missile flight tests – was a difficult issue (Dobrynin, 1994; Gelb, 1994; interview with Adamishin, 2015). The Carter administration was, in theory, left to conclude the SALT II negotiations. In January 1977, the newly elected President Carter took office determined to accomplish 'a breakthrough in the slow and indeterminate process of arms limitations' (Blight and Lang, 1994), seeking to move the negotiations toward meaningful cuts in both the US and Russian strategic arsenals.

Both Carter and Brezhnev were keen supporters of nuclear arms control. Carter expressed his goal to eliminate nuclear weapons in his Inaugural Address in 1977. In contrast to President Richard Nixon and his Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, Carter believed that arms control was so important that it should not be linked to other issues (Caldwell, 1991, p. 286). Brezhnev also wanted to come to a settlement with the United States as he hoped to place a ceiling on the growth of US forces and arms control was seen as the best option (Baglione, 1999). However, as negotiations indicate, reaching an agreement posed a serious challenge to both sides due to significant differences in political views between two countries that did 'not naturally trust one another' (Carter, 1995, p. 218). Verification, especially the difficulty of reaching consensus on the transparency-security trade-off, was a

significant part of the negotiations and the absence of trust between the two sides seemed to decrease the likelihood of reaching an arms control agreement. In the words of Cyrus Vance, Secretary of State under President Carter, 'Verification was a very important issue politically. That's something that everybody understands: whether the other side will be honest, or whether they're going to cheat, is very important' (1994, p. 88).

Key policymakers involved in the negotiation process from both the United States and the Soviet Union seemed to agree at the 'critical oral history' conference organised by James Blight and Janet Lang in 1994 that most of the final SALT II negotiating document was actually decided during the Carter administration (1994, pp. 79-80). The conference transcripts provide a rich description of the context in which the actors negotiated the final stages of the SALT II treaty. They also suggest the importance of the chief negotiators' performances in reaching consensus on verification amid, what they key players portrayed as a structural lack of trust between the two countries (see Blight and Lang, 1994). According to Ambassador Ralph Earle, chief of the SALT II delegation from 1978 until the June summit in 1979, the negotiations were significantly more intense during the presidency of Carter compared to previous administrations:

> In the Nixon and Ford administrations, we'd be over there [Geneva] for two months and then come home for two months. … In the Carter administration, as I like to say, we were there thirteen months a year. I mean, we just never, ever stopped. We got two weeks off for Christmas, that sort of thing (1991, p. 30).

The US and Soviet negotiators travelled between Helsinki and Vienna and, in 1972, settled in Geneva where their discussions continued until 1979. The two delegations were roughly similar in size, numbering up to 100 people, including advisers, interpreters, administrative staff, and Marine guards – 'the equivalent of a major embassy staff'

(Garthoff, 1977, p. 76). One important difference was that there was greater military and military-industrial representation in the Soviet delegation and no representation equivalent to that of the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) that formulated and implemented arms control and disarmament policies (Blight and Lang, 1994). These negotiations were 'the broadest, most extensive US-Soviet negotiations ever undertaken' and offered important insights into 'how, and how not, to negotiate with the Russians' (Garthoff, 1977, p. 76). Despite the significant large number of each delegation and the various working groups on different topics of interest, the important negotiations were always done at the highest level, between the chief negotiators of the treaty and, ultimately, between President Carter and Secretary of State Vance on the US side, and Secretary General Brezhnev and Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrei Gromyko on the Soviet side (see Blight and Lang, 1994, p. 44). Between 1977 and 1978, Paul Warnke, director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) was head of the SALT delegation in Geneva. Upon Warnke's resignation, Ralph Earle took over as US chief negotiator. The Soviet delegation, which in eight years had exhibited far fewer changes in personnel, was led by Ambassador Vladimir Semenov during the SALT I and II negotiations until 1978 when his deputy, Ambassador Victor Karpov, replaced him.

Verification was clearly considered to be a very challenging aspect in the debate over SALT II, and it therefore represented a key part of the negotiations (see Blight and Lang, 1994). The Treaty entitled both states 'to use their national technical means (NTM) of verification to ensure compliance' with the terms of the agreement and required them 'not to interfere with the NTM of the other side', as well as 'not to use deliberate concealment measures that could impede verification by NTM' (Article XV). Both countries could

encode telemetry to make sure that the information about a missile's performance was protected, although the Soviet use of encryption represented one of the most challenging aspects of the negotiations (Scribner *et al.*, 1985, p. 120). Telemetry included signals from the missile as to how the various components were working, to be examined by engineers at the launch facility. The Soviet negotiators maintained that their counterparts were seeking to obtain more intrusive intelligence on Soviet military facilities than it was required for the SALT II verification (in Blight and Lang, 1994). The American narrative, however, was that the Soviet high level of encryption would impede verification of compliance with the provisions of the Treaty (Scribner *et al.* 1985, p. 120). Unfortunately, the term 'impede' was not specifically defined because the Carter administration did not want to reveal sensitive information about the US methods for acquiring data that could undermine their national security (Scribner *et al.*, 1985, p. 121; Turner, 1994, p. 82). The US position in the SALT II negotiations leaned heavily on the Soviets to include a ban on telemetry encryption in the treaty.

The eventual agreement did explicitly include limitations on telemetric encryption, seen as a 'forensic triumph for the US side' (see Blight and Lang, 1994), but only in cases where such encryption would directly impede the ability to verify. Although such encryption would most likely be banned by provisions relating to non-interference with NTM (Lebovic, 2013, p. 98), it could be argued that the specific language did not really represent a concession on the Soviet side. However, given that it was regarded as one by arms control supporters in the Carter administration, it is important to understand how the two sides arrived at this decision.

Noteworthy for the analysis in this chapter is the fact that, although the detailed technical aspects of verification represented a significant aspect of the SALT II negotiations, the Soviet scientific community did not appear to have much influence on the practical matters of Soviet nuclear arms control (Dobrynin, 1994, p 6). According to Anatoly Dobrynin, former Soviet Ambassador to the United States, the scientific community did not play an important role in the technical negotiations of SALT II:

> I was involved in the negotiations through the Foreign Ministry; I was an ambassador. We had some really knowledgeable people working on the arms negotiations. They wrote their papers; they sent these papers to the Central Committee; but practically nobody read them … They [scientific community] knew nothing about our negotiating position, our preparations, or our delegation's instructions. … You couldn't show any telegrams to any of our scientific people. … Unfortunately, we didn't make good use of the intellectual potential that we had for the practical work of formulating our positions (1994, pp. 6-7).

This was problematic because, as Harold Brown, Secretary of Defence during the Carter administration, explained, the restricted access to essential information on the Soviet side hindered the flexibility of the Soviet negotiators during the meetings with their American counterparts: 'The Soviet side's intellectuals were not in a position, in general, even to know what the characteristics of the Soviet systems were. And, in fact, during SALT I it was unclear even how much Foreign Ministry officials knew about that' (1994, p. 7). This aspect of the negotiations is important for this case because, if technical knowledge was not something the Soviet negotiators had access to in order to inform their decision-making with regard to verification, then something else must have played a role in how they reached agreement on the transparency-security trade-off with their American counterparts.

3.3. 'Sliding door' moments during the negotiations

At the 1994 COH event, General Nikolai Detinov, Deputy to Defence Minister Dimitry Ustinov and SALT II representative of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), explained that the trust between the two sides developed during and with the help of the negotiations: 'It would be unfair to say now that we trusted each other completely. However, by the end of the negotiations, we got to know each other really well, and the level of trust rose' (1994, p. 94). While issues of trust were mentioned by most players at the 1994 COH conference, there is not much information on how this trust developed, nor on what role it played during the negotiations. What is essential to explore in this section is the leaders' and negotiators' practices during the negotiations to shed light on the extent to which and how trust developed between the two sides.

3.3.1 Carter and Brezhnev

Shortly after Carter took power, his relations with Brezhnev got worse almost as soon as Vance went to Moscow in March 1977 to discuss Carter's new proposal to move to deep cuts (Talbott, 1980). The proposal almost rejected all the previous negotiations between Brezhnev and the previous US administrations, 'for which the Soviet leader had paid a considerable domestic political cost with the military' (in Blight and Lang, 1994). Carter's deep cuts, unintentionally, came across as 'throwing away' past agreements with Brezhnev (in Blight and Lang, 1994). Building on the framework of the Vladivostok Accord agreed in November 1974, Carter developed a comprehensive proposal which Vance presented to the Soviets in March 1977 (Talbott, 1980). This proposal was a bold step aimed at more significant reductions and constraints than the terms agreed to at Vladivostok. Wisely, Vance, who was sceptical of the new proposal, insisted on having an alternative second

proposal similar to the framework negotiated at Vladivostok as a fallback (Talbott, 1980). Together with his new proposal, Carter's campaign in defence of human rights really angered Brezhnev, especially when he perceived that Soviet Union's rival, China, did not have to confront the same level of criticism (Blight and Lang, 1994).

From Carter's point of view, he was keen to reach an early agreement on his own terms, and he was convinced that more substantial reductions were necessary. Carter was hoping that Brezhnev would 'meet us halfway and negotiate in good faith' if he were sincere about wanting to make progress on disarmament (Carter, 2010, p. 35). Brezhnev, however, felt deeply disappointed by this significant change, 'He felt that all he had done at Vladivostok was being completely overturned' (Sukhodrev, 1994, p. 11). Carter's proposals were rejected by the Russian leader for being inconsistent with their prior negotiations of the Vladivostok Accord. For Brezhnev, this change reflected Carter's insincere intentions who 'was toppling the whole structure he [Brezhnev] had worked so hard to build' (Sukhodrev, 1994, p. 44). The Russian leader felt that he had made himself politically vulnerable by getting the Vladivostok Accord accepted by the Politburo (Talbott, 1980, p. 73; Dobrynin, 1994, p. 12; Tarasenko, 1994, p. 5). According to Georgy Kornienko, Gromyko's deputy, he warned Warnke that Carter 'shouldn't have disregarded the fact that Brezhnev had to spill political blood to get the Vladivostok accords' (quoted in Talbott, 1980, p. 73).

While a significant moment in the US-Russian relations, and a serious disappointment for Brezhnev, who felt he had, personally, worked hard in Vladivostok to reach an agreement with Ford, the incident only seems to highlight that relations between the two leaders were not on the path of reaching consensus regarding nuclear arms control.

In the words of Viktor Sukhodrev, aide to Brezhnev and Gromyko, the new proposal and the campaign on human rights were two issues 'regarded by both Brezhnev and Gromyko as a kind of personal affront. And that attitude – that emotional attitude – coloured the whole relationship, as it were, and the negotiations on all other issues. They could never obliterate them' (1994, p. 44). In line with the argument put forward in this thesis, the two leaders, from the very beginning, failed to empathise with each other's security concerns. Carter did not appreciate the context within which he was operating and, in doing so, missed a 'sliding door' moment to improve relations with his Russian counterpart. By rejecting the prior Vladivostok agreement between Brezhnev and Ford, Carter's action can also be seen as, what Gottman calls, a 'betrayal of disengagement' – an action which hinder the development of potential future trust-building.

Carter was convinced that personal diplomacy could contribute to improving the relations between the two countries, that it would be beneficial 'to sit down across the table from his counterpart and see whether or not he could communicate his own sincerity' (Pastor, 1994, p. 94; see also Talbott, 1980, p. 10). President Carter said various times that 'if only I could get my hands' on Brezhnev, it would surely do some good (Talbott, 1980, p. 10).

Brezhnev and Gromyko, however, were deeply suspicious of Carter's intentions and did not want to hold a summit until an agreement between the two sides had been reached (Talbott, 1980, p. 10; Dobrynin, 1994, p. 95). What is interesting about the face-to-face aspect of the story is that Brezhnev and his advisers did not think that the leader's precarious physical health would allow him to conduct his side of the conversation (Talbott, 1980, p.

10; Dobrynin, 1994, p. 95). What this seems to suggest rather than the fact that Brezhnev did not believe that personal diplomacy was important for clarifying positions is the actual strength and significance of face-to-face meetings and their role for trust-building. Brezhnev did not trust his own ability to have a successful meeting with Carter in which he would not come across as weak (Talbott, 1980). Eventually, this did happen at the Vienna summit in 1979 where, in the words of one of the summit planners: 'There's no point in stressing the personal relationship with a guy who is on his last legs. Better to pitch this thing so that we are looking forward, beyond Brezhnev, to binding agreements and institutionalised contact' (quoted in Talbott, 1980, p. 11).

The caveat in this case is that, compared to the other two empirical cases in the thesis, the leaders were not as involved in the negotiations as, for example, President Obama and President Medvedev were during the 2010 New START Treaty negotiations. This is not a limitation of the DoT framework. As discussed in the previous two chapters, actors can display two types of power – deontic and performative – and, sometimes, leaders can elicit both. In the case of SALT II, however, the chief negotiators displayed more performative power during the negotiations that enabled them to reach agreement by identifying small concessions that were possible. I argue that low levels of asymmetric trust that the negotiators developed were contingent on their entangled performances and, as a result, influenced how the verification issues were interpreted by both sides.

3.3.2 The performative power of the chief negotiators

Most key actors highlighted the importance of informal meetings for advancing the arms control negotiations. For instance, Earle noted that the only possibility to have a meaningful dialogue between delegations was in private meetings between chief negotiators:

> Now in the private meetings, which always took place after each plenary, where the chiefs of delegation would meet in a private room with just their interpreters, and especially as we approached the end, we had many, many more chiefs of delegation meetings, there we did have a discussion (1991, p. 26).

Earle suggested, however, that even some of the talks in the private meetings were limited due to the rigidity in negotiations on the Soviet side. For instance, Earle pointed out that:

> I would bring up a subject, and you could see Semenov leafing through his notes, and then he would read a response to me. Or he would want to talk about something, and then he would read to me. I mean, this is in a one-on-one meeting. He was very structured but there was some spontaneity, but maybe twenty percent of it was extemporaneous (1991, p. 27).

What helped the negotiations move forward, Earle claimed, was the good relationship he established with his counterpart, Karpov, who seemed to be more willing to engage with his counterpart:

> Karpov was a little freer, because Karpov was younger and Karpov's English was perfect, or nearly perfect, and we had a better...well, we were exactly the same age. Semenov was a lot older than I, and it bothered him a lot when I became chief negotiator, because I was younger. He tried to give me a very hard time initially (1991, p. 27).

Earle mentioned various times that Karpov was competent and they could have efficient negotiations in their private meetings. The relationship that developed between them and their ensuing performances to reach agreement on verification facilitated the low levels of asymmetric trust they developed. While informal meetings are part of almost all nuclear arms control negotiations, what makes this case interesting in the context of the DoT framework is the shared understanding of both chief negotiators that this practice of informal bargaining was particularly needed to reach agreement on verification.

Thomas Graham, who served as the legal adviser to the SALT II delegation, confirmed Karpov's competence saying that he was very witty and 'you could always count on him to deliver when he gave his commitment' (2012, p. 90). Giving the example of a concession the American delegation hoped to trade in exchange for a Soviet concession on one point of interest to the Carter administration, Graham recalled that Karpov agreed to the trade and made the concessions only to find out that the Americans did not (2012, p. 90). Graham noted that, while he felt strongly about the need to inform Karpov about his involuntary deception, he was strongly advised to refrain from communicating to the Soviet chief negotiator. When the American delegation failed to deliver, Victor Smolin, Karpov's deputy, accused Graham of deception (2012, p. 90). It is in these small moments, I argue, that 'sliding doors' are opened or closed by the chief negotiators, creating opportunities for trust-building. Karpov's gesture indicated a willingness to trust his counterpart, opening the door to mutual trust, opportunity that was, however, rejected by his American colleague during the negotiations. Karpov's willingness to continue the negotiations with his counterpart in good faith even after the American rejection emphasises the salience of actors' performances through small gestures in advancing negotiations to reach agreement.

Personal relationships and the actors' entangled performances are key in this case for explaining how they reach consensus on verification. As Leslie Gelb, Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs in the US delegation for SALT II, highlights, 'Neither of us trusted the other enough to make big leaps' (1994, p. 116). While big leaps of trust are not essential in this case to negotiate the verification provisions, small 'sliding door'

moments are key for understanding the micro-dynamics between negotiators that reach agreements on *how* to agree on verification for SALT II.

One main theme that was constant throughout the SALT II negotiations was that of the inherent structural lack of trust between the two countries. As Talbott describes it, 'each country felt it had good reason to question the long-range intentions of the other' (1980, p. 1). Given the strength of this theme for both sides, negotiators found it almost impossible to empathise with each other to reach agreement, in particular with regard to verification. According to Gelb, the fear that the other side was insincere about their intentions had already impacted negatively on the relations between the two delegations:

> A lot of the negotiations were just dancing around waiting for greater historical currents to lead us into more opportunistic agreements (1994, p. 117).

Essentially, as Shimko argues, the debates over these issues 'were partially rooted in the decision makers' perceptions of the existing strategic balance, beliefs about Soviet treaty behaviour, and their view of the Soviet approach to arms control in general' (1991, p. 176; see also Lebovic, 2013). The significant misunderstandings and misperceptions stemmed from strongly held beliefs about the nature of the other side. Both Russian and American negotiators agreed about this aspect of the negotiations at the 1994 COH conference (Gelb; Legvold; Vance; Zubok). Recalling the SALT II negotiations, Gelb mentioned the powerful influence of beliefs on misperceiving the other side's trustworthiness:

> All the conversations from here to eternity at that point would not have changed their minds. And many on your side would not have been persuaded by our good will (1994, p. 184).

What becomes then interesting is how the negotiators' performances managed to facilitate reaching an agreement by making concessions in spite of all these misperceptions. Verification aspects, for instance, were strongly associated in discussions with the idea that

the other side could not be trusted in regard to their intentions. The theme that run deeply through the Soviet narrative was that the American proposals were, at best, just propaganda, not really aiming to bridge the divide between the two countries (in Blight and Lang, 1994), and, at worst, seeking to undermine the Soviet national security by giving the Carter administration the possibility to collect information about the Soviet military forces (Blight and Lang, 1994). The main theme in the American narrative about verification was that the Soviets were always looking for opportunities to cheat. For critics of arms control, for instance, the Soviets had a strong intention to cheat 'when ambiguity – intentional or not – provided a cloak for deception' (Lebovic, 2013, p. 113). What helps explain how these actors succeed in reaching agreement on verification despite the structural lack of trust is their performances during their informal meetings with each other where they create opportunities for trust-building. Brown manages to capture this idea, and how more trust could have led to an earlier conclusion, in his explanation of how SALT II gets concluded:

> I would note that we did get a SALT to agreement which, though it was never ratified, was observed; but I think, we would have gotten to that earlier, and some of the details probably would have been overlooked or overridden by political decision, because there would have been more trust on the US side (1994, p. 175).

3.4 Conclusion

Considering the lack of trust between Carter and Brezhnev, what made an agreement on verification provisions possible was the chief negotiators' shared practices of informal bargaining facilitated by 'sliding door' moments. These moments helped to create impressions of trustworthiness that led to a level of asymmetric trust between negotiators that was sufficient to enable agreement on verification. The DoT framework was not used to shed light on the entire case, but the analytic tools of 'sliding door' moments and 'betrayal of disengagement' captured some of the key aspects that traditional bargaining theory cannot

explain, showing that the presence of trust is a necessary factor in explaining how agreement on verification was reached in the process of negotiations. In addition, this chapter has shown that performative power can play a more important role for trust-building than deontic power. In other words, the performances of the two chief negotiators rather than those of the political leaders were essential for negotiating the verification provisions in this case.

Chapter 4. The Moscow Treaty, 2001-2002

4.1 Introduction

George W. Bush promised during his US presidential campaign to proceed with the deployment of national missile defences and the missile defence testing that this would imply – a top priority that would require the withdrawal of the United States from the 1972 Antiballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty (Kimball, 2001; Cirincione, 2001; Rhinelander, 2001; Rusten, 2010; Stent, 2014b, p. 72). Despite Bush's opposition to formal treaties, on 24 May 2002, the two presidents signed the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (the Moscow Treaty, also known as SORT). Existing accounts of the Moscow Treaty negotiations have highlighted the importance of the US State Department and Senate's opposition to informal arms control and, in particular, the relationship between Bush and Putin as key factors in the signing of the Moscow Treaty (Sanger, 2001; Baker, 2013; Lebovic, 2013, p. 209; Williams, 2017a; Roberts, 2016, p. 24). A careful reading of the available sources, however, suggests that domestic pressure only reinforced Bush's prior decision to pursue and sign a formal agreement with his Russian counterpart. Moreover, if the Moscow Treaty was indeed the result of bargaining between the two sides, the existing literature has not interrogated the extent to which and how the trust both developed between the two presidents and influenced the format of the treaty. The present chapter explores whether the legal format of the Moscow Treaty was shaped by the two leaders' exercise of a diplomacy of trusting.

The chapter starts with an examination of the Bush administration's pledge to withdraw the United States from the ABM Treaty and the ensuing actions before and after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. This precedes the period of US–Russian Moscow Treaty formal

negotiations that started in January 2002 but deserves attention. This period set the stage for the SORT negotiations. Moreover, the negotiations between the United States and Russia concerning withdrawal from the ABM Treaty provided the affective and normative context of Putin's insistence on a 'legally binding document' concerning strategic arms reductions with the United States and shaped Bush's attitude with regard to a treaty with Putin. In the second part, focusing on the relationship between the two leaders, I examine the formal negotiations of the Moscow Treaty to reveal the struggles for social competence generated in the practices of bargaining. The last part examines the leaders' decision-making and expectations with regards to the outcome of the Moscow Treaty negotiations. The chapter argues that Putin's more procedurally competent performances and interpretations created a strong impression of trustworthiness that facilitated Bush's trust, but this was asymmetric trust. In turn, Bush's trust shaped his decision-making with regard to the format of the treaty.

4.2 Background: ABM withdrawal

'If you speak about the arms race, it started when the US withdrew from the ABM Treaty'
(Russian President Vladimir Putin, 2018)

The 1972 ABM Treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union (and later Russia) was signed to restrict the number of ground-based anti-ballistic missile systems and sites that each country could have (NTI, 2011). The ABM Treaty and SALT I Treaty were negotiated and signed concurrently and, together, the two treaties were at the root of a system of international accords on arms control that followed in the next decades (Rusten, 2010, p. 1; NTI, 2011). Both superpowers, as well as the international community, considered the treaty a 'cornerstone of strategic stability' because it represented the foundation on which

later US-Russian agreements limiting and reducing deployed strategic nuclear arsenals were developed (Ivanov, 2002, p. 72; Boese, 2002; Kuchins, 2002; Rusten, 2010, p. 1; NTI, 2011).

Missile defence had been a contentious issue throughout both the Cold War and the post-Cold War periods. Concerns about a missile threat were galvanised by the warnings in 1998 of a pending missile ballistic threat in the report from the *Commission to assess the Ballistic Missile Threat to the United States* (better known as the Rumsfeld report, named after the commission's chairman, Donald Rumsfeld, who would become secretary of defence in the Bush administration) (Lebovic, 2013, p. 206). Candidate Bush and his advisers had argued throughout the presidential campaign that a missile defence system was imperative to counter nuclear threats from rogue states (the 'Axis of Evil' described by Bush in his January 2002 State of the Union address) and nonstate actors that might seek to obtain nuclear weapons (Stent, 2014b, p. 73). In a speech at the Reagan Library in California, although he highlighted that Russia was a great power, Bush argued for a new relationship without formal arms control between the two countries, indicating his commitment to missile defence systems (Bush, 1999). Writing during the 2000 presidential campaign, Condoleezza Rice, Bush's National Security Adviser (NSA) during his first term and his most trusted adviser (Rice, 2011, p. 62), argued, 'We will always have interests that conflict' because Russia is a great power but also that 'Russia is no longer our enemy' (Rice, 2000, p. 46; see also Roberts, 2016, p. 110). For Bush officials, the ABM Treaty was a 'Cold War relic' that preserved mutual assured destruction policies and prevented Bush from acting on his campaign pledge to protect the country against emerging threats (Lebovic, 2013, p. 206). The 1972 Treaty was thus seen as an unnecessary obstacle to the United States deploying missile defence installations to counter potential missiles attacks from Iran and North Korea

and Bush was adamant that he wanted to be free of the treaty's constraints (Bolton, 2007, p. 54; Stent, 2014b, p. 72). In the words of John Rhinelander, a legal adviser to the ABM Treaty and SALT I delegation, 'the stage was set for withdrawal when Bush campaigned in favour of effective missile defence and getting rid of the treaty' (2001).

The process to withdraw from the ABM Treaty reportedly began three weeks after President Bush took office in 2001 when he issued a National Security Directive that described the conceptual framework the administration would operate within the context of deterrence and strategic offensive and defensive forces, stipulating the intention to modify or withdraw from the ABM Treaty (Myers, 2001; Rusten, 2010, p. 2). Separately, Franklin Miller, the NSC Senior Director for Defence Policy and Arms Control, oversaw the Pentagon review of the US nuclear posture to identify the extent to which a reduction in its strategic nuclear forces would be possible (Rusten, 2010, p. 3). A *New York Times* report, quoting an administration backgrounder, emphasised the fate of the ABM Treaty:

> By issuing the directive, the official said, Mr. Bush will not declare his intention to withdraw from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, which the United States and Soviet Union signed in 1972 to prohibit national missile defences. The review, however, appears intended to lay the foundation for a decision to do so in parallel with nuclear cutbacks (Myers, 2001).

After the strategic decision to deploy missile defences was made at the top level, there was no uncertainty regarding the future of the ABM, it was just a matter of when and in what context the United States would abandon the treaty.

The State Department, in particular Secretary Colin Powell, was concerned that the withdrawing from the treaty would 'put unnecessary strain' on the United States' relations with Russia (Cheney, 2011, p. 325). Powell supported a gradual approach to withdrawal and a process of diplomatic consultation with the Russian government (Bolton, 2007, p. 56;

Rusten, 2010, p. 2). He was convinced that the United States would still be able to conduct substantial research and testing activities within the framework of the ABM Treaty and thus, it was not urgent to withdraw from the treaty given that missile defence had not been made viable (Bolton, 2007, p. 56; Rusten, 2010, p. 2). John Bolton, Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, recalls in his memoirs that Powell's approach was that '[The Department of] Defence had not progressed far enough operationally on missile defence for us to tank the ABM Treaty now' (2007, p. 57). A veteran of the Ronald Reagan administration and a splenetic opponent of agreements on arms control, 'Bolton would become a key interlocutor with the Russians for Bush' (Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 125; Borger, 2018).

Secretary Powell's views surfaced at a time when the United States was under serious criticism both at home and abroad for the pronounced post-Cold War unilateralism and becoming too dismissive of multilateral cooperation (Lebovic, 2013, p. 205). Various early administration actions – such as the intention to withdraw from the ABM Treaty, the abandonment of the Kyoto Protocol on climate change, and the harder line towards North Korea – signalled the United States' new way of doing business (Murphy and Purdum, 2008; Borger, 2018). For instance, after Bush's victory, the diplomats involved in negotiating a peace deal with North Korea were hopeful that an agreement was still possible when Secretary Powell told reporters that the United States sought to 'engage with North Korea to pick up where President Clinton and his administration left off' (Borger, 2018). On 8 March 2001, only a couple of days later, however, Powell's statements seemed more in line with the US administration's approach to international cooperation, including that 'North Korea was a threat' and 'we have to not be naïve about the nature of this threat, but at the same

time realise that changes are taking place' (Sanger, 2001; Borger, 2018). The hawkish Bush advisers, in particular Vice-President Dick Cheney, Defence Secretary Rumsfeld, Under-Secretary Bolton, and NSC staffer Robert Joseph, who shared an antipathy to talks, appeared to have managed to influence Bush's decision-making on issues pertaining to international cooperation (Baker and Glasser, 2005, pp. 124-125; Borger, 2018). At this stage, Bush's actions can be interpreted as what Brown calls 'the betrayal of disengagement' (2012). Rather than creating opportunities for engagement with Putin and Russian security concerns, the Bush administration was determined to withdraw from key international agreements.

The Bush administration took office highlighting from the beginning that the United States would move away from formal arms control, arguing for a 'clean break from the past, and especially from the adversarial legacy of the Cold War' (Bush, 2001). In reaction to this significant shift in the US approach to arms control, Russia's President Vladimir Putin was strongly motivated to maintain an arms control framework with the United States (Sanger, 2002; Lebovic, 2013, p. 209; Roberts, 2016, p. 23). The Russian Government entered negotiations with the Bush administration seeking a legally binding document that would include limits and rules similar to those incorporated in the START Treaties (Woolf, 2011). Putin managed to persuade Bush to sign a legally binding treaty, although the US president rejected 'any limits and counting rules' that would necessitate 'the elimination of delivery vehicles and warheads removed from service' (Woolf, 2011). Essentially, the SORT treaty had the legal format of what the United States had already planned to do unilaterally (Lebovic, 2013, p. 208; Stent, 2014b, p. 74).

The Bush administration was keen to depart from thirty years of US support for multilateral and bilateral arms control and non-proliferation measures (Kimball, 2001). The US intention to withdraw from the ABM Treaty and unilaterally reduce its strategic forces at its own pace, without signing an agreement with Russia, was seen as a departure from the international framework of cooperation in this area. (Cirincione, 2001; Lebovic, 2013, p. 207). US allies regarded the US intention to withdraw from a landmark arms control treaty as a threat to that established framework (Cirincione, 2001). Bolton explains in his memoirs that the Bush administration thinking 'ran squarely contrary to existing arms control theology, which had been painstakingly developed during the Cold War' (2007, p. 55). Bolton mocks what he calls the 'Church of Arms Control' (2000), the arms control crowd who 'believed that scrapping the ABM Treaty was heresy, a desecration of their sacred scrolls' (2007, p. 55). He adds that 'Breaking out of this formulaic approach was necessary because it was both flawed in theory and no longer reflected strategic reality, if it ever had' (2007, p. 55). The Bush administration's actions concerning the move towards a new strategic framework with Russia can thus be interpreted as a contestation of the accepted social practices of nuclear arms control bargaining.

This form of contestation resembles Adler-Nissen and Pouliot's notion of 'thick contestation', which 'not only regards the competence of another member, but also involves questioning the definition of competence altogether' (2014, p. 895). Understanding practices as performances of varying competence, Adler-Nissen and Pouliot (2014) contend that 'power in practice emerges out of micro-struggles over specific resources' – social skills and competence – generated in certain social practices. This is not to say that material factors or discursive negotiation do not impact on outcomes, but power should also be studied 'from

the perspective of everyday social relations, including the ways in which various resources are put to task' (Adler-Nissen and Pouliot, 2014, p. 909). The following sections zoom in on the distinct procedural practices of the two leaders during the negotiations.

Disagreement over the appropriate procedural practices of bargaining compromises trust-building. This observation has particularly serious implications given the Bush administration's apparent rejection of formal arms control and perhaps even of multilateralism and international organisations more generally. While complete agreement between parties on the content and interpretation of any complex rules and practices is highly unlikely (Raymond, 2019, p. 162), the Moscow Treaty case study is interesting because, despite deep disagreement about the procedural practices of bargaining, both sides continued to engage the other side according to their respective understandings of how agreement on a treaty could be reached. The most important question here is not what led Bush to attempt to change the accepted practices of bargaining, but how far Putin, his interlocutor in the bargaining process, accepted or rejected the proposed new practices, and how this impacted on their negotiations of a new nuclear arms control treaty.

The Bush administration was strongly criticised by many Democrats, Russia, China, and several key European allies for its determination to withdraw from the 1972 treaty so it could pursue the missile defence programme (King, 2002; Rusten, 2010, p. 4). According to Kimball, withdrawal from the ABM Treaty was a series of steps that reflected 'the Bush administration's policy of unilateralist nonengagement with US allies, partners, and erstwhile adversaries' (2001). Cirincione believes that the United States was pursuing what he calls 'unilateral multilateralism' explained as 'Washington wants international

cooperation on its terms' (2001). Despite these criticisms of Bush's diplomatic performance, the United States withdrew from the ABM Treaty in June 2002. In other words, the fact that the United States sought to change 'the rules of the game', without providing an alternative accepted by both domestic and international audiences did not impact on Bush's decision to terminate the ABM Treaty. This context is important because Putin's success in 2002 was that he managed to persuade Bush to sign the Moscow Treaty in spite of Bush's initial opposition to a formal treaty. I argue that Putin's performance through the negotiations between the two leaders conveyed an image of his trustworthiness to Bush that led to a relationship of asymmetric trust between them in so far as Bush was not successful in conveying an image of his trustworthiness to Putin. Bush's trust in Putin led him to accept what he had previously rejected, namely, a legally binding treaty with Russia.

Although the Bush administration initiated the formal US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, the tensions between Russia and the United States over missile defence began during the previous Clinton administration. A draft resolution was presented by Russia to the First Committee of the UN General Assembly on Disarmament and International Security in November 1999 and the approved final text 'called on Russia and the United States to make new efforts to maintain and strengthen the ABM Treaty by completely and strictly complying with it' (DiFilippo, 2006, p. 26). When discussing the draft resolution, the Russian representative argued that by weakening the ABM Treaty, the entire system of international arms control treaties would collapse: 'It would be a delusion to consider the problem of preservation and strict compliance with the ABM Treaty as a purely bilateral affair' (Antonov, 1999). Following a heated debate between the two representatives of Russia and the United States, 80 countries voted in favour of the resolution, including

Russia, China, France, India and Pakistan (DiFilippo, 2006, p. 26). In April 2000, at the Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in New York, Russia took a harsh stance against any American efforts to alter the 1972 treaty and solicited international support (Crossette, 2000). Russian Foreign Minister (FM) Igor Ivanov stressed that Russia was willing to reduce the number of its nuclear warheads as long as the ABM Treaty, a cornerstone of nuclear arms control agreements, would remain in force, noting that 'compliance with the ABM treaty in its present form without any modifications is a prerequisite for further negotiations on nuclear disarmament' (quoted in Crossette, 2000). Ivanov also reiterated the importance of maintaining the international system of arms control treaties:

> The prevailing system of arms control agreements is a complex and quite fragile structure . . . Once one of its key elements has been weakened, the entire system is destabilised. The collapse of the ABM treaty would, therefore, undermine the entirety of disarmament agreements concluded over the last 30 years (quoted in Crossette, 2000).

The vote on the ABM Treaty in November 2000 was almost identical to the previous year. Japan's 2000 nuclear disarmament resolution to the UN General Assembly reflected the international community's approach to the ABM Treaty, emphasising the need to 'preserve its integrity and validity, so that it remained a cornerstone in maintaining global strategic stability' (UNGA, 2000; see also Hall, 2015, p. 85). Russia's actions suggest consistency of the Russian position with past state practice of multilateralism and with accepted procedural practices of bargaining which the United States was contesting.

The process of consultation with 'friends and allies' (Bush, 2001), however, was characterised by a complete unwillingness to engage with the views and security concerns

of Russia. This approach thus lacked any empathy and blocked the development of a shared understanding of how to reach agreement with Russia on which the emergence of mutual trust is contingent. The consultations can thus be seen as a series of 'sliding door' moments for both Bush and Putin. Whereas Bush decided repeatedly not to engage with Putin's security concerns, the Russian president sought to avoid a direct confrontation. This does not go against the claim that Russia was too weak in material terms to confront the United States at that stage, but rather it made use of the legitimate/accepted procedural practices of bargaining to shape the outcome it wanted.

4.2.1 Bush's speech at the National Defence University

In drafting the US President's speech at the National Defence University on 1 May 2001, Robert Joseph, NSC Senior Director for Proliferation Strategy, Counterproliferation, and Homeland Defence, made certain that the text emphasised the administration's intention to conduct consultations with US allies Russia and China regarding 'the need for a new framework that reflects a clear and clean break from the past, and especially from the adversarial legacy of the Cold War' (Bush, 2001; see also Rusten, 2010, p. 2). Reflecting Secretary Powell's suggestion to initiate broad diplomatic consultations before abandoning the ABM Treaty, the speech included multiple promises:

> I've made it clear from the beginning that I would consult closely on the important subject with our friends and allies who are also threatened by missiles and weapons of mass destruction … These will be real consultations. We are not presenting our friends and allies with unilateral decisions already made. We look forward to hearing their views, the views of our friends, and to take them into account' (Bush, 2001).

Ironically, as indicated previously, the strategic-level decision to withdraw from the ABM treaty had already been taken before the intensive 7-month period of consultation and

diplomacy that followed. The Bush administration specified the aim of 'seeking the acquiescence of allies and countries such as Russia and China to a "new strategic framework" that the administration declared would include not only missile defences, but also non-proliferation, counterproliferation, and unilateral nuclear reductions' (Rusten, 2010, p. 4; see also Cirincione, 2001).

Immediately after the NDU speech, various senior Bush administration officials were sent to consult with their counterparts in other countries (Rusten, 2010). In a similar fashion, Putin spent much of the spring of 2001 travelling the world capitals 'rallying international opposition to Bush's plans to gut or abandon the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972' (Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 127). Interestingly, in what was deemed to be a strong manifestation of American unilateralism, the Bush administration sought to engage (albeit in bad-faith as I will show below) in a structured social practice aimed at establishing new rules legitimating its unilateralist position. From the standpoint of realism, this action presents a curiosity – if not an anomaly. In contrast, this behaviour is completely consistent with the expectations of the argument advanced in this thesis. A unilateralist administration is expected to behave in a procedurally orthodox manner even as it seeks to alter the rules of the game. Overall, foreign leaders reacted positively to the consultations, but multiple European governments articulated their concerns about the possible unilateral US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty (King, 2002; Rusten, 2010). They expressed their support for the preservation of the treaty in particular, and for international efforts in arms control more broadly. The key challenge for the Bush administration was to get allies to support a framework which did not specify its contents and was intended to justify the abandonment of the landmark ABM Treaty (Miller, 2001, p. 103; Cirincione, 2001). Bolton highlights this

absence of clarity in his memoirs, 'In many respects . . . the "new strategic framework" was still somewhat dreamy and academic, and debate within the administration focused on how to make it concrete and practical, both on the strategic offensive and defensive side of the equation' (2007, p. 55).

Only one thing appeared to be clear about the 'new strategic framework' and that was the abrogation of the ABM Treaty (Miller, 2001, p. 104; Cirincione, 2001). Deputy NSA Stephen Hadley aimed to illuminate the content of the framework. The US president, Hadley claimed, 'is talking about a much broader framework, one that says you need non-proliferation strategies, counterproliferation strategies, traditional deterrence, and much less reliance on nuclear weapons' (Sanger, 2001). These terms, however, as Miller emphasises, defined the debate in the 1990s and the new framework did not offer a response regarding how the Bush administration would deal with them differently (2001, p. 104). Indeed, the US administration's 'new strategic framework' appeared to be an 'empty shell' (Cirincione, 2001), 'open about the largely content-free nature of the notion' (Miller, 2001, p. 104). As NSA Rice explained, 'The idea here is that we should have a new security framework. Now, we are open as to what form that takes' (quoted in Bruni, 2001). Given the lack of both clarity and content, Miller has stated that:

> It is hard to avoid the suspicion that the new strategic framework is an idea primarily intended to comfort those who will be reluctant to set aside the ABM Treaty in the absence of some negotiated arrangement to replace it. Perhaps there will be more substantive definition of the notion somewhere down the road. But for the time being, the phrase 'new strategic framework' appears to be little more than a euphemism for 'no more ABM Treaty' (Miller, 2001, p. 104).

This argument seemed to be supported strongly by the Bush administration's actions concerning the diplomatic consultations with NATO allies and Russia. To start with, the day before his trip to Europe, President Bush 'flatly and uncompromisingly reiterated his

commitment to move forward on missile defences and beyond the ABM Treaty' (Miller, 2001, p. 102). Even more tellingly, Bush boasted publicly that his plans remained unchanged when he returned to the United States. In an interview with *The Wall Street Journal*, for instance, President Bush remarked, 'With all due modesty, I think Ronald Reagan would have been proud of how I conducted myself. I went to Europe a humble leader of a great country and stood my ground. I wasn't going to yield' (Noonan, 2001). A *Washington Post* article commented that Bush had successfully applied the principle of 'Make nice, then carry on', summarising that 'for all the rhetorical bows to Russian, European, and liberal sensibilities, look at how Bush returns from Europe . . . The ABM Treaty is history. Missile Defense is on' (Krauthammer, 2001).

The Bush administration's interactions with the Kremlin can also be characterised as bad-faith attempts to conduct genuine dialogue. After a trip to Moscow on 11 May by Deputy NSA Hadley and Deputy Secretary of Defence Paul Wolfowitz to explain the administration's position on missile defence, a Russian delegation, led by FM Igor Ivanov came to Washington on 18 May 2001. During their meeting, Bolton stressed that 'the Clinton ideas were dead' and a 'new strategic framework' would replace them, 'including much more than just scrapping the ABM Treaty' (2007, p. 58) despite the fact that the Russians questioned the idea that a new framework was necessary for new threats (Boese, 2002; see also Bolton, 2007, p. 56). No productive engagement with the Russian counterparts took place to define the 'new strategic framework' (Kimball, 2001). The one and only item for negotiation appeared to be 'a pretty tough choice for the Russians: unilateral withdrawal from the ABM Treaty or joint withdrawal' (Kimball, 2001; see also Bolton, 2007, p. 62). Putin was hoping that the long-awaited meeting with President Bush would help to reach a

mutually favourable solution (Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 127). The summit in Slovenia on 16 June 2001 was organised at the end of the American president's first trip to Europe which, as indicated above, had proved to be difficult given the lack of clarity of the proposed 'new strategic framework' (Stent, 2014b, p. 61). And with good reason, as Miller argues, 'because the case the Bush administration has put before the world is not compelling' (2001, p. 96).

4.3 The first presidential meeting

The new US-Russian relationship did not begin auspiciously (Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 123; Stent, 2014b, p. 58). Not only had no face-to-face meeting been scheduled between the two presidents, but Putin's advisers could also not get to engage with the new US administration in the White House during the first few months of 2001 (Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 126). A senior Russian official said that 'When Mr. Bush came to office, we had tremendous difficulties. Continuity was lost for several months. Everything was broken' (quoted in Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 126). As the Bush administration was preparing for the Ljubljana Summit, many internal US meetings were taking place without much engagement with their Russian counterparts. The Kremlin frustration turned to aggravation when the Bush agenda on Russia became clear. The key priority the new American government wanted to discuss was the unilateral or joint withdrawal with Russia from the ABM Treaty (Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 127; Rice, 2011, p. 60; Stent, 2014b, p. 60). The missile defence programme, a scaled-down version of President Reagan's Strategic Defence Initiative, or Star Wars was no more popular in Moscow than it had been two decades earlier (Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 127).

According to their advisers, and even the two leaders, there was good personal chemistry at the meeting. Bush writes in his memoirs that, 'My goal at the summit had been to cut through any tension and forge a connection with Putin. I placed a high priority on personal diplomacy' (2010, p. 195). He also highlights the importance of reaching common ground through diplomacy: 'Getting to know a fellow world leader's personality, character, and concerns made it easier to find common ground and deal with contentious issues' (2010, p. 195). Ironically, his first interaction with the Russian president did not seem to submit to this sort of approach. Rice recalls that, at the meeting, Bush said to Putin that 'he intended to get out of the ABM treaty and would prefer to do so mutually' (2011, p. 62). William Safire's phrase, a policy of 'consultative unilateralism' (2001, quoted in Miller, 2001, p. 103), seems to capture Bush administration's attitude to dialogue – 'it will listen to others, but it will not change its fundamental approach' (Miller, 2001, p. 103).

For Putin, the first meeting with the US president was an opportunity 'to move beyond the Clinton-Yeltsin relationship that symbolised Russia's weakness and promote the US-Russian relationship on the basis of greater equality' (Stent, 2014b, p. 60). Newly elected Russian president, Putin saw his primary mission to restore the viability of what he viewed as a declining power (Stent, 2014b, p. 52; Rice, 2011, p. 60; McFaul, 2018, p. 57). Overall, there seems to be agreement that, in 2001, Putin 'was trying hard to nurture closer ties with America' (McFaul, 2018, p. 65; see also Rice, 2011, p. 60; Stent, 2014b, p. 52). Putin had come into office with a key aim 'to restore Russia's role as a great power – a *velikaia derzhava* – that could reclaim its rightful place in the world' (Stent, 2014b, p. 52). This involved, among other things, preserving as much as possible of the Cold War bilateral arms control structures with the United States, 'because these guaranteed Russia's status as major

power' (Stent, 2014b, p. 53; see also Rice, 2011, pp. 60-61). Rice's account supports this view (2011). Rice, a Soviet specialist by training, writes in her memoirs that 'an end to arms control as we had come to know it also meant an end to the equality between the Kremlin and the White House that it had come to symbolise' (2011, p. 60). The Cold War treaties were reminiscent of an international system in which Moscow challenged Washington 'with an alternative view of how human history would evolve' (Rice, 2011, p. 60). Rice adds that 'Arms control and the ABM Treaty were integral to that reality and thus talismans against decline' (2011, p. 60). Russia's 2000 official Foreign Policy Doctrine embodied this outlook. It committed Russia to seek 'to achieve a multipolar system of international relations', stated that Russia was pursuing an independent, pragmatic foreign policy, called for the upgrading of the United Nations Security Council, insisted that the ABM Treaty must be retained, and acknowledged the need to 'create a positive perception of Russia abroad' (see appendix in Ivanov, 2002).

Putin's actions in this context seem to confirm Raymond's claim that procedural practices are 'more than simply tools or constraints' (2019, p. 239). Raymond argues that actors are prone to connecting procedural practices to highly valued referent objects, and to speaking about procedural matters in unusually emotional language when they are aware of stark differences about legitimate procedures (2019, p. 239). This sheds light on Putin's attempts to prevent the US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty given the symbolism of formal arms control agreements for the Russian Federation. In particular, the Russian president's attachment to signing a legal treaty suggests that procedural legitimacy is connected in actors' understandings to group identity and ontological security (Raymond, 2019, p. 239; see also Mitzen, 2006). In this context, to Putin, the ABM Treaty, and the structure of

equality it created, was not only an integral part of the nuclear deterrence architecture; it also 'constituted a central pillar of the Soviet and Russian identity as a great power' that can rival the United States (Lilly, 2014, p. 24; Oliker, 2017; see also Rice, 2011, p. 60). The ABM Treaty and cooperation on missile defence became particularly important for Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union when Russia experienced a decline in its political and military influence as it had to relinquish its formidable conventional military force (Lilly, 2014, p. 25). The abrogation of the ABM Treaty would reduce Russia's perception of itself as a great power.

Both presidents had strong, albeit different reasons, to form a good relationship to advance their goals. A devout Christian, the US president seemed to judge other people through his own Christian faith (Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 128). Bush was captivated by a story Putin told him about an Orthodox cross that his mother had given him (Baker, 2013). At the press conference afterward, the American president, perhaps trying to establish a more personal relationship after Putin's appeal to his faith (Rice, 2011, p. 63; Cheney, 2011, p. 326; McFaul, 2018, p. 64), made the following, now famous, comments: 'I looked the man in the eye. I found him to be very straightforward and trustworthy. We had a very good dialogue. I was able to get a sense of his soul' (Bush, 2001). Putin did not initiate the story but a reporter's question triggered Bush's answer and the president 'seized on this apparent point of commonality to build a bond' (Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 128; see also Rice, 2011, p. 63). Many of Bush's advisers seemed to agree that the president's phrase regarding reading Putin's soul after one meeting had been a serious mistake. Vice President Cheney thought that Bush's statement 'reflected the hopes of the time that Putin would be a different kind of Russian leader, one who would put his nation on a path to greater freedom', albeit

admitting that he did not trust Putin, 'When I looked into his eyes, I saw an old KGB hand' (2005, p. 326). Michael McFaul, a leading expert on Russia, who would eventually become US Ambassador to Russia in 2012 and Barack Obama's key adviser on Russia, called Bush's remarks at the time a 'rookie mistake' (McFaul, 2017, p. 64). He added that: 'I can understand the strategy on rapport, but it went too far . . . I think there is plenty of good reason not to trust Putin. This is a man who was trained to lie' (quoted in McFaul, 2017, p. 64). Rice never really knew what to make of the story because, as she notes, 'it's hard for me to imagine Putin, this former servant of atheistic communism, as a religious man' (2011, p. 63; see also Rice, 2017; Fried, 2017). Bush's words would come to haunt his administration in many ways over the years. In Rice's words, 'We were never able to escape the perception that the President had naively trusted Putin and then been betrayed' (2011, p. 63).

For Bush, the encounter evidently left a deep impression. The situation can be interpreted as what the framework in this thesis calls a 'challenge' – a moment which triggers reflection or determines an actor to reassess their attitude concerning trust. In this context, Bush's statement about Putin's trustworthiness might have been a genuine comment. Alternatively, even if the words were just aimed at developing better relations with Putin, they should not be disregarded as 'cheap rhetoric'. Genuine or not, Bush's statement triggered a process of self-reflection that made Bush reassess his attitude towards Putin. In an interview with the *Wall Street Journal* later in the year, Bush sought to explain his reasons for his statements after the meeting. Noting that his remarks had received significant criticism, Bush said:

> I've been noticing some of these guys popping off saying Bush shouldn't have
> used the word 'trust.' If you're trying to redefine a relationship, and somebody

asks you, 'Can you trust the guy?' imagine what it'd have been like if I'd have stood up in front of the world and said, 'No, I don't think so.' Or, 'You know, perhaps.' Or, 'It's yet to be proven.' To me my attitude is, and this is Reaganesque in a sense, 'Yes I trust him, until he proves otherwise.' But why say the 'proves otherwise'? To me that goes without saying (Bush, 2001, quoted in Noonan, 2001).

Shortly after their meeting, Bush invited the Russian president to visit him at his Texas ranch later in the year (Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 28). Building trust with his counterpart seemed to be an important goal for the American president. At the start of his meeting with Putin, Bush wanted to know Putin's most trusted adviser, 'I have to know whom you trust' (Bush, 2001 quoted in Rice, 2011, p. 62). For Putin, his minister of defence, Sergei Ivanov, was his 'go-to-person, whereas Condoleezza Rice was Bush's trusted adviser (Rice, 2011, p. 63). After the private talks with Putin, the American president told Karen Hughes, one of his counsellors, about his new friend Vladimir: 'I think I made progress getting him to trust me' (quoted in Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 28). Putin also seemed positive about the meeting but more reserved in his remarks. The summit in Slovenia seemed a good start: 'We have bones. We have to put meat on these bones', Putin said (quoted in Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 129). He told Russian lawmaker Dmitri Rogozin that he was impressed with Bush's plainspokenness: 'Putin said he thought Bush was a lively politician and a man who loved his children and family . . . And the most important thing he noted about Bush was that he was not a snob' (Rogozin quoted in Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 129). The Russian president seemed to remember Bush's fascination with the cross and brought it with him a few weeks later to Italy, to show the American president when they met at the Genoa summit of the Group of Eight (G-8), the major industrialised nations (Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 129).

It is obvious from the two presidents' statements and actions that they had a good personal relationship. Bush's perception of Putin's trustworthiness seems to support

Hardin's (2002) argument that trustworthiness begets trust defined as 'encapsulated interest': individuals deem others trustworthy if they believe their interests are encapsulated in the other's interests. The US president's statements suggest a clear separation between the trustor and the trustee, rather than a focus on the relationship as the perspective from which he understands and interprets situations. This seems to be supported, for instance, by Bush's understanding of Putin's potential motives for engagement with the United States in the same *Wall Street Journal* interview:

> I found a man who realises his future lies with the West, not the East, that we share common security concerns, primarily Islamic fundamentalism, that he understands missiles could affect him just as much as us. On the other hand, he doesn't want to be diminished by America (Bush, 2001, quoted in Noonan, 2001).

In light of the argument proposed in the thesis, it becomes easy to understand why, despite Bush's interest in gaining Putin's trust, mutual trust was highly unlikely. Bush's failure to take into account some of Putin's key security concerns blocked the possibility of reaching a common understanding on how to negotiate nuclear arms control. This mismatch in their views, i.e. unilateral versus multilateral practices of bargaining, was detrimental to the emergence of mutual trust which is contingent on the process of aligning procedural practices.

4.4 Game Changer: 9/11 terrorist attacks

Three months after their meeting in Slovenia, Putin was the first foreign leader to call the White House on 11 September 2001, after the terrorists struck the United States, to express his sympathy and support (Bush, 2010, p. 196; Stent, 2014b, p. 64). Putin could not reach the American president but assured Rice that Russia would not increase its military readiness in response to the US move to DEFCON 3, a high state of military alert – something the

Soviet Union would have done automatically during the Cold War (Bush, 2010, p. 196). The following day, Putin called off a military exercise in the northern Pacific Ocean 'that might have distracted US forces' (Stent, 2014b, p. 64). When the two presidents eventually spoke, Putin reiterated Russia's support, 'Good will triumph over evil. I want you to know that in this struggle, we will stand together' (Woodward, 2002, p. 118; Bush, 2010, p. 196; Stent, 2014b, p. 64). Less than two weeks later, he described what Russia would do to help: 1) 'exchange intelligence on international terrorists', 2) 'open Russian air-space for humanitarian flights', 3) 'encourage the Central Asian states to offer military bases for the counterterrorist campaign', 4) 'cooperate in search-and-rescue operations', and 5) 'expand assistance to the Northern Alliance in its campaign against the Taliban' (Putin, 2001, quoted in Graham, 2002, p. 83). The 9/11 terror attacks can be viewed as another 'sliding door' moment for both sides, 'a window of opportunity' (Mamedov, 2001, quoted in Bolton, 2007, p. 67) for the two leaders to signal their mutual trustworthiness and transform their relationship. Putin called the 11 September terror attacks a 'turning point' in Russia's relations with the world (Dougherty, 2002). According to Kuchins (2016), his interviews with 40 former US and Russian officials indicated a consensus that Washington and Moscow 'had a real opportunity to establish a more durable partnership on security issues' after the attacks. However, the argument I make in this section is that both leaders failed to empathise with the other's concerns even after the 9/11 attacks, preventing the potential emergence of mutual trust. Putin's competent performances, however, secured his goal of signing a legally binding treaty with Bush. The available sources suggest that, as a result of Putin's performativity, Bush displayed a low level of asymmetric trust towards the Russian president which shaped the final legal format of the treaty.

The fast friendship and good chemistry Bush found at the summit in Slovenia appeared to grow with Putin's gestures after the terror attacks. The first test would be Russia's response to American requests to deploy troops to the former Soviet republics in Central Asia, a region that would be crucial for any assault on Afghanistan and where Russia still played a dominant role (Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 129). Within the Russian government, the leader of the opposition to Americans in Central Asia, was Sergei Ivanov, the defence minister and Putin's closest friend in the cabinet (Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 129). Three days after the terrorist attacks, he told reporters that, 'I see absolutely no basis for even hypothetical suppositions about the possibility of NATO military operations on the territory of Central Asian nations' (Ivanov, 2001, quoted in Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 130). Putin also dispatched his national security adviser, Vladimir Rushailo, to Central Asia to instruct regional leaders 'to hold off making any commitments' (Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 130). According to Powell, 'there were some on the Russian side who were nervous about us fiddling in their backyard' (2009, quoted in Hall, 2015, p. 83). The Bush team decided to bypass Russia and sent John Bolton to meet with Uzbek officials to discuss the creation of a US-led coalition (Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 130).

Putin debated the Central Asia question with his top security advisers and, despite some serious pressure from the military establishment and hard-liners inside the government, the Russian president saw this opportunity as 'a tremendous step forward in returning Russia as a significant power in global affairs' (Graham, 2017). Sergei Prikhodko, the pragmatic Kremlin foreign policy chief, advocated for the idea that Russia should aid the United States after the 9/11 attacks (Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 132). He regarded Russia's support as a benefit for both Moscow and Washington: 'What was done in Afghanistan was not only in

the interests of America but also in the interests of Russia' (quoted in Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 132). Dmitri Trenin of the Moscow Carnegie Centre supports this view, arguing that Putin's actions were transformational in terms of Russia's foreign policy (quoted in Dougherty, 2002). Trenin claims that Putin took advantage of the sliding door moment after 9/11 to further his foreign policy ambitions: 'He [Putin] used, he seized upon September 11 as an opportunity to leapfrog in his foreign policy, the outlines of which by that time had been complete' (quoted in Dougherty, 2002).

The 9/11 attacks, although not associated with missile defence, had a substantial influence on the domestic perception of threat in the United States (Futter, 2013, p. 93). The 11 September 2001 'produced an acute sense of our vulnerability,' said Rice (quoted in Leffler, 2004, p. 25) which provided the political opportunity for Bush to push ahead with the missile defence plans (Futter, 2013, p. 94). Most in the Bush administration believed that their actions in Afghanistan, in routing the Taliban, would also enhance Russia's security (Stent, 2014b, p. 71; Graham, 2017). In Stent's words, 'In short, the Bush administration's initial post 9/11 relationship with Russia focused on Realpolitik' (2014b, p. 71). In return for their help on terrorism, US officials expected that Russia would eventually amend its views on missile defence and accept the premise that formal arms control were obsolete (Stent, 2014b, p. 72). Putin, however, according to Thomas Graham, who served as Bush's senior director for Russia on the National Security Council between 2002 and 2007, 'didn't ask for a quid pro quo. His reasoning for that was, well, if we're doing something that's in our interest, we don't ask for someone to give us something in exchange' (2017).

Powell confirms that Russia' cooperation with the United States after the terrorist attacks 'was never in the context of we did this for you for 9/11, therefore you've got to do this . . . never in the context of you owe this to us', confirming that, 'I am not aware of any quid-pro-quo between us and the Russians' (quoted in Hall, 2015, p. 89). While there certainly were issues where Russia could have leveraged its support for payoffs, the available evidence suggests that this did not occur (see also Hall, 2015). According to Hall, Russia could have used their intelligence and support as valuable bargaining chips to pressure the United States to change their position on the ABM Treaty (2015, p. 85). On the contrary, the Russian Federation managed to avoid behaving like there existed a quid pro quo. Putin stressed that the Russian position was 'Russia is not bargaining, it is cooperating' (quoted in Hall, 2015, p. 85). The argument that the absolute material power of the United States pressured the Russians to support the United States is not valid – as Hall points out, 'if this were the case, one would have expected the same level of assistance two years later as the United States moved against Iraq' (2015, p. 84).

The absence of quid-pro-quo argument is important for the purpose of this chapter because, if there was never an explicit or implicit quid-pro-quo concerning the ABM Treaty, Bush's attitude towards formal arms control must have been shaped by other factors. Also, while clearly strategic in nature, Putin's efforts cannot be understood as simply a quid pro quo. According to Hall, if that was the case, we should have seen Russia 'at least adopting a bargaining approach, seeking to trade-off cooperation for other advantages and to extract everything possible – yielding only when others proposed policies in line with their own goals or they had received sufficient payoffs' (2015, p. 85). In his book, Hall (2015) advances the argument that Putin employed a diplomacy of sympathy as a strategic tool to

reframe the relations with the United States. The diplomacy of sympathy, the author contends, may offer the possibility of improved relations, but it does not guarantee that the target will respond in kind (Hall, 2015, p. 108). This supports the argument made in this chapter that Bush's attitude towards a legally binding treaty was contingent on Putin's performativity, in particular, on the Russian president's diplomatic practices of bargaining. These practices elicited trustworthiness by supporting widely accepted procedural practices of multilateralism. As I show below, a month after the 9/11 attacks, at the Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in Shanghai, Bush was persuaded by Putin to sign a treaty with Russia.

The American president met with his counterpart on the sidelines of an APEC summit in China in October 2001. Bolton recalls in his memoirs that the meeting between the two leaders went quite well 'as Bush explained to Putin we were leaving the ABM Treaty' (2007, p. 69). The Russian president surprised the American delegation with a secret proposal to amend the ABM Treaty's restrictions in exchange for an agreement to keep the treaty in place for at least another twelve or twenty-four months (Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 134). Moscow Bureau Chiefs for *The Washington Post* at the time of these negotiations, Susan Glasser and Peter Baker, reveal in their book that both US and Russian sources confirmed the secret proposal and its details. The authors argue that, although neither president mentioned the discussion after the meeting, Bush was interested and ordered his aides to pursue it (Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 134). Alexander Vershbow, US Ambassador to Russia at the time, confirms this plan and Bush's determination to reach an agreement with Putin, 'After Shanghai we were quite sure . . . The President made quite clear he wanted to work out a deal if we could as the bridge to the future' (quoted in Baker and Glasser,

2005, p. 134). Bolton's memoirs reinforce the idea that Bush's attitude towards a legally binding treaty changed after the meeting with Putin in Shanghai. He recalls that Powell was under the impression 'Bush wanted a treaty to announce in spring 2002' (2007, p. 69). Stent notes in her book that Putin told Bush, 'I need a treaty' (2014b, p. 73), which is also mentioned in Bolton's memoirs (2007, p. 76). Drawing on her interview with Steven Pifer, former Ambassador to Ukraine and, from 2001 to 2004, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, with responsibility for Russia and Ukraine, Stent claims that Bush rejected the advice of the hardliners in his government and 'agreed to a new treaty' (2014b, p. 73).

I argue that Bush's change in attitude took place as a result of Putin's performativity. Considering that Bush rejected Putin's secret proposal and announced US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, the argument that the quid-pro-quo led to Bush's change of mind falls flat – if this were the case, Bush would have negotiated the withdrawal details with the Russians. In fact, the Bush administration was so keen to reject any negotiations on this topic that Bolton and Powell met with the Russians in November 2001 hoping that 'If we could convince them that our testing programme was in violation of the treaty, which it clearly was, then we would be back on the road to withdrawal' (Bolton, 2007, p. 73). The Russians were outraged and believed the Bush administration sought to 'make it impossible for the Russians to say yes' (Senior Russian official, quoted in Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 135).

My narrative does not negate that there were different expectations on both sides from the moment Bush came to power until after the 9/11 attacks. In line with my conceptual framework, the distinct expectations and approaches to bargaining indicate why the two

administrations failed to reach a common understanding on how to reach agreement on nuclear arms control. Stent seems to capture this idea when she argues, 'With hindsight, it is clear that US and Russian expectations were mismatched' (2014b, p. 69). John Beyrle, former Ambassador to Russia, agrees: 'Russia was looking for respect and acknowledgement that Russia's voice mattered and that the United States would listen to Russia and act as if its opinions mattered' (quoted in Stent, 2014b, p. 69). Graham claims that the US approach insulted Moscow: 'We missed some opportunities in the Bush administration's initial years to put this on a different track. And then later on, some of our actions, intentional or not, sent a clear message to Moscow that we didn't care' (2017). This lack of empathy reflected in the unwillingness to engage with the other side's security concerns was displayed by both administrations. This, of course, hindered the emergence of mutual trust. According to Alexander Voloshin, Putin's chief of staff, Putin believed that, if Bush understood Russia's own terrorist problem, this would improve the relations between their countries (quoted in Stent, 2014b, p. 70). This statement, however, appears to suggest that the Russians did not anticipate the strong manifestations of American unilateralism even after the 9/11 terrorist attacks (see Raymond, 2019, p. 152).

Even before Putin's visit to Bush's ranch in Crawford, Texas in November 2001, the Russian president indicated his flexibility and the possibility of an agreement with the United States on the ABM Treaty as long as the United States made some specific proposals (Rusten, 2010, p. 9). For instance, in the context of the ABM Treaty, Putin wanted to know whether amendments could be made to avoid terminating the treaty, 'What exactly [does the United States] want changed? What exactly hinders the implementation of the [missile defence] project devised by the US administration?' (quoted in Rusten, 2010, p. 9). On 3

November 2001, The Russian Defence Minister Ivanov stressed the inability of the two countries to find a common approach to missile defence, 'before scrapping one agreement or another . . . we believe that this should be better done only after something has been created in the way of replacement' (quoted in Rusten, 2010, p. 9). The Bush administration, however, was determined to pursue the US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty with or without Russia. During three days of talk, Bush and Putin failed to reach a joint agreement on missile defence. Bolton recalls that Putin accepted the American sovereign right to withdraw but stressed that a mutual withdrawal was impossible 'because it would be seen as caving in to us [the United States]': "It would be our last agreement, and they would replace us here", Putin said' (Putin quoted in Bolton, 2007, p. 72). The Bush administration postponed the withdrawal for December as a result of the Russian appeal not to make the announcement during their visit in the United States, which would put them 'in a difficult situation' at home (Bolton, 2007, p. 72). What the Crawford summit demonstrates is Putin's flexibility in his negotiations with Bush to secure an agreement with the United States as well as Bush's unwillingness to empathise with the Russian president's security concerns, making it clear that, from the moment he took office, Bush had adopted a 'take it or leave it' attitude, leaving no room for negotiations or American concessions.

At their press conference, Bush announced that the United States was going to unilaterally reduce its nuclear arsenal to between 1,700 and 2,200 warheads over the following decade (Bolton, 2007, p. 74; Stent, 2014b, p. 68). Before the US announcement of the withdrawal from the ABM Treaty a month later, on 13 December 2001, the two countries coordinated their responses so, Vershbow said, 'the world could see this wasn't a crisis' (quoted in Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 136). The Russian government's approach of

'muted criticisms mixed with cautious optimism' (NTI, 2003) indicates Putin's ambition to retain the possibility of negotiating a treaty with the United States to restore the country's status as a partner on the global level. Putin could have been more vocal about his disagreement with the US withdrawal, but his more pressing goal was to demonstrate his trustworthiness through his practices of multilateralism supporting the existing international arms control architecture in order to secure a legally binding treaty with the United States (see NTI, 2002; Baker and Glasser, 2005, p. 136). As one Russian official explains, 'We could have played it differently, a sense of crisis, but it would have undermined other things that we wanted to do' (quoted in Baker and Glasses, 2005, p. 136).

4.5 The Moscow Treaty Negotiations

As mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, this case study differs from the other two in the thesis because of the very short period of negotiations between the two countries; bilateral talks only occurred between January and May 2002. According to David Cooper, Former Director, Office of Strategic Arms Control Policy and negotiator of the Moscow Treaty, there was no negotiating team for the Moscow Treaty and negotiations entailed approximately five meetings (2013, p. 162). Most documents that were signed – some of them having, perhaps, more symbolic than practical meaning – did 'not include any of the detailed definitions, counting rules, elimination procedures, or monitoring and verification provisions that have become common in treaties signed since the late 1980s' (NTI, 2002; Woolf, 2011; Roberts, 2016, p. 24). The START I treaty also remained in force and provided the verification mechanisms lacking in the Moscow Treaty (Woolf, 2011; Roberts, 2016, p. 24). In this section, I examine the formal negotiations and ask whether trust played a role in shaping the Moscow Treaty. Given that there were no verification provisions to be

negotiated, I examine the extent to which and how trust shaped reaching the SORT treaty. I argue Bush displayed a low level of asymmetric trust which was contingent on Putin's performativity. This asymmetric trust shaped Bush's decision-making with regard to the legal format of the final treaty.

4.5.1 The relationship between the United States and Russia (January – May 2002)

The previous sections revealed the inability of the two sides to reach a common understanding on how to conclude a nuclear arms control agreement because of their distinct procedural practices of unilateralism and multilateralism. That means that, before the start of the formal negotiations, both the United States and Russia had different views on how to reach agreement on strategic arms control. Putin's statement about the attempts to cooperate between the two countries in November 2001 seems to support this argument: 'We differ in the ways and means we perceive that are suitable for reaching the same objective' (Putin, 2001). If their views were essentially opposing, what convinced Bush to agree to a treaty? In this section, I argue that Bush displayed a low level of asymmetric trust towards Putin during the formal negotiations which shaped the legal format of the Moscow Treaty. Even if the pressure from the Senate and the State Department also contributed to Bush's decision-making, I show that Bush was already predisposed to signing a treaty with Russia at the start of the negotiations in January 2002 as a result of Putin's performativity throughout 2001.

At their US-Russia negotiating meeting in Washington on 29 January 2002, Russian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Georgy Mamedov handed over two drafts, one concerning the elements of an offensive weapons treaty, and one on the overall strategic relationship between the two countries (Bolton, 2007, p. 76). It was clear at that point that

the Russians were going to get a 'bad' arms control agreement (NTI, 2002) but, as the previous section indicated, Putin was determined to obtain a legally binding treaty with Bush, a symbol of a partnership with the United States. In the words of Trenin, 'Putin was interested in an equal partnership of unequals' (quoted in Stent, 2014b, p. 69). The Russian president took the US unilateral decisions quite calmly, but these tensions would come to define the US-Russia relations in the following years. As a former Russian official explains, Putin realised that 'a strategic partnership with the United States means if you accept Washington's agenda you remain a partner in good standing, but you are not allowed to contribute to developing the agenda jointly; and if you object, you will be thrown overboard' (quoted in Kuchins, 2016).

Powell supported the format of a legally binding agreement because he understood that a treaty 'would help President Putin's standing with domestic critics who opposed his policies towards the United States' (Woolf, 2011, p. 3; see Landay, 2002). In early February 2002, the Bush administration indicated a public change in their approach towards Russia's position. Powell testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the format of the agreement 'will be something that is legally binding, and we are examining different ways in which this can happen' (quoted in Purdum, 2002; see also Woolf, 2011). Even if Powell's previous arguments contributed to Bush's decision to agree to a legally binding document, I argue that Bush was already determined to offer Putin what he had asked for. This does not mean that Powell's opinion did not matter in reinforcing Bush's pre-existing attitudes towards a treaty (see Woolf, 2011, p. 3) but it was not the main cause of Bush's change of mind after the Shanghai summit (see Rusten, 2010, p. 11), as I showed in the previous sections. Also, as other examples seemed to suggest, Bush was not easily convinced

by Powell's advice. As I mentioned in the first section of the chapter, Powell was against the US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty and he was also keen to continue diplomatic negotiations with North Korea, both issues on which Bush did not share his views. According to a US State Department official, 'It should not surprise you that many see the president's decision to abrogate the treaty as a major policy defeat for Secretary Powell who feels strongly that he should be the official spokesman for foreign policy matters and initiatives within the administration' (quoted in Stocker, 2002, p. 67). Richard Haass, who was the Director for Policy Planning in the State Department, claims that Powell's place in the administration was very different to that of Rumsfeld, Cheney, or Rice, 'who all had the ear of the president in a far more informal way' (2010, p. 185). In his memoirs, Haass explains that 'I am not too sure the president and those around him trusted Powell all that much. Powell was too popular, too moderate, and too independent for their taste' (2010, p. 185). He adds that:

> Rumsfeld, Cheney, and Rice would hang around with the president and engage in West Wing bull sessions; Powell tended not to. The president, who didn't have close ties to either Cheney or Rumsfeld at the outset, over time developed them, but not with Powell, who president felt did not respond to his overtures. Whatever the reason or reasons, the bottom line is that George W. Bush and Colin Powell never forged the sort of close relationship that is essential if a secretary of state is to succeed' (Haass, 2010, p. 185).

It becomes apparent then and it can be argued, given the context, that Powell's opinion only reinforced Bush's decision to agree to a legally binding treaty which he had articulated in October 2001.

In mid-March 2002, *The New York Times* reported that Senators Joseph Biden and Jesse Helms 'sent a letter to the White House reportedly "demanding" that the Administration submit the eventual agreement to the Senate as a treaty' (Shanker, 2002).

The two stated that 'significant obligations by the United States regarding deployed U.S. strategic nuclear warheads' would 'constitute a treaty subject to the advice and consent of the Senate' (quoted in Shanker, 2002). Their letter to Powell was dated 15 March, two days after President Bush expressed optimism that an agreement with Russia on nuclear arms control would be reached before May (Shanker, 2002). The timing here is important because, as Bolton's memoirs suggest, Bush had already stated his preference for a treaty in their Principals Committee (PC) meeting (which includes Cabinet members who deal with national security issues) on 12 February. In Bolton's words, 'Putin had asked Bush for a treat, and Bush appeared to agree' (2007, p. 76). Bush did not seem to care too much about the debate over what was 'legally binding' in international law because he was more interested in the flexibility of the agreement, in particular, 'the ability to get out [of any treaty]' (quoted in Bolton, 2007, p. 76). Bush's low level of asymmetric trust is revealed in his following statement, 'I can get what I need and still be faithful to the Russians' (quoted in Bolton, 2007, p. 76). Highlighting the timing of the events, I have established that Bush was already predisposed to signing a legally binding treaty with Putin before the formal negotiations started in 2002. In addition, while the emergence of mutual trust was blocked by distinct approaches to bargaining even throughout the formal negotiations in 2002, Bush displayed a low level of asymmetric trust which shaped the format of the Moscow Treaty. Given the context and the timing, I have argued that Bush's asymmetric trust was shaped by Putin's performativity. The following section expands on the two leaders' dispositions to examine their justification of their decision-making.

4.5.2 Bush's justification of his decision regarding the format of the Moscow Treaty

This section will focus on Bush's experience of the relationship with his counterpart given his change of mind concerning the legal format of the Moscow Treaty. Even if some of Putin's actions can be interpreted as signals of trustworthiness, a careful reading of the available sources does not suggest any changes in Putin's approach to achieving his goal of securing a treaty with the United States as a result of his interactions with Bush.

Considering the positive interactions between Bush and Putin in 2001, especially Bush's remark about Putin's soul in Slovenia, it can be said that Bush felt highly familiar with the Russian president. In his interview with the *Wall Street Journal* after the summit, Bush was very positive about the meeting with Putin (Noonan, 2001). Asked if the summit could be considered a breakthrough, the American president was confident, 'I think it was,' said Bush (quoted in Noonan, 2001). Bush writes in his memoirs that he 'appreciated his [Putin's] willingness to move beyond the suspicions of the past' (2010, p. 197). In this thesis's conceptual framework, the process of aligning practices does not need to occur for one individual to display asymmetric trust. Bush might have thought he understood and shared Putin's views but, as the chapter has argued, this was not the case.

Bush's justification of his decision at the Principals' meeting on 12 February 2002 is a strong indicator of his state of asymmetric trust. Given his administration's determination to pursue unilateral policies, it is surprising that Bush decided to support the signing of a legally binding treaty with Russia after the meeting in Shanghai in 2001. Despite Rumsfeld's and Cheney's rejection of the treaty, the US President decided to give Putin what he wanted (Bolton, 2007, p. 76). Bush explains that,

> I believe we must have something that lasts beyond our presidencies. The strategic relationship with Russia is something that's important for the next ten years. So, to cement relations, I'm willing to throw the guy [Putin] some bones . . . [Putin] is on thin ice in his own mind. I want to give him a document he can hold up (quoted in Bolton, 2007, p. 77).

Bush is thus justifying his decisions as a result of Putin's needs. 'Putin is at huge risk,' Bush explained to his aides at the February meeting, 'and he needs to fight off his troglodytes' (quoted in Baker, 2013; see also Bolton, 2007). Both his decisions and interpretations can be seen as strategic moves which does not negate my argument. I argue Bush's change of mind is as a result of Putin's competent performances throughout their interactions. The low level of asymmetric trust displayed by Bush implies that one trusts another because they think the other shares their interests.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has argued that the legal format of the Moscow Treaty was contingent on the two leaders' entangled performances. The case study has revealed the potential gains from more competence in procedural practices with regard to the emergence of asymmetric trust. In line with the DoT framework, this chapter has shown that the two presidents had different approaches as to *how* to reach an agreement on strategic nuclear arms control and this prevented the development of mutual trust. However, despite Bush's early betrayal of disengagement, President Putin took advantage of several sliding door moments throughout their interactions. The Russian leader thus managed to leverage social competence in the procedural practices of bargaining to achieve his goal of securing a formal treaty. In doing so, Putin's diplomatic performances influenced Bush's perception of Putin's trustworthiness, but this trust was not reciprocated by Putin, hence my claim that the case is

one of asymmetric trust. Nevertheless, it was Putin's diplomacy of inviting Bush's trust that shaped the legal format of the treaty.

Two main points need to be highlighted. First, the case of the Moscow Treaty differs significantly from the other two analysed in this thesis because both Bush and Putin displayed different procedural practices of bargaining (i.e. unilateralism and multilateralism) throughout their interactions. Both sides also failed to empathise with the other side's security concerns. This essentially blocked the possibility of mutual trust between the two leaders. The argument was made by showing that, throughout their interactions, Bush was determined to avoid formal arms control through his administration's unilateralist policies, whereas Putin actively sought to obtain a legally binding treaty with the United States. In particular, although willing to reach an agreement on strategic arms control, the two sides had very different understandings on how consensus could be reached.

The second point concerns the level of asymmetric trust displayed by Bush which, as I showed in this chapter, shaped the legal format of the Moscow Treaty. Conventional studies assume the main causes which led to the treaty were the personal relationship between the two leaders and the pressure from the US Senate and the State Department. An analysis of the available sources has supported the role of these factors in the final decision to sign a legally binding treaty. It has also shown, however, that Bush's decision to agree to a treaty with Russia was only reinforced by the pressure from the Senate and the State Department, not instigated by them. In addition, the chapter has clarified how the personal relationship between the two leaders impacted on their final agreement.

Chapter 5. New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START), 2009-2010

5.1 Introduction

President Obama and the Russian President, Dmitry Medvedev, got off to a solid start, indicating a more pragmatic partnership than the one their predecessors, Bush and Putin, had enjoyed (Whitmore, 2009; Roberts, 2016, p. 113; McFaul, 2018, p. 127). The two leaders succeeded in reaching an agreement on nuclear arms reductions and signed the *Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms*, known as the New START Treaty (NST) on 8 April 2010. The NST replaced the Treaty of Moscow (SORT) which was due to expire in December 2012. Even though Obama and Medvedev had achieved a consensus that another arms control treaty was in their mutual interest, traditional structural considerations, such as material power, do not sufficiently account for any diplomatic negotiations that took place to shape the terms of the agreement, nor do they consider the context in which the negotiations occurred. Existing accounts of the NST negotiations highlight the personal relationship between Obama and Medvedev as a key factor in reaching a final agreement but they all imply that diplomatic practices were largely secondary to the bargaining process (Antonov, 2011; Lavrov, 2011; Stent, 2014b, p. 217; McFaul, 2018, p. 145; Burns, 2019, p. 645; interview with Roberts, 2019; see also Wikileaks Cable 09STATE94672_a). This chapter explores whether there was any trust that developed between the two leaders and, if so, how it impacted on the process of negotiating the verification provisions.

The first section begins with a reconstruction of the early days of interactions between the new administrations in the United States and Russia between 2008 and 2009, highlighting the key roles of the two presidents in creating the conditions which shaped the NST negotiations. What much of the literature underestimates is the role that the trust which developed between the two leaders in the context of the secret talks regarding the issue of missile defence (MD) played in shaping the transparency-security trade-off during the formals NST negotiations. In this section I argue that the NST negotiations cannot be understood without considering the role of the separate discussions between Obama and Medvedev on MD. This differs from the standard accounts which examine the formal NST negotiations without taking into account the role of the missile defence talks (Lebovic, 2013; Stent, 2014b; Williams, 2017a, interview with Coe, 2019; interview with Roberts, 2019). Obama's diplomatic effort to keep the two policies formally separate despite Russian pressure to link them is indicative of procedural competence and sheds light on how the NST negotiations were enabled and shaped by the conversation on missile defence between the two sides.

Therefore, an examination of the context that predates the official treaty negotiations deserves close attention, because it reveals the leaders' initial dispositions[19] and their justification for seeking to engage and negotiate with the other side. This enables me to trace changes in dispositions and examine whether an empathetic process of aligning the two sides' views on their procedural practices of bargaining takes place – the first empirical indicator for potential mutual trust between the two leaders (see Figure 2.4). The section makes a case for the salience of the secret diplomatic exchanges between the two leaders in

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[19] Propensities of practitioners to act in certain ways because of beliefs based on experience and habits (Adler, 2019, p. 198).

making possible the development of mutual trust. The second empirical indicator – the shared vulnerability which increases the likelihood of mutual trust – becomes apparent during the first face-to-face meeting between the leaders and subsequent private talks. The second part of this chapter examines the formal NST negotiations which started in July 2009 and explains how key decisions, in particular with regard to the transparency-security trade-off, were shaped by the mutual trust between the two leaders which enabled or constrained their behaviour during the formal negotiations. The 'sliding door' moments and critical challenges for trust are also discussed throughout this chapter to highlight their role in producing trust through the DoT.

5.2 Two new leaders and the beginnings of cooperation

The election of US president, Barack Obama, in November 2008 was viewed by many at the time as a potential turning point in relations between the United States and Russia (Bowcott, 2008; *The New York Times*, 2009; Roxburgh, 2012, p. 562; Pifer, 2014; Zygar, 2016). In early 2008, during the second term of the Bush administration, both Russia and the United States, recognised that arms control was in their mutual interest, but they were not able to agree on terms for replacing START I (Stent, 2014b, p. 222). This brings to the fore an important puzzle. How did a change in leadership impact on the way the two sides engaged in the NST negotiations and reached agreement on the terms of the new treaty, especially its verification provisions? My contention is that it is not really possible to understand the NST negotiations without analysing the extent to which and how the DoT made possible an agreement that could not be reached a couple of years earlier. I argue that the DoT defined the conditions of possibility for the particular form of negotiations and shaped both leaders' decision-making regarding the transparency-security trade-off.

Any complex political outcome is likely to be the result of many causal factors. The outcome is over-determined because, as Holmes explains, 'one could provide many different causal arguments or multiple causal pathways that seek to explain, for example, German unification and indeed all of the arguments could be right, assuming they were not mutually exclusive' (2018, p. 82). As one might expect, different explanations focus on distinct causal factors which could all be influencing the various processes that come together to create, in this case, an arms control agreement, and in doing so, 'help to make sense of the larger picture' (Holmes, 2018, p. 82). The practice approach employed in this thesis captures the DoT and the implicit process of trusting between Obama and Medvedev. While I do not argue that either material factors or, especially, issues of interest more broadly conceived are absent from the case, I show that more procedurally competent proposals put forward by the two leaders exerted more influence during the negotiations, while creating impressions of their trustworthiness. The mutual trust which emerged out of the process of trusting was both an enabler and/or constrainer for the two leaders – it provided them with meaning, purpose, and direction in their interpretation of their interests. I argue that this mutual trust was contingent on their entangled performances of procedural practices. This mutual trust informed their decision-making during the NST negotiations, and crucially shaped how the two leaders managed the transparency-security trade-off. The Wikileaks diplomatic cables, the recently published memoirs, and interviews with high-level decision-makers in office during the period, provide rich primary evidence to draw upon in order to examine the process by which the NST became possible.

This section examines the relationship between the United States and Russia in the context of nuclear arms control prior to the formal NST negotiations. The deliberations within the Obama administration before attempting to reset the relations with Russia indicate the challenges which required consideration prior to a nuclear arms control agreement. In particular, a key challenge was the need to reconcile the development of a MD system in Europe with the replacement of the START verification regime which was due to expire in November 2009. The quintessential problem was that the Russians were keen to talk about reducing offensive strategic weapons within the same conversation about missile defence, something which was deemed unacceptable by the Obama administration who wanted to keep the two issues separate for future flexibility (Roxburgh, 2012, p. 570; Futter, 2011, p. 261; McFaul, 2018, p. 141; Burns, 2019, p. 635). Therefore, Obama actively sought to create opportunities to promote cooperation on these issues by demonstrating his competence at putting forward proposals which sought to signal his trustworthiness, while keeping the two subjects separate. The chapter shows that, by working on creating the conditions to keep the two topics separate, Obama engaged Medvedev in a process of negotiating a common understanding of how to reach agreement on NST that facilitated the development of mutual trust between them. In this reading, mutual trust was pivotal in how the two sides negotiated the NST, in particular in shaping the transparency-security trade-off.

Since the end of the Cold War, each US administration has sought to remake the political relationship with Russia and bilateral arms control negotiations have been an essential part of redefining the relationship. As Stent has argued, 'There has been far more continuity in Russian policy between Democratic and Republican administrations than many would admit' (2014b, p. 256). She argues further that there have been four 'Resets' by both

Washington and Moscow, as new leaders tried to promote positive relations between the two countries by looking for areas where they should cooperate together to advance shared interests (2014b, p. 256; see also Roberts, 2016; interview with Stent, 2019). In her words, 'Washington's repeated cycle of high hopes followed by disappointment have been mirrored in Moscow', where this history is interpreted as confirming that 'the United States has disregarded Russia's interests' (Stent, 2014b, p. 256).

For instance, after the 2002 US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, Washington had proceeded to enlarge NATO a second time (with addition of the three Baltic states, former Soviet republics), which the Russian President Putin described at the 2007 Munich Security Conference as 'a serious provocation that reduces the level of mutual trust' (2007). Instead of removing the nuclear rivalry with Russia, the ABM withdrawal and the alliance politics had 'contributed greatly to Russia's current distrust of Washington's intentions regarding its MD plans in Europe' (Collina, 2012). In Stent's words, 'on one issue after another, Putin was disappointed' (2014b, p. 78). Putin understood that 'a strategic partnership with the United States means if you accept Washington's agenda, you remain a partner in good standing, but you are not allowed to contribute to developing the agenda jointly; and if you object, you will be thrown overboard' (former Russian official quoted in Kuchins, 2016). Determined to rectify this, the Obama administration sought to engage Russia in a pragmatic relationship by addressing the key security concerns that Moscow had expressed while pursuing national interests that Obama had highlighted throughout his presidential campaign.

Obama's performance during the presidential campaign and the first few months after the 2008 elections indicated his willingness to empathise with Russia's security concerns. As opposed to the previous Bush administration, the Obama administration viewed cooperation with the Russian Federation as intrinsic to a larger multilateral effort to halt the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to solve global security problems (Lebovic, 2013, p. 211; Interview 11, 2018; McFaul, 2018, p. 129; Burns, 2019, p. 627; interview with Stent, 2019). The US president was aware that the priorities he had talked about during his campaign, amongst which were a commitment to reduce the dangers of nuclear war, direct engagement with the Iranian regime, and a more effective approach to the war in Afghanistan, required Russia's support (Burns, 2019, p. 627; see also McFaul, 2018, p. 88). In Roberts' words, Obama 'reframed the effort to move relations with Russia forward onto cooperative approaches to shared interests' (2016, p. 112; see also McFaul, 2018, p. 89; Burns, 2019, p. 630). William 'Bill' Burns, Under Secretary of State, explains in his memoir that Obama thought it made sense to explore a 'reset' in the relations with Russia since 'All of those priorities would benefit from a healthier US-Russian relationship' (2019, p. 630). As Michael McFaul, Obama's special adviser on Russia and the architect of the 'Russian Reset' policy, recalls, 'we had to create incentives to induce cooperation, which could only be realised through direct engagement with Russian government officials' (2018, p. 89).

Obama's foreign policy premised on empathetic engagement appeared to be a natural extension of his declaration in his book, 'The Audacity of Hope', that 'A sense of empathy is at the heart of my moral code' (2006a). In 2006, Senator Obama also highlighted the importance of empathy in his speech to Northwestern University graduates:

> There's a lot of talk in this country about the federal deficit. But I think we
> should talk more about our empathy deficit – the ability to put ourselves in

someone else's shoes; to see the world through those who are different from us – the child who's hungry, the laid-off steelworker, the immigrant woman cleaning your dorm room. As you go on in life, cultivating this quality of empathy will become harder, not easier (Obama, 2006b).

The notion that Obama was attuned to understanding and engaging with Russia's security concerns based on mutual interests and mutual respect finds support in the accounts of his administration officials. As McFaul highlights in his memoir, 'More than many on our national security team, he [Obama] had empathy for his foreign interlocutors, including the Russians' (2018, p. 91). Ben Rhodes, Obama's speech-writer and one of his closest aides, said that Obama was committed to building bridges between the United States and other countries:

> One of his [Obama's] unique attributes is the ability to both speak to the universalisation of American values and also to meet international audiences where they are, to show a degree of empathy for their worldviews, to demonstrate that he is a person capable of standing in their shoes and looking at America through their eyes. That's an asset that we sought to protect (quoted in Traub, 2014; see also Rhodes, 2018).

Obama's close team appeared to share a similar understanding of the importance of empathetic engagement. For instance, Anne-Marie Slaughter, who served as Head of Policy Planning at the State Department under Obama, wrote a February 2008 article called *Good Reasons to be Humble* in which she argued that the next president would have 'to show humility rather than just talk about it'. Alluding to foreign policy decisions made by previous US administrations, Slaughter argued that 'We must take responsibility for what we have done if we expect others to believe that we will do better from now on' and the United States should 'make clear that our hubris . . . has diminished us and led to tens of thousands of unnecessary deaths' (2008). Samantha Power, while a Harvard University lecturer, before being appointed to the National Security Council as Special Assistant to the President in 2009, wrote in a 2003 issue of *The New Republic* that the United States should

apologise for its behaviour in the past. In the article, Power insisted that 'Instituting a doctrine of *mea culpa* would enhance our credibility by showing that American decision-makers do not endorse the sins of their predecessors', and that 'much anti-Americanism derives from the role US political, economic, and military power has played in denying such freedoms to others' (2003). Also, more recently, reflecting on his time in power, McFaul emphasised the importance of empathy and personal relationships: 'Empathy does not mean you agree, but you listen and you engage, and I've had to do that both internationally and domestically' (2019).

These statements, taken together with Obama's commitment to empathetic engagement, indicate that the Obama presidency was an opportunity for genuine engagement with Russia based on a mutual understanding of each other's security concerns. As I have outlined above, Obama and his closest advisers were already particularly perceptive in this regard when they took office. As Kertzer notes, however, merely having the *capacity* or disposition for empathy does not imply a motivation to engage in it, and engagement in it does not mean one can accurately place oneself in the shoes of another being (2019). Holmes and Yarhi-Milo have expanded on this emphasising that the communicative aspect of empathy is crucial in diplomatic settings: 'For empathy to have effects in diplomacy, actors must convey it to others' (2017, p. 4). Empathy in itself, therefore, does not determine social change but can become a feature of practices as background knowledge and can affect outcomes in and through practices. In this case, empathy should be observed by interpreting agents who perform their background knowledge, which consists among other things, of dispositions.

On the Russian side, as soon as Medvedev came into the office in May 2008, 'he tried to establish his own distinct persona' (Stent, 2014b, p. 217) because many commentators had suggested that President Medvedev and Prime-Minister Putin would rule in 'tandem' (Reuters, 2010; see also Black, 2015). A few American diplomatic cables referred to the two leaders as 'two peas in a pod' (*The Guardian*, 2010), or described President Medvedev as 'playing Robin to Putin's Batman' (quoted in Elder, 2011). With Medvedev in charge of the country's foreign policy and his commitment to modernising Russia, Stent argues that the Obama administration wanted to 'empower' the new leader:

> The Obama administration decided to place its bets on Medvedev and focus on that half of the tandem, hoping that eventually Medvedev would be able to assert himself and take control. The buzzword among officials was "empowering" Medvedev, overestimating the influence that the United States could have on Russian domestic politics (2014b, p. 216; also interview, 2019; Roberts, interview, 2019).

Many hours were spent in Washington trying to analyse the relationship between the two Russian leaders as things were unclear in 2008 but, during the first few years, 'Medvedev appeared to have Putin's blessing to reach out to the United States and seek to improve ties' (Stent, 2014b, p. 217). American cables suggest that the new Russian president prioritised reaching a post-START treaty before December 2009, although he still objected strongly to the US proposal to deploy missile defence in Eastern Europe (Wikileaks Cable 08MOSCOW3492_a; 08MOSCOW3616_a; 08MOSCOW3707_a; 09MOSCOW68_a). As Anatoly Antonov, who was the Russian chief negotiator on New START, has explained, 'For us, dealing with missile defence was essential. Missile defence had to be linked to the new treaty' (interview, 2011). The following section will summarise the main challenges underpinning the politically fraught issue of missile defence between the United States and Russia.

<u>5.2.1 The old problem of missile defence</u>

Both the idea of stationing assets of a US missile defence system in Europe and the possible joint cooperation with Russia on such a system are rather old. The current debate is simply the most recent iteration 'of a discussion dating back to the Johnson administration about whether and, if so, how to defend US assets against attack from ballistic missiles' (Mankoff, 2012, p. 331). The contours of this debate have not suffered many changes since the late 1960s. Supporters of the proposed missile defence systems argue that the United States requires the technology in order to defend itself against a growing missile threat. Opponents claim that missile defence systems are expensive and still of uncertain reliability in their current configuration; and, moreover, missile defence could lead to '*increasing* insecurity by undermining strategic stability as embodied in the Cold War-era doctrine of mutually assured destruction (MAD) – thereby giving an adversary an incentive to build an even larger arsenal to overwhelm missile defence, and potentially to launch a pre-emptive attack' (Mankoff, 2012, p. 332). This belief in the potentially destabilising effects of missile defence facilitated the signing of the 1972 ABM Treaty between the United States and Russia, limiting each country to only two ABM deployment sites to ensure mutual vulnerability.

The George W. Bush administration's 2007 decision to create in Europe a 'Third Site' for protection of the American homeland from ballistic missile attack (the first two being in Alaska and California), with facilities in Poland (the interceptors) and the Czech Republic (the radar) elicited vehement Russian opposition (Roberts, 2016, p. 112). Bush and his top advisers argued that, while the prospect of a nuclear exchange between the United States and Russia was almost nil, the advancement in the North Korean and Iranian missile capabilities implied that MAD could not be a basis for the US nuclear strategy anymore

(Mankoff, 2012, p. 333). This led to the US withdrawal from the ABM treaty which, as discussed in the previous chapter, the Bush administration regarded as encompassing Cold War ideas that prevented the United States from addressing the real dangers from North Korea and Iran. Russia, however, did not share the United States' assessment that Tehran and Pyongyang represented a serious missile threat. The US ABM withdrawal and the MD system in Europe thus led to tensions in the US-Russian relations and to a pause in bilateral nuclear arms reduction (Futter, 2013, p. 135; Lebovic, 2013, p. 213; Roberts, 2016, p. 112; Tsygankov, 2016, p. 216).

Obama took office at a time when Iran and North Korea's plans to pursue nuclear weapons were a source of deep concern for the international community and Russia was anxious about US defensive capabilities and intentions (Futter, 2013, p. 135). The Third Site proposal inherited from the Bush administration created a dilemma for Obama who had campaigned on a pledge to downgrade the ballistic missile defence (BMD) programme (Mankoff, 2012, p. 337; Futter, 2013, p. 134). Obama articulated his approach to Iran in 2008 following a series of missile tests by Iran. He argued that 'direct and aggressive diplomacy', not missile defence, was the way to respond to provocations (2008a; see Baker, 2017). In a later interview with *Arms Control Today*, he declared his belief that 'The biggest nuclear security risk is not from a rogue state lashing out with ballistic missiles, but from a terrorist smuggling a crude nuclear device across our borders' (Obama, 2008b). Shortly after his inauguration, the US president clarified his views on missile defence in a major address in Prague: 'As long as the threat from Iran persists, we will go forward with a missile defence system that is cost-effective and proven. If the Iranian threat is eliminated, we will have a stronger basis for security, and the driving force for missile defence construction in Europe will be removed' (Obama, 2009a). This formulation incorporated Obama's approach

to BMD governed by his desire to develop a missile defence system that was cost-effective and proven (Lebovic, 2013, p. 229). Essentially, the US president did not want missile defence to become a stumbling block in realising his administration's other policies priorities, including arms control with Russia and Russia's cooperation on Iran (Mankoff, 2012, p. 339; Futter, 2013, p. 138). John Isaacs suggested that 'Obama was neither for nor against BMD', and that pragmatism defined the American president's approach as he balanced other priorities (2010, quoted in Futter, 2013, p. 137). In this context, Obama sought to empathise with Russia's security concerns and identify a way to advance the US agenda while keeping the two topics – missile defence and arms control – separate. This was essential if a treaty were to reach the US Senate for ratification; the Obama administration was aware that any inclusion of limits on missile defence in a nuclear arms control treaty with Russia would make the road to ratification in Senate almost impossible (McFaul, 2018, p. 102).

Angus Roxburgh, former BBC correspondent in Moscow and former adviser to the Russian government from 2006 to 2009, has explained this problem in his book, *The Strongman*:

> The Americans were determined not to include in the New Start treaty anything that would impede their development of a missile shield. The Russians were equally determined to link the two. They insisted that building defences against offensive nuclear missiles destabilised the general strategic balance by making the side without the shield vulnerable to a first strike (2012, p. 570).

The idea that the US administration was determined to keep the two policies separate is supported by McFaul:

> We were categorical that we were not going to have this conversation together. We could have a separate conversation about missile defence, but here we were going to talk about reducing offensive strategic weapons. That's what the negotiations had to be about. The Russians wanted to do it all together. We said no (quoted in Roxburgh, 2012, p. 570).

The Russian president had wasted little time after the 2008 presidential election in making clear his plans if the Obama administration advanced the proposed Third Site in Europe. Medvedev did not envisage better relations between Russia and the United States if the US MD programme was deployed in Europe. In a speech on 5 November 2008, for instance, Medvedev declared that:

> If US interceptors were deployed in Poland, Russia would target them with new deployments of Iskander ballistic missiles in the Kaliningrad enclave, and plans to decommission three regiments of nuclear-armed long-range missiles in Western Russia would be scrapped (Boese, 2008).

According to Roberts, missile defence was 'a key sticking point' which made the NST negotiations more difficult than many in the Obama administration had expected (2016, p. 113). Antonov confirmed this in a 2011 interview: 'We were always talking that, without dealing with this problem [the linkage between MD and NST], we won't be able to find solution. We reported this to president Medvedev. And Obama was discussing this issue with Medvedev' (interview with Percy, 2011). This dilemma is examined by Norma Percy and Paul Mitchell in their insightful 2011 final film of the four-part BBC Two documentary, *Putin, Russia and the West*. Through her interviews with both American and Russian senior officials involved in the NST negotiations, Percy (2011) underlined the role of missile defence in enabling a reset in relations between the United States and Russia. The series director, Paul Mitchell, reflecting upon his interviews with key decision-makers, told me that 'The separate dialogue on missile defence between the United States and Russia is essential for understanding the negotiations of the New START Treaty' (interview, 2019). It is this separate dialogue between Obama and Medvedev, I argue, which enabled the development of trust between them and shaped their decision-making during the formal NST negotiations.

5.2.2 The route to New START goes through Iran

The term 'Reset', coined by McFaul, was meant to 'encourage' the Russian government to identify shared strategic interests with mutual respect for both countries' values and interests (2018, p. 88). The 'Reset' policy was intended to be about 'deeper engagement' to reach tangible security and economic objectives for the United States (McFaul, 2018, p. 88). Seeking to convince the Kremlin about the seriousness of their reset strategy, the Obama administration decided to send a secret letter to the Russian president to spell out 'the concrete goals that we aimed to accomplish' (McFaul, 2018, p. 97; see Burns, 2019, p. 628). Obama's main way to empathise with his Russian counterpart was to appreciate the significance that Russia's leader and his advisers gave to the notion of respect. In crafting the letter to Medvedev, the US president sought to convey this to his counterpart, and to reassure him that the United States respected Russia's security concerns. He did this primarily through having the message delivered in a symbolic manner and raising two key topics of interest to both the United States and Russia – missile defence and Iran. A report in *The New York Times* in March 2009 stated that, in the letter, the US president had offered to back off deploying a new 'missile defence system in Eastern Europe in exchange for Russia's assistance in pressuring Iran to stop building a nuclear weapon' (Baker, 2009a).

In essence, the letter was a skilful way to achieve better relations with Russia by seeking to address a key security concern for the Kremlin – missile defence – while keeping the topic separate from arms control. The letter can thus be seen as a sliding door moment within the DoT, creating an opportunity for the two sides to start negotiations on a new arms control treaty and, in doing so, enlist Moscow's support in dealing with Iran. Burns recalls the significance of the letter for Medvedev and his team in his memoir:

'"No passage in the President's letter caught the Russians' attention more," I told Clinton, "than the paragraph on Iran and missile defence." Choosing his words carefully, the president had emphasized that he was in the process of reviewing U.S. missile defence strategy, including the plans for sites in Poland and the Czech Republic that had so exercised the Russians, and that – logically – progress in reducing the risks posed by Iran's missile and nuclear programs would have a direct impact on our review, since those were the threats against which our European plans were primarily targeted. The Russians couldn't miss the implication' (2019, p. 630).

The logic seemed simple: the plans for a European missile defence would be sacrificed in order to improve relations with Moscow in exchange for Russia's cooperation on preventing Iran from building nuclear warheads and ballistic missiles (Futter, 2012; 2013; Khoo and Steff, 2014). Obama's secret letter (whose exact contents have never been revealed) requires some attention given the role it played in creating a 'sliding door' moment for Medvedev.

Procedurally, the secret letter was noteworthy for two reasons. First, this was a secret proposal addressed directly to Medvedev before a face-to-face meeting. Medvedev had called president-elect Obama in December 2008 and the two were in agreement that an early meeting was needed (Wikileaks Cable 08MOSCOW3707_a) so the letter was intended to clarify the US position on missile defence and engage Russia before a first meeting between the presidents. This likely reflected the US administration's effort to engage the Kremlin in a manner loaded with symbolic meaning. Burns came up with the idea that a hand-delivered presidential letter outlining the new US 'Reset' policy to Medvedev 'would help reinforce the seriousness of the administration's approach' (2019, p. 628). He argued that 'the Russians tended to be traditionalists in their estimation of diplomatic seriousness, and that this would help' (Burns, 2019, p. 630). Here, the diplomat's empathetic proposal is not actively devised to build trust as much as it simply attunes officials to potential opportunities for trust-building. Going back to the sliding-door analogy, the letter was not purposely

intended as a step for building trust but, by signalling a willingness to become vulnerable, it invited trustworthiness on the part of Medvedev. Actors may demonstrate their trustworthiness through credible commitments which can lead to trust-building (Möllering, 2006, p. 22).

Second, the secret letter reflects the Obama administration's awareness that its proposal might face scrutiny from allied governments and world opinion if revealed for public scrutiny, and that they therefore required justification in the context of existing international legal procedural practices. As discussed earlier, Obama did not have a fixed position on missile defence but the strategic quid-pro-quo deal proposed in the letter was justified by their legal commitments both in the context of domestic and international politics. Obama's proposal thus only reiterated remarks made by Robert Gates, US Secretary of Defence, on 20 February 2009 that 'if there were no Iranian missile programme, there would be no need for the missile defence sites' (quoted in Baker, 2009a). Ultimately, Obama's gesture did not include any mutually binding initiatives that would breach the US security commitments to NATO or threaten American national security; it solely indicated that the missile defence programme was the subject of a comprehensive review and Russia's cooperation on Iran might have a direct impact on the shape of the new missile defence plan for Europe (Futter, 2012, p. 6; Khoo and Steff, 2014, p. 18). Therefore, this sliding door moment paved the way for further cooperation with Russia and opened the door to trust-building between the two leaders by offering Medvedev the possibility to work together on redefining the context which had hitherto shaped the missile defence plans for Europe.

The letter signalled Obama's trustworthiness by suggesting that the new US administration took Medvedev's stated security concerns seriously. McFaul perceived the hand-delivered letter idea to be 'old-fashioned' (McFaul, 2018, p. 97), 'very nineteenth-century' (Burns, 2019, p. 628; see Percy, 2011) but, despite his initial scepticism, he eventually understood the significance of the rather ceremonial diplomatic practice (McFaul, 2018, p. 97). The letter was endorsed by the administration:

> At first, the idea of two senior officials flying eleven hours to deliver a letter seemed silly and inefficient. We were policymakers, not postmen, and there is this thing called email. But Burns's instincts were spot-on. The letter had to be transmitted with proper fanfare to have its intended effect, and by travelling to Moscow in February 2009, Bill and I would have the chance to expand verbally on what Obama had outlined in written form (McFaul, 2018, p. 97).[20]

The symbolism of having two prominent US officials – Burns and McFaul – deliver the presidential letter as a first move towards resetting the US–Russia relationship was seen as dramatic and sent a very positive message (McFaul, 2018, p. 97; Burns, 2019, p. 630; see Percy documentary, 2011). By emphasising the difficulty of translating opportunities into better relations between the two countries, both McFaul and Burns are essentially capturing in their memoirs the contingent nature of trust and the role that both the trustor and the trustee play in building trust. Trust is built gradually through a series of sliding-door moments that both sides can open or close in the light of various alternative courses of action that are open

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[20] This episode highlights the difference between what anthropologist Edward T. Hall characterised as 'low-context' and 'high-context' cultures depending on how they communicate (1976). United States exemplifies the low-context style characterised by 'individualist triumph over communal relationship building; directness, openness, and honesty in communications' (Feste, 2012, p. 136). The Russian Federation operates in a high-context orientation characterised by 'an emphasis on creating and cementing a relationship of trust between parties. As such, an indirect communication style is very important (what is said and what is *not* said)' (Feste, 2012, p. 136). The more pronounced the cultural contrasts between negotiating parties, like in the case of the United States and Russia, the greater the potential for misunderstanding, and interactions across the divide between Hall's dichotomy of 'low-context' and 'high-context' cultures are especially prone to confusion (see Feste, 2012, pp. 135-139). The letter can thus be seen as a procedural way of adapting to the Russian 'high-context' culture.

in principle to both the trustor and the trustee. This becomes apparent in the officials'

recollection of the Russian response to Obama's letter. McFaul recalls that:

> All of these meetings were full of optimism. [Foreign Minister Sergey] Lavrov,
> I would later learn, rarely shows positive expressions of emotion, yet he was
> downright ebullient during our meeting. [Medvedev's foreign policy adviser
> Sergei] Prikhodko was a man of few words, but praised Obama's letter and
> reported that Medvedev had too. Maybe this was a moment for genuine change
> in the dynamics of US-Russian relations? I returned to Washington convinced
> that Reset could work (McFaul, 2018, p. 98).

Burns, it seems, was aware of the challenges the two sides might face in the process

of trying to improve their relations but highlighted the positive expectations which resulted

from delivering the letter:

> McFaul and I spent two days in intensive discussions with Lavrov and other
> senior officials. It went better than we expected. I told the secretary on February
> 13, "I left Moscow convinced that we have a significant opportunity before us,
> but realistic about how hard it is going to be to shift gears with a Russian
> leadership deeply distracted by a worsening economic predicament, and still
> conflicted about whether their interests are better served by a thaw in relations
> (Burns, 2019, p. 630)

In addition to the presidential letter, Burns recalls in his memoir that he 'also took

along a handwritten note from Secretary Clinton to FM Lavrov' although Clinton was

sceptical about how much the 'Reset' could achieve but believed 'it was worth a shot'

(Burns, 2019, p. 629). From a bargaining perspective, one could make the argument that the

discourse and symbolic actions were simply window dressing and the labels we place on the

behaviour secondary; that what really mattered was the strategic quid-pro-quo and the

negotiations that Obama was seeking to initiate with his letter. However, Burns' letter

endorsed by Obama can be seen as a competent performance to seek to legitimate the

administration's new 'Reset' policy by presenting the strategic quid-pro-quo in a way that

could be justified in the context of existing international practices, while advancing US

national interests. Moreover, by actively opening dialogue on missile defence in the context of the Iranian threat, the letter was a skilful move to separate missile defence from arms control negotiations, while signalling a commitment to addressing Russia's key security concern. Obama's letter and, in particular, the strategic quid-pro-quo, would become the foundation for the NST negotiations and a key moment for the development of trust between the two leaders. This is not to say that the New START would not have happened without the letter, but it is plausible that Medvedev may have advocated more adamantly for missile defence to be addressed in the treaty. The letter, therefore, was a competent performance on Obama's side to signal trustworthiness by reaching out to engage Russia on missile defence, while safeguarding US national interests by keeping the issues of missile defence and arms control separate.

Declaring in a public statement his administration's willingness to engage with American proposals concerning missile defence, Medvedev dismissed the suggestion of a deal with the United States that would involve Russian help on Iran in exchange for the US cancellation of missile defence plans in Europe. (Barry, 2009; Spillius, 2009). This idea seemed to be supported by statements from the anonymous US officials who were willing to discuss the contents of the message with *The New York Times*, saying the letter 'did not offer a direct quid pro quo' but 'was intended to give Moscow an incentive to join the United States in a common front against Iran' (Baker, 2009a). Natalya Timakova, the Press Attaché to the Russian president, reiterated publicly the absence of a proposed deal, adding that the letter contained 'various proposals and assessments of the current situation. But the message did not contain any specific proposals or mutually binding initiatives' (quoted in Baker, 2009a). In the same context, Timakova also said that Medvedev perceived the

development of Russian–American relations as 'exceptionally positive' (quoted in Baker, 2009a). The Russian president confirmed this in an interview emphasising that the letter 'was very positive' but remained sceptical of the US president's rhetoric until it translated into actions: 'I don't know if we can turn his [Obama's] words into deeds. Are our governments ready to work together?' (2009, quoted in Percy, 2011). Both Obama's proposal and Medvedev's response capture the dynamism of diplomatic practices whose characteristics must be treated as contingent and open to change. However, it is necessary to examine both the secret and the public talks in order to gain an understanding of the leaders' performances and the development of trust between them.

Linking the two issues – missile defence and Russia's cooperation on Iran – in a crafty proposal by making creative use of procedures enabled the Obama administration to deal with a sensitive issue which was an irritant in the US-Russia relations, namely, the sale by Russia of the S-300 surface-to-defence missile system to Iran that could protect Tehran's nuclear facilities. This sale would become a key aspect of the backchannel diplomacy between the United States and Russia upon which the missile defence dialogue would hinge. It is through this separate private dialogue that the shared practice of secret diplomacy emerges and facilitates the development of trust between Obama and Medvedev. As the Wikileaks cables suggest, for two years between 2008 and 2010, US diplomats and Israeli leaders had sought to persuade Russia not to sell Iran the S-300 mobile surface-to-air missile system that could defend against multiple aircraft at a range of 195 kilometres and ballistic missiles at a range of up to 50 kilometres (Ackerman, 2010; Katz and Bohbot, 2017, p. 396; see Wikileaks Cable 09MOSCOW1111_a).

As Ackerman explains, 'Stopping the sale of the S-300 missile, an issue obscure to all but obsessive observers of the region, became a secret test for American diplomacy at the highest levels' (2010). Almost as soon as the Obama administration came into office, Israeli diplomats put pressure on Russia and sought American cooperation to prevent the sale of the powerful anti-aircraft system to Iran that was believed to threaten regional security (Ackerman, 2010; Wikileaks Cable 09TELAVIV1688_a). The United States was keen to support Israel in this endeavour to avoid the transfer of a military system that could destabilise the Middle East region (Ackerman, 2010; Katz and Bohbot, 2017, p. 396; see Wikileaks Cable 09MOSCOW1111_a). Given the Obama administration's efforts to implement their new 'Reset' with Russia, the Iran sale together with the European plans for missile defence became key pieces of the puzzle without which the NST negotiations would be incomplete.

Compared to the previous chapter, the interactions between the two leaders so far suggest that both sides have a common understanding of how an agreement on NST can be reached and they are both willing to negotiate a way forward through secret diplomatic negotiations. For instance, Obama made an initial proposal that invoked accepted international legal practices and alliance politics. In his words, the letter proposal was not 'a quid pro quo but a statement of fact' and discussions with Russia did not 'diminish my commitment to making sure that Poland, the Czech Republic and other NATO members are fully enjoying the partnership, the alliance and US support with respect to their security' (Obama, 2009, quoted in Barry, 2009). The justification of the proposal was thus made according to established legal practices. Medvedev's response also sought to justify the rejection of a quid-pro-quo, highlighting the absence of a legally binding agreement in the letter. As the rest of this chapter shows, however, the backchanneling between the two

leaders reveals that the Kremlin did agree to the tacit exchange suggested in the letter which then led to the cancellation of the Third Site. Despite Medvedev's public rejection of the quid pro quo, Sergei Ryabkov, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister, confirmed to the American Ambassador to Russia, John Beyrle, that 'Moscow had "gotten the message"' (Wikileaks Cable 09MOSCOW405_a). By this, he meant that Medvedev had decided to postpone the delivery of the S-300 system to Iran, 'an $800 million deal signed between the two countries in 2007' (Wikileaks Cable 09MOSCOW405_a).

The Wikileaks cables state that the prospect of better US-Russian relations 'may have tempered the GOR [Government of Russia] response' and highlight the press reports inside Russia which note that 'Russia had "deferred its plan to sell S-300's to Iran "in an effort to improve Moscow's relations with the new Obama administration"' (Wikileaks Cable 09MOSCOW405_a). What these cables show is that the two leaders engaged in an empathetic process of finding a common understanding of how to reach agreement on NST (i.e. what I call a process of aligning procedural practices). This, of course, does not mean that the two sides did not consider their national interests in the negotiations, but their willingness to engage with the other side's security concerns meant their performances facilitated the development of asymmetric levels of trust. As Burns explains, Medvedev's decision was more than a simple quid-pro-quo, it showed a willingness to be vulnerable by postponing the sale of the S-300 system and a potential for mutual trust between the two leaders:

> No, it's not a small thing for the Russians to, in essence, return an $800 million down payment to the Iranians, which was in effect what they did. And no, no one underestimated the significance of this step. Not only the cancellation of that sale itself, but also the President that I think many on the Russian side were quite concerned about. So it was not a small thing, but I think it was a reflection, both

of increasing Russian concern about Iran, and also I think increasing trust in the relationship with President Obama (Burns, interview with Percy, 2011).

5.2.3 The first meeting between Obama and Medvedev

Following the letter and the secret communications on missile defence and Iran, the first face-to-face meeting between Obama and Medvedev was an opportunity to expand on the terms of the US reset and identify a shared understanding on how to proceed with the NST negotiations. The first challenge of missile defence for the NST negotiations came up in the context of the joint statement intended for release at the London meeting between the two leaders. During the preparations prior to the meeting, the Russians pushed to include 'language about the relationship between offensive and defensive weapons into the initial statement' about the NST negotiations (McFaul, 2018, p. 101). According to McFaul, for the Americans, 'we worried that this seemingly innocuous material was really a Trojan horse for future language designed to limit US missile defences' (2018, p. 102). The difficulty of reaching agreement on this short one-page joint statement raised questions as to how hard it would be to negotiate a new nuclear arms control treaty: 'If we couldn't agree to this "chickenshit" (as Samore called it) one page-joint statement, how were we going to negotiate an entire treaty?' (McFaul, 2018, p. 102). A few days before the meeting, based on more backchannel communication, the two sides managed to agree on the language for the joint statement, indicative of a 'cooperative mood' (McFaul, 2018, p. 102).

The first meeting between the two presidents, organised at the residence of the US ambassador to Britain, on 1 April 2009, on the margins of a G-20 meeting, lasted for seventy minutes, and concluded with a joint statement pledging cooperation on issues including Afghanistan, Iran's nuclear programme, and nuclear proliferation (Stent, 2014b, p. 219).

Unlike the first Bush-Putin summit in Slovenia, this meeting did not produce 'effusive rhetoric' (Stent, 2014b, p. 219). During their one-on-one, however, the two presidents outlined their goals for the negotiations on a new START Treaty by the end of the year (McFaul, 2018, p. 105; Burns, 2019, p. 633). Moreover, Medvedev indicated his willingness to respond positively to the US reset in relations. Indicative of this was the Russian president's decision to allow the United States to transport lethal cargo via Russian airspace to supply their troops into Afghanistan (Clinton, 2014, p. 233; McFaul, 2018, p. 123; Burns, 2019, p. 633): 'This was important because it would give us leverage with Pakistan, which otherwise controlled the only route for troops and equipment into Afghanistan' (Clinton, 2014, p. 233). As McFaul writes in his memoir, acknowledging Medvedev's contribution to the beginning of 'new progress' in US-Russia relations, 'the overture was not simply a symbolic gesture, but a first step toward an agreement that could diversify our supply lines as well as speed up and reduce the costs of supplying our soldiers' (2018, p. 123).

A significant event worth highlighting, given it was not accessible to the public at the time, was Medvedev's surprising acknowledgement during the meeting that 'Russia had underestimated Iran's growing nuclear capacity' (2014, p. 233). Clinton notes in her memoir that the Russian president made a startling statement – 'Turns out you were right' – to the US officials, referring to Iran's steady progress toward nuclear capability (2014, p. 233; see McFaul, 2018, p. 105). According to Clinton (2014, p. 233); McFaul (2018, p. 105), and Burns (2019, p. 634) the situation was utterly unexpected – the Russian president was admitting to Obama that the Iranian nuclear and ballistic missile programmes were advancing faster than the Russian analysts had reported. Medvedev's comment, Clinton argues, 'opened a door for stronger cooperation on Iran' although the Russian leader 'did

not alter his opposition to our plans for missile defence in Europe' (2014, p. 233; see McFaul, 2018, p. 105). Given the Obama's letter proposal, Burns' assessment of the situation was that Medvedev was 'probing to see how far a tougher line on Iran might get him on the missile defence issue' (2019, p. 634). Medvedev was thus indicating a willingness to embrace the terms of the American reset. McFaul claims that this Russian move was signalling 'that Obama and Medvedev might have a chance at developing a new kind of relationship between our two countries' (2018, p. 106). In particular, the official found the move positively surprising in light of the fact that it contradicted 'the briefings we had received about Russian negotiation behaviour. They never gave away anything for free. They were always "transactional", or so we were told' (McFaul, 2018, p. 106). Obama did not expand on the topic of missile defence at this stage, but he promised talks, informing Medvedev that his administration was still reviewing missile defence options in Europe. He stated that Russia would be briefed on its conclusions 'as soon as that review is complete', which he specified would be before the end of the summer (quoted in Fletcher and Pan, 2009).

The US president, however, keen to develop a strong relationship with the Russian leader, decided to raise one sensitive issue with Medvedev in their one-on-one meeting to test his trust. McFaul recalls that, prior to the London meeting, Obama weighed carefully the potential consequences and risks of his own action:

> Obama was going to tell Medvedev about our new policy of engagement with Iran, including that the president had reached out to Iran's supreme leader in the form of a letter. Not everyone in the administration agreed with the idea; few people in our own government knew about the letter. It had not been made public. What if Medvedev spilled the beans? But we wanted to win Russia's support for our new approach to Iran, and we also wanted to test Medvedev's commitment to developing a relationship with Obama based on trust. If the

Russian president kept quiet about the letter, that would be a good sign (McFaul, 2018, p. 104).

This episode is essential for this chapter's argument that mutual trust developed between Obama and Medvedev. Essentially, while deontic power (i.e. his status) made it possible for Obama to engage with his Russian counterpart, his performative power was an intrinsic part of facilitating the co-creation of mutual trust. I argue that Obama shared a vulnerability with Medvedev by disclosing secret information to about the secret US letter to Iran that had only been shared with a few people in the US government (see McFaul, 2018, p. 104). The information was sensitive given that Obama's intention to keep his communication with the Iranian Supreme Leader private for as long as possible, to insulate the interaction from political costs related to the disclosure of his outreach to Iran (see Baker, 2017, p. 160). By keeping this information secret and working with the Obama administration quietly, behind closed doors, to prevent the sale of the S-300 system to Iran, the two leaders' diplomatic practices co-created mutual trust. The Russian DFM Ryabkov emphasised the significance of the Iranian issue for the US-Russian relations in an interview with Percy:

> And Iran, paradoxically as it might seem, despite the complexity of the problem, is the subject that has helped us to reset our relations. I am not an advocate of high-flown phrases, and I don't want to exaggerate anything, but this is exactly how it is (interview with Percy, 2011).

The impact of Obama sharing this secret information about Iran – what I argue became a 'shared vulnerability' – on the NST formal negotiations is explored in the following section.

The overall conclusion after the first face-to-face meeting between the two leaders was that Obama and Medvedev got off to a solid start, indicating a more pragmatic partnership than the one their predecessors pursued (Shear and Wilson, 2009; Whitmore, 2009; Roberts, 2016, p. 113). A senior US official described the 'good rapport' between Obama and

Medvedev in the meeting, adding that 'since the two are roughly the same age and were both trained as lawyers, they shared a "common language"' (Whitmore, 2009). Russian FM Lavrov, seeking to avoid reducing cooperation between the United States and Russia to a personal relationship, praised what he called a 'new atmosphere of mutual trust . . . which does not create the illusion of good relations because they develop well on a personal level, but which ensures taking into account mutual interests and readiness to listen to each other' (quoted in Shear and Wilson, 2009). Obama's empathic disposition appeared to be recognised by his Russian counterpart who appreciated that Obama was a good listener (interview 3, 2016; interview 6, 2016) and later called him 'my new comrade' (quoted in Black, 2015, p. 154). The Russians felt they had been disrespected by previous US administrations – something which the Obama administration was deeply aware of (Wikileaks Cable 08MOSCOW3616_a; see also McFaul, 2018, pp. 130-133). Medvedev, however, announced his optimism about the new US-Russian relationship:

> What we are getting from our US partners shows at least one thing, that our U.S. partners are ready to discuss the issue. That's good, because only a few months ago we were getting different signals – that the decision has been made, there is nothing to talk about, that we will do everything as it has been decided (quoted in Barry, 2009).

The Russian leader reiterated this point in a speech at the London School of Economics where he declared that 'I can say at the very least that the United States is ready to listen to our views today. They do not cut us off and tell us that the matter is settled and there is nothing to discuss' (2009b; see also Stent, 2014b, p. 219). What this first part of the chapter aimed to show was that, before the formal NST negotiations started, the two presidents had already indicated their willingness to trust each other by sharing a secret which, if revealed, could have affected negatively both their countries' relations with Iran. The extent to which

the mutual trust between the two leaders shaped the formal NST negotiations is discussed in the following part of the chapter.

5.3 The New START formal negotiations

This section examines the two-day July summit meeting between Obama and Medvedev, the subsequent formal treaty negotiations, and the cancellation of the Third Site plan for missile defence in Europe. By doing so, it seeks to show that key decisions made by the two leaders, in particular with regard to the transparency-security trade-off, were instantiations of their mutual trust through which the two leaders interpreted their decisions, thus shaping the verification provisions of the NST.

The US president travelled to Moscow for the 6-7 July 2009 summit and he and Medvedev used this opportunity to further refine their goals for a new START Treaty, and indicated for the first time the range they were discussing for the limits in the treaty (Woolf, 2019). They decided that the new document would restrict both countries to between 500 and 1,100 strategic delivery vehicles and in the range of 1,500 and 1,675 for their associated warheads (Woolf, 2019, p. 4). They also reached consensus that the new treaty would include 'provisions on definitions, data exchanges, notifications, eliminations, inspections and verification procedures, as well as confidence building and transparency measures, as adapted, simplified, and made less costly, as appropriate, in comparison to the START Treaty' (*The White House*, 2009). Interestingly, while the majority of the agreements announced on 6 July were reached by senior officials ahead of the summit, Obama and Medvedev managed to work out a deal on language on missile defence without the support

of their advisers (McFaul quoted in Fletcher and Pan, 2009; McFaul interview with Percy, 2011).

Until the summit, Russia had rejected any statement on missile defence cooperation in the context of arms control negotiations unless the United States abandoned plans for deploying missile defence in Poland and the Czech Republic (Fletcher and Pan, 2009). Also, the Obama administration approach to arms control was to disconnect the topic of missile defence, so defensive systems, from that of offensive systems negotiated in the arms control talks. The two presidents, however, surprisingly decided that the treaty would include a 'provision on the interrelationship of strategic offensive arms and strategic defensive arms' (*The White House*, 2009). At the joint conference on 6 July, Obama agreed to a last-minute joint statement on missile defence issues and Medvedev seized on, what Kramer described as 'Obama's acquiescence to Russia' (2009):

> In our mutual understanding that has just been signed, we talk about the linkage between offensive and defensive weapons, and this already constitutes a step forward. Some time ago, on this question, we had all – only differences. Now this linkage is being stated and this opens up the opportunity of bringing positions closer to each other (Medvedev, 2009).

The rather spontaneous statement of both presidents which is now part of the preamble to New START, states that the two parties acknowledge:

> the existence of the interrelationship between strategic offensive arms and strategic defensive arms, that this interrelationship will become more important as strategic nuclear arms are reduced, and that current strategic defensive arms do not undermine the viability and effectiveness of the strategic offensive arms of the parties (NST, 2010).

The language that was used was seen as a substantial improvement in the US–Russia relations as a result of the two leaders' good personal relationship. This particular moment would remain controversial for the Obama administration and would represent a key aspect

of the treaty they would have to defend in the hearings during the ratification process. During the ratification debate, many senators proposed amendments to the treaty to remove any language associated with missile defences for fear that it would place limitations on the development of the US MD programme (Woolf, 2019, p. 25).

The joint statement is controversial because it was the result of the one-to-one talks between Obama and Medvedev, without prepared points from their advisers. I argue this is an evidence of their mutual trust that had developed between them, and which cannot be fully understood outside the private talks that had taken place between the two leaders. Essentially, what the Wikileaks cables (examined below) appear to suggest is that Obama's decision to agree to the joint statement at the July summit took place after Russia had informed his administration in their private meetings that the S-300 sale to Iran was frozen. Press reports of the US-Russian secret diplomatic activities could have severely disrupted their own relationship and their bilateral relations with Iran and could have undermined the entire US 'Reset' policy. The mutual trust between the two leaders made possible the joint statement. The DoT framework thus offers a nuanced understanding of how both Obama and Medvedev interpreted the missile defence issue in light of their mutual trust.

While no Wikileaks cable yet released states clearly that the US and Israeli pressure stopped the S-300 sale, a couple of accounts, in particular drawing on Wikileaks cables, appear to suggest that Medvedev decided to freeze the delivery to test the new relationship with the United States so, essentially, to create a context in which the 'reset' narrative could lead to positive changes in US-Russia relations (Katz and Bohbot, 2017, p. 168; Miles, 2013). Two weeks after Obama and Medvedev met for the first time in London, in a meeting

with US officials, FM Lavrov made it clear that Medvedev rejected a quid-pro-quo in which the US would cancel its missile defence plans in Eastern Europe in return for 'Russia pressuring Iran to end its nuclear weapons programme' (Wikileaks Cable 09MOSCOW1111_a, 2009). However, in an effort to indicate potential collaboration between the United States and Russia, Russian DFM Ryabkov stated in a follow-on meeting with US senator Carl Levin, the chairman at the time of the Senate Armed Services Committee, that the S-300 deal was 'frozen' and 'Russia would be prepared to undertake a dual-track approach' towards Iran's nuclear programme' (Wikileaks Cable 09MOSCOW1111_a, 2009). In other words, Russia would 'offer incentives to Tehran, but keeping in reserve measures within the Agreed Framework' (Wikileaks Cable 09MOSCOW1111_a, 2009). Ryabkov's performance was essentially implying the need for a face-saving mechanism that would allow Russia to freeze the planned sale to Iran as a response to an international agreement, without having to denounce Iran's actions publicly, with whom they wanted to maintain good diplomatic relations. This diplomatic plan seemed clear when Ryabkov stressed that 'no one can deliver Iran to the US, except the US itself,' and argued that it did not help that everyone kept talking about the frozen deal: the 'less Moscow heard from Washington about it, the better' (Wikileaks Cable 09MOSCOW1111_a, 2009). This story appears to suggest that the mutual trust developed between Obama and Medvedev at their meeting in London was now shaping both leaders' decisions with regard to the NST negotiations.

5.3.1 The cancelling of the Third Site plan for missile defence in Europe

On 17 September 2009, the Obama Administration announced that a Phased Adaptive Approach (PAA) would replace the Third Site plan for BMD in Europe. In a low-key statement at the White House, the US president highlighted that:

> The new approach will provide capabilities sooner, build on proven systems, and offer greater defences against the threat of missile attack than the 2007 European missile defence programme . . . It is more comprehensive than the previous programme; it deploys capabilities that are proven and cost- effective; and it sustains and builds upon our commitment to protect the US homeland against long-range ballistic missile threats (2009b; see also Futter, 2013, p. 144).

This significant change in plan and, ultimately, what Obama had actually suggested in the secret letter to Medvedev from the beginning of his term, seemed to finally take place, pleasing the Russians while creating tensions among NATO members. Without any public reciprocation from their Russian counterparts, the US actions were perceived as trying to placate Russia.

The new approach, Obama said, would concentrate 'on the threat posed by Iran's short- and medium-range missiles, rather than its intercontinental nuclear capabilities' (Baker, 2009b). Of interest here is the extent to which the mutual trust with Medvedev was important in Obama's decision-making. US officials consistently denied that Russia was a factor in Obama's decision to shelve plans for US missile defence in Poland and the Czech Republic (Kramer, 2010, p. 66). US Secretary of Defence Robert Gates claimed 'Russia's attitude and possible reaction played no part in my recommendation to the president on this issue', adding, however, that 'Of course, considering Russia's past hostility toward American missile defence in Europe, if Russia's leaders embrace this plan, then that will be an unexpected – and welcome – change of policy on their part' (Kramer, 2010, p. 66). Speaking to reporters at the White House, Obama portrayed the change 'as a revamping, not an

abandonment', of missile defence in Europe (Baker, 2009b). In a similar fashion, in an interview with CBS's *Face the Nation*, the US president made sure he rejected Russia's objections to the missile defence shield:

> Russia had always been paranoid about this but George Bush was right, this wasn't a threat to them. And this program will not be a threat to them. So my task here was not to negotiate with the Russians. The Russians don't make determinations about what our defence posture is . . . If the by-product of it is that the Russians feel a little less paranoid and are now willing to work more effectively with us to deal with threats like ballistic missiles from Iran or nuclear development in Iran, you know, then that's a bonus (quoted in Kramer, 2010, p. 66).

The Moscow response was, of course, positive. Medvedev welcomed Obama's move, calling it a 'responsible approach' and affirming that 'I am prepared to continue this dialogue' (Baker, 2009b). A Russian FM spokesman, Andrei Nesterenko, described Obama's policy change as 'obviously a positive sign for us' but made clear that Russia was not involved in a deal and that the American leader's decision was a unilateral one (Harding and Traynor, 2009). Prime-Minister Putin hailed as 'correct and brave' Obama's decision to roll back the missile shield plan and called for further gestures to improve their countries' relations (Bryanski, 2009). Additionally, 'The Russian officials did indicate that the Kremlin would withdraw its threat to base short-range missiles on Russia's western border, in Kaliningrad' (Levy and Baker, 2009), which they had intended to use in the event the United States did not cancel the Third Site.

As expected, Obama's decision about missile defence sparked various reactions in the world. In particular, it was seen as a significant concession to Russia, one that prioritised an adversary over NATO allies. In the words of Kramer, 'Whatever the official explanation now for not moving forward, many – including the Kremlin – will read this shift as an effort

to placate Moscow' (2009). Seeking to underline the NATO alliance perceptions of Obama's change of plan, Kramer argues that the 'administration's capitulation to Russian pressure is a serious betrayal of loyal allies in Warsaw and Prague whose governments pursued politically unpopular positions at the request of the Bush administration to help confront a rising threat from Iran' (2009). Although Democrats praised the president's decision, Obama's announcement was strongly criticised by Republicans, who accused the president of betraying European allies and 'caving in' to Russian pressure 'in a naive bid for diplomacy' (Stent, 2014b, p. 210; see also Baker, 2009b). Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell has argued that Obama's decision was 'short-sighted and harmful to our long-term security interests' (*BBC News*, 2009). Representative John A. Boehner of Ohio, the House Republican leader, has noted that 'Scrapping US MD system in Poland and the Czech Republic does little more than empower Russia and Iran at the expense of our allies in Europe' (Baker, 2009b). What the responses suggest is that, politically, Obama took a political risk with his performance to convey his trustworthiness to Medvedev.

The situation had been made worse by some of Medvedev's public statements which highlighted that the Russian president was not soft on the United States. Medvedev's threats against Poland and the Czech Republic days after the July summit together with his trip to South Ossetia a week later were seen as 'a warning that the current Russian president will be no pushover when it comes to standing up to the United States' (Kramer, 2010, p. 74). Furthermore, Medvedev outlined his programme in his article, 'Go Russia!', on 10 September 2009, in which he emphasised the salience of enhancing the country's nuclear technology. While he stated that the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons was an absolute priority and a common goal for Russia and the leading democratic countries, Medvedev

added that Russia should 'maintain and raise our nuclear technology to a qualitatively new level' (2009). In this context, regardless of the US administration's continuous rejection of the argument that the cancellation was aimed at pleasing Russia, Obama's decision to cancel the Third Site was undoubtedly perceived as a major concession to Russia, hurting the NATO alliance, while showing weakness towards Russia. As Kirchick has argued, 'Perception matters in foreign policy, and the perception in Central and Eastern Europe was that America was abandoning its friends in order to satiate an adversary' (2017). In addition, the timing of the announcement was not well received in Poland since the date of Obama's change in policy coincided with the 70th anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Poland at the start of World War II (Weinthal, 2012). In abandoning the missile installations in Poland and the Czech Republic, Feith and Cropsey accused Obama of siding with Russia:

> Obama apparently decided that those agreements were less important than the goodwill he might buy with Russia by cancelling them. Maintaining solidarity with allies that look to America as the leader of the free world has never been an Obama administration priority (2012).

The context, again, is crucial to understand the motivations for cancelling the Third Site and the role of mutual trust in shaping Obama's decision and his public performance. First, the threat assessment of the Iran situation changed over the summer. Gates explained the change in the US administration's approach in the following way:

> The intelligence community now assess that the threat from Iran's short and medium-range ballistic missiles, such as the Shahab-3, is developing more rapidly than previously projected [while] the threat of potential Iranian ICBM capabilities has been slower to develop than was previously estimated in 2006 (quoted in Harvey, 2009).

Second, technological advancements from the Missile Defence Review promised by the Obama administration indicated that 'better performing, near-term systems should be prioritised over those with a less promising record, and those that were considered more

futuristic' (Futter, 2013; BMDR, 2010). Burns recalls that the review was a strong recommendation, supported by both Gates and Clinton, to pursue an alternative to the Third Site, concluding that the 'phased adaptive approach (PAA)' would be 'a technically superior defence against a potential Iranian threat over the near and medium term, and more sustainable politically in Europe' (2019, p. 643). Essentially, the PAA would be technically superior to the Third Site and in the US national interest but in addition, in cancelling the Third Site, relations with Russia might also improve as a result. In the words of Fitzpatrick, the PAA 'replaces a system that had experienced serious operational and developmental problems with radars and interceptors that are much more capable and are likely to be better in the future' (2009, p. 5). The recommendations in the report, therefore, provided the Obama administration with more flexibility with regard to compromises on missile defence systems in Europe in their negotiations with the Russians. Burns captures this idea in his memoir:

> I pointed out in a note to Clinton in early September an obvious corollary benefit: 'A fresh start on missile defence, entirely defensible on the technical merits, gives you and the President a stronger hand to play' with the Russians. 'Far from letting the Russians off the hook, this approach is our best bet to corner them on Iran, and to press ahead on post-START and wider European security issues' (2019, pp. 643-644).

The results of the missile defence review were an opportunity for Obama to improve relations with Russia without compromising the US national security. Moreover, the Obama administration had already received secret intelligence over the summer that Russia would move ahead with the sale of the S-300 if the United States did not cancel their Third Site (Wikileaks Cable 09TELAVIV1688_a). The Wikileaks cables appear to suggest that the 'sale of the S-300 is a matter of prestige to Russia' (Wikileaks Cable 09MOSCOW405_a), requiring a face-saving option for the Russians to stop the sale, as discussed in the previous section. Obama's decision concerning the Third Site took into account the new context that

both Medvedev and himself had redefined through the development of mutual trust between them and the result was to offer the Russian president a face-saving option with regard to Iran.

At the United Nations General Assembly on 23 September 2009, the US administration found the opportunity to provide the Russians with evidence that Iran was developing nuclear weapons, which would give them a legitimate claim to stop the S-300 sale. After announcing the cancellation of the Third Site a few days earlier, this episode was meant to force the Russians to cooperate publicly on Iran by offering them a legitimate way out of the sale and giving Medvedev ammunition for dealing with his own domestic criticisms that he was weak towards the United States. In sharing spy photographs of a secret uranium enrichment plant that Iran was building, the Obama administration was hoping to end the S-300 problems:

> In a room at the Waldorf Astoria hotel, Jones showed Prikhodko spy photographs of a secret uranium enrichment plant that the Iranians were building near the holy city of Qom. Prikhodko admitted in an interview: 'This was not the nicest surprise we could have got.' Jones says the Russian was shocked and kept shaking his head, saying, 'This is bad, really bad . . . Foreign minister Lavrov couldn't believe what he was seeing. He took Michael McFaul aside and said: "Why didn't you tell us before, Mike?' McFaul replied: 'Well… we thought you knew. I mean, these are your guys, not ours!' (Roxburgh, 2012, pp. 575-576; see also McFaul, 2011)

This episode highlights Obama's competent performance in his approach to arms control negotiations with Russia in an attempt to keep missile defence separate from the NST talks. In creating a legitimate situation for Medvedev to react to, Obama managed for the first time to get Russia to agree publicly to sanctions on Iran and identified a legal reason to prevent the transfer of the S-300 to Iran. Also, as Stent has told me, there must have been mutual trust between the two sides to share the sensitive photographs with the Russians,

which also highlighted the sort of intelligence the Americans possessed (interview, 2019). As the episode suggests, material and ideational concerns remained important during the decision-making process, but the sharing of spy photographs with Russia and Medvedev's agreement to public sanctions on Iran can be seen as instantiations of the mutual trust developed between the two leaders through both public and private talks. It would thus be insufficient to examine the NST negotiations on the verification provisions in the following section without considering all these instances of mutual trust which had developed through their parallel secret talks.

5.3.2 Telemetry, inspections, and unique identifiers

The United States and the Russian delegations conducted prolonged talks led on the American side by State Department Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control, Verification and Compliance (AVC), Rose Gottemoeller. The Russian delegation was headed by Anatoly Antonov, Director of Security and Disarmament at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In order to find a mutually agreeable final agreement, both sides had to balance the compromises they would make with how the domestic audiences would perceive these compromises in their own countries. Key topics that were debated throughout the negotiations by the two delegations included telemetry, unique identifiers for missiles and bombers, and the number of inspections (Stent, 2014b, p. 220; McFaul, 2018, p. 141; interview with Mitchell, 2019). Both delegations, however, relied on the presidents to finalise challenging aspects of the negotiations. Roxburgh highlights the two leaders' keen interest in the negotiations and their role in supporting their delegations on the most challenging topics:

Both Obama and Medvedev became deeply involved in the process, hammering out all the most important details in telephone calls and face-to-face meetings (2012, p. 577).

McFaul also acknowledges the presidents' role in reaching a deal on NST:

For all the big moves, our closer was Obama. He became our lead negotiator on the New START treaty, speaking with Medvedev both on the phone and in meetings on the sidelines of multilateral gatherings. Obama wanted the assignment. Since college, he had developed a keen interest in nuclear weapons, and was therefore ready to invest the time to learn the issues and negotiate the difficult elements of the treaty . . . Ultimately, it was Obama who wanted to see us, Obama who wanted to make the necessary calls and take the meetings, Obama who wanted the leading roll in negotiations (2018, p. 145).

Burns confirms the importance of Obama and Medvedev in leading the NST negotiations and helping to reach agreement on difficult issues:

The president himself [Obama] played a critical role in this, hammering out key compromises with Medvedev by phone and in meetings on the margins of international conferences (2019, p. 645; see also Lavrov, 2011; Stent, 2014b, p. 217; Wikileaks Cable 09STATE94672_a).

The discussions on these issues and the role of the presidents are discussed in detail below.

As the two presidents agreed in July 2009, a key goal for NST was to streamline and simplify verification measures. Critics of the NST, as it had happened with every past arms control treaty, challenged the new verification procedures. Verification provisions have always been and will always remain an issue that is quite vulnerable to various political manipulations on both sides. Where treaty supporters saw advantages in efficiency and costs, treaty critics insisted that new verification provisions under the NST were poor substitute for pre-existing practices (Lebovic, 2013, p. 221). In particular, three topics were subjected to endless debates as they would have a significant impact on the transparency-security trade-off. One was the topic of unique identifiers – which meant giving every missile a serial

number so they could be accounted for and tracked. The second was the exchange of what was known as telemetric information – missile-generated flight test data. The third issue was the number of annual short-notice, on-site inspections to ensure compliance with the treaty terms.

First, the problem with the unique identifiers was discussed by the two presidents at a meeting in December 2009 in Copenhagen, where both leaders were attending climate talks. After months of meetings between the two delegations, McFaul explains that 'We made progress, but not nearly as much as I had hoped' (2018, p. 146). The negotiators could not agree on this technical issue: 'Giving a serial number to each missile and heavy bomber seemed like an obvious, trivial move. Why were they resisting so defiantly?' (McFaul, 2018, p. 147). The Russian negotiators had been opposing this move, asserting that 'if we sign a treaty, we fulfil it' and that their US counterparts should refrain from making assumptions about Russia's cheating if they cannot reach agreement on the issue of unique identifiers (Roxburgh, 2012, p. 578). McFaul recalls that this was one of the challenges which required the leaders' help: 'We were going to have to go to Medvedev' (2018, p. 147). The two presidents did manage to discuss some key topics and clarify their concerns in their meeting, including on unique identifiers and the number of inspections. Obama was keen to make progress with Medvedev on the issue of 'unique identifiers': 'Look, we just put these barcodes on the missiles, so we can count them. That's what the treaty's all about, after all' (quoted in Roxburgh, 2012, p. 578). Compared to his delegation, the Russian leader did not see a problem with using this method: 'Medvedev saw the sense of it. "OK," he said, "so long as it's done in a fair way. That you do it and we do it, and we do it in a symmetrical way"' (quoted in Roxburgh, 2012, p. 578).

In addition, the two leaders reached a breakthrough on the second topic of telemetry and it seemed that the negotiations were coming to an end. Telemetric exchange provides some transparency into the capabilities of the countries' systems, so it is regarded as a sensitive topic for the transparency-security trade-off. Critics in the United States argued that 'maintaining the prohibitions on telemetry encryption was vital for ensuring that the Russians would not test new systems – with greater warhead capacities – nor equip their systems with undeclared warheads' (Lebovic, 2013, p. 221). Also, Moscow was adamant that the new treaty did not require telemetry exchange. NST does not restrict the throw-weight on new types of ballistic missiles, meaning that telemetry sharing based on the old START terms was no longer seen as needed (Pifer, 2010; Reif, 2018). As Pifer has observed, 'New START thus does not need telemetry for purposes of verifying its limits' (2010). The Obama administration sought to retain START 1's telemetry provisions but the Russians were not prepared to provide access to all telemetry from their ballistic missile tests (Pifer, 2010). The topic was so frequent in the NST negotiations that Medvedev joked, 'My favourite word in English now is "telemetry"' (Baker, 2010; see also Roxburgh, 2012, p. 577). Obama asked to conduct 18 inspections a year, which was different from the 10 originally proposed by Moscow but, in return, the US president accepted 'a more limited transparency provision on telemetry that provides exchanges on five missiles per year' (Pifer, 2010). 'Let's just do it on an annual basis,' Obama proposed unexpectedly at the meeting (quoted in Baker, 2010). 'I don't see any problem with that,' Medvedev replied (quoted in Baker, 2010). As a result, the treaty divides inspections into Type One (which can confirm data on delivery vehicles and warheads) and Type Two inspections (of non-deployed systems). Each country is allowed to conduct up to 10 Type One inspections and

up to 8 Type Two inspections (Reif, 2018; Woolf, 2019). In the absence of rival explanations, this moment between the two leaders can be regarded as further evidence of their mutual trust. Considering their previous interactions and their established mutual trust, I argue that these compromises were negotiated as a result of their mutual trust.

Another challenge for the transparency-security trade-off the two delegations had to discuss was related to the perimeter portal continuous monitoring (PPCM) which had provided for continuous monitoring missile production plants to verify the entrance and exit of new types of missiles (Kile, 2009). Under START 1, US inspectors had been based at Russia's Votkinsk missile production factory, which allowed the United States to count mobile missiles leaving the facility (Lewis, 2009). This issue has been particularly important for the United States given its anxiety about new Russian missiles 'that are, by design, very hard to find' (Lewis, 2009). Moscow wanted this sort of monitoring to end with START I mainly because Medvedev's administration believed the United States had taken advantage of the verification activities to collect information on Russian capabilities (Williams, 2017a). The Russian negotiators claimed that the Bush Administration had signed an agreement with Russia to permanently remove PPCM from Votkinsk when START expired in 2009 (Wikileaks Cable 08MOSCOW3707_a). According to an American official, the Russians kept repeating that 'It's the reset. Why do we need inspectors? We're all friends now' (quoted in Baker, 2010). Gottemoeller confirmed that the US negotiators had tried to keep PPCM in the new treaty but she found she could not reopen the issue (Baker, 2010). New START, therefore, does not permit perimeter and portal monitoring at missile assembly facilities (Woolf, 2011, p. 17). Russia, however, must inform the United States 48 hours in advance of the exit of a solid-fuelled ICBM or SLBM from a production facility, which also enhances monitoring by NTM such as satellites (Reif, 2018).

In January 2010, General James Jones, US National Security Adviser, called Obama from Moscow airport 'after talks that seemed to clinch the deal' (Roxburgh, 2012, p. 578). There was, however, a significant challenge the US administration did not expect at this late stage in the negotiations. Given the progress with the replacement for the Third Site in Europe, the Russians became much more wary of missile defence. The Obama administration managed to limit the language in the treaty to include only the observation that 'a relationship exists between offensive and defensive weapons' (McFaul, 2018, p. 149) but Antonov insisted on some constraints on US missile defence. On 24 February 2010, Obama had a one hour and a half phone call with Medvedev to try to reach a compromise on this issue (Roxburgh, 2012, p. 579; McFaul, 2018, p. 149). This was a tough call and Obama clarified the US position, telling Medvedev that 'he'd rather scrap the deal' (McFaul, 2018, p. 150) if the US position was a deal breaker:

> Medvedev was again trying to couple the arms cuts with legally binding missile defence restrictions – within the new treaty. Obama was angry. 'We'd agreed, Dmitry! If the conditions for the treaty are this, then we're not going to have a treaty (Roxburgh, 2012, p. 580).

A treaty that, before the phone call, seemed a done deal, was now in danger of collapsing. This aspect of the NST took three more weeks of intense negotiations in Geneva and Moscow, and a final phone call between the two presidents to settle the deal (Roxburgh, 2012, p. 580; see also McFaul, 2018, pp.150-151). There is not much information available on the reason why Medvedev reengaged with Obama despite the fact that the US position did not change on missile defence. McFaul suggests that perhaps 'Medvedev realised that Obama was not bluffing and decided to move forward with the treaty without the missile defence constraints' (2018, p. 151). Finally, in March 2010, Antonov received new instructions from Moscow and the two sides were able to make progress on missile defence

(Roxburgh, 2012, p. 580; McFaul, 2018, p. 151). I argue that, while Medvedev might have tried to gain more from Obama in the last stages of their negotiations, this does not undermine the role of the mutual trust between the two leaders in reaching agreement on most of the key issues.

Even if one assumes that Medvedev realised that the US missile defence capabilities were not going to increase considerably over the duration of the NST (McFaul, 2018, p. 151), this does not fully explain his decision to abandon further negotiations with Obama on this topic. It is also rather difficult to argue that Medvedev would have agreed to arms control negotiations in the absence of Obama's cancellation of the Third Site in September 2009. The Third Site was in closer proximity to Russia than the new PAA developments which were already creating new challenges for the US-Russia security relations.

My argument is that the mutual trust between Obama and Medvedev developed through their diplomatic practices shaped key decisions on the transparency-security trade-off during the NST negotiations. In the words of Brad Roberts, who served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear and Missile Defense Policy between 2009 and 2013, 'the trust generated between Obama and Medvedev was sufficient to come to the conclusion of NST even though it didn't permeate other layers of decision-making' (interview, 2019). Mutual trust does not have to explain *all* decisions because it is up to the individuals whether they act on the trust or not. Medvedev's final compromise though, together with the previous key decisions negotiated by the two leaders were shaped by a diplomacy of trusting throughout the secret and formal talks between them. The result of their leadership was agreement on a nuclear arms control treaty which was signed on 8 April 2010 in Prague and was later ratified by both countries.

5.4 Conclusion

Through a practice investigation of the process of trusting, this chapter has highlighted the importance of the relationship between Obama and Medvedev in reaching agreement on verification by making explicit the role of their mutual trust. The chapter has shown how Obama and Medvedev's competent performances co-created mutual trust. The two empirical indicators that are expected to be present for mutual trust to emerge were identified prior to the start of the formal NST negotiations. This chapter has shown how both sides engaged in an empathetic process of aligning their procedural practices of bargaining by taking into account each other's security concerns. Differences in the leaders' competence at performing these practices have helped to explain the opportunities and constraints that constitute the specific game of bilateral arms control. In particular, Obama's secret letter to Medvedev was a crafty proposal which elicited creativity in the use of procedural practices to separate two key security topics of interest for Russia – arms control and missile defence. This chapter has emphasised the importance of the secret diplomatic exchanges between the United States and Russia for creating the conditions of possibility for reaching agreement on NST. The formal NST negotiations cannot be understood without considering the role of the secret talks between the leaders on missile defence. The second empirical indicator, a shared vulnerability, which increases the likelihood of mutual trust became possible during the leaders' first face-to-face meeting. The chapter thus showed the importance of both actors – the trustor and the trustee – in co-creating mutual trust through their practices.

It is important to emphasise that the leaders' subsequent decision-making was shaped by their mutual trust during the formal NST negotiations, in particular with regard to the

transparency-security trade-off. By empirically examining how diplomatic practices define the conditions of possibility for nuclear arms control negotiations, this chapter has clarified the role of mutual trust between the two leaders in shaping the key verification terms of the New START Treaty. This chapter has demonstrated the need for a situational approach that traces both the connection between intentional agents and outcomes and the processes through which arms control negotiations become possible and structure the terms of an agreement.

In addition, this chapter has shown that key decisions, in particular concerning the transparency-security trade-off, were instantiations of their mutual trust which either enabled or constrained the leaders' behaviour during the formal negotiations, thus shaping the terms of the final treaty. The DoT framework has helped to provide a more nuanced understanding of the two leaders' decision-making regarding the transparency-security trade-off by making explicit the role of trust in reaching agreement on verification.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

Lawrence Freedman's short monograph entitled *Why is arms control so boring?* published in 1987 drew attention to a tendency to focus on the technical problems of verification without consideration for an overall conceptual framework. Freedman's critique, in the midst of a political and academic debate on the management of arms in the mid-1980s, with no arms control negotiations between the two superpowers between 1983 and 1985, was actually a call to re-evaluate the theory of arms control which became even more important with the end of the Cold War. Much has changed in the thirty years since Freedman's study, but his argument about the limitations of the conceptualisations imposed by arms control theory remains valid. More recently, Nancy Gallagher has captured the constraints of rationalist approaches to nuclear policy in general and, in particular, to nuclear arms control, in her following statement:

> Nuclear policy is still studied and made by a small community of individuals whose claim to expertise rests on their ability to talk fluently about esoteric, highly technical subjects and to reason skilfully within an abstract conceptual system that is based more on mutually accepted assumptions than on empirical evidence (2015, p. 479).

This thesis has made evident the importance of disentangling the theory from the practice of nuclear arms control to illuminate the process through which successful agreements are reached. The first part of the thesis looked at existing approaches to the study of nuclear arms control negotiations and the relationship between trust and verification and established the context and parameters of the study. It also explored the ways in which existing research tends to overlook or marginalise the role of trust, underlining the problems with this neglect. Only few studies in International Relations have highlighted the

importance of trust for nuclear arms control, and none of them have done so systematically and in-depth. The second chapter reviewed the literature on trust and, in particular, trust in negotiations and emphasised the limitations of the current approaches to trust in IR. The chapter argued that a processual and relational ontological approach to trust in IR provides us with a conceptual framework and set of analytic tools useful to address these shortcomings. By bringing trust research – inside and outside IR – into a conversation with negotiations and bargaining theory, and practice-based methods, this thesis has developed a conceptual and methodological framework for enquiring into the question of how trust shaped the verification provisions in the context of US-Soviet/Russia arms control negotiations.

The second part of the study, in Chapters 3 to 5, undertook an in-depth empirical analysis of three cases of nuclear arms control negotiations: the 1979 SALT II Treaty, the 2002 Moscow Treaty (SORT), and the 2010 New START Treaty. These chapters examined the extent to which and how trust influenced the leaders' decision-making with regard to the verification provisions that were agreed to manage the transparency-security trade-off. Within each case, not only were key decisions regarding verification considered in detail, but the longitudinal analysis traced the changes and development of trust between the leaders and helped us understand how the process of trusting changed over time.

The remainder of this chapter proceeds as follows. The first section evaluates the extent to which the diplomacy of trusting framework was able to shed light on the empirical case studies in Chapters 3, 4, and 5. Next, I discuss the major contributions of this thesis and implications for IR. The third section considers the policy implications of the study's

findings for arms control in the 21st century. The chapter closes by highlighting some limitations of the thesis and outlining how future research could build on the thesis.

6.2 Assessing the explanatory power of the Diplomacy of Trusting

Traditional nuclear arms control theory is based on the assumption that actors are purely rational actors. They are expected to identify all available possibilities, calculate the expected costs and benefits of each option, and select the best course of action that ultimately advances their national interests. The value of the DoT framework ultimately depends on whether it improves our understanding of leaders' decision-making during strategic arms control negotiations. The thesis has used the framework to explore the process of trusting and the leaders' decision-making during negotiations in the context of three case studies of nuclear arms control agreements. These analyses have yielded mixed results. Throughout the cases, the thesis has shown that key decisions under investigation were shaped by the DoT. The actors' procedural practices of bargaining helped to produce the system within which their negotiations operated and therefore structured their bilateral relations in fundamental, yet unacknowledged ways. In all cases, the leaders' choices concerning the verification provisions were either constrained or reinforced by the trust that developed prior to their formal arms control negotiations. In particular, the leaders' performances elicited impressions of trustworthiness which influenced their counterpart's level of trust in them and shaped some of their key decisions with regard to verification in nuclear arms control agreements.

Trust shapes bargaining behaviour in powerful and complex ways. The thesis has shown that variation in the outcome of negotiated nuclear arms control agreements, in

particular with regard to the transparency-security trade-off, can be explained by the type of trust leaders experience during the negotiations. This means that, for a better understanding of the conditions under which the verification provisions in an agreement are negotiated, we need to consider the impact of trust on decision-making, which develops and gets revealed through actors' social practices of bargaining.

In the first case of the SALT II Treaty, verification was an important part of the agreement. The case stands out because the analysis revealed that the two leaders' performances were less significant for reaching an agreement on arms control than those of their chief negotiators. In line with the DoT framework, while Carter and Brezhnev enjoyed deontic power (i.e. because of their role), they lacked the performative power necessary to convince each other of their trustworthiness and willingness to negotiate a mutually acceptable agreement. The chapter revealed that the various key decisions with regard to reaching agreement on the verification provisions were shaped by the low level of asymmetric trust that the negotiators developed through their interactions. The two sides highlighted the role of their informal meetings in negotiating a shared approach to how a consensus on verification could be reached. The final SALT II treaty did explicitly include limitations on telemetric encryption, seen as a successful outcome by the US administration. What enhances the analytic utility of the DoT framework in this case is the absence of technical information available to the negotiators. In particular, the Soviet negotiators did not have access to sufficient details to inform their decision-making based on technical knowledge. This means that a significant part of their decisions concerning the verification provisions negotiated in the agreement had to be based on perceptions of trustworthiness

and low levels of asymmetric trust that developed through the negotiators' performances of procedural practices of bargaining.

The second case of the Moscow Treaty (SORT) is also interesting for this thesis because the transparency-security trade-off was not an issue prioritised in the short negotiations that took place between the two sides. This, of course, can be seen as a challenge for the DoT framework given that agreement was reached between Bush and Putin without having to negotiate any verification provisions to manage the transparency-security trade-off. However, the DoT framework, while aimed at examining the transparency-security trade-off, it is not restricted to it. The DoT, given its focus on the impact of leaders' performances on trust-building, was able to shed some light on how a low level of asymmetric trust on Bush's side facilitated the reaching of a legal agreement. The DoT was thus able to bring more nuance to how the agreement was reached between the two leaders compared to traditional approaches to nuclear arms control that neglect the role of diplomatic practices and trust. In particular, the chapter has shown that there was no likelihood for mutual trust to develop between Bush and Putin given the absence of the two indicators in the framework and that only a low asymmetric level of trust was displayed by Bush in the negotiations with his Russian counterpart. These findings are in line with the main proposition in this thesis that leaders' asymmetric levels of trust are less transformative or significant for an arms control agreement than if mutual trust develops between them. In this case, the absence of verification provisions in the SORT Treaty – although the two sides continued to rely on the 1991 START verification regime for verifying implementation – together with Bush's low level of asymmetric trust supports the key proposition of the DoT.

The SORT Treaty highlighted the importance of an empathetic process of aligning procedural practices of bargaining for increasing the likelihood of mutual trust between leaders. This was a clear case of opposing procedural practices of bargaining. Whereas the Bush administration behaved in a procedurally orthodox manner and sought to justify its unilateralist decisions within the international legal framework, its actions were aimed at altering the accepted practices of bargaining of nuclear arms control. Putin's actions, on the other hand, were in line with the accepted multilateralist practices of arms control and were thus antithetical to those of the Bush administration. These distinct practices blocked the possibility of the development of mutual trust, supporting the study's proposition. By showing how Bush's asymmetric trust was contingent on Putin's performances of procedural practices, the thesis also contributed to a richer understanding of how the relationship between the two presidents contributed to reaching an agreement on arms control.

The last case of the New START Treaty has determined the role of mutual trust between leaders in reaching agreement on verification under challenging circumstances. The recent and limited amount of available information on the case entail limitations on the conclusions that can be drawn from the findings. Nevertheless, the DoT framework suggests that secret talks on missile defence between Obama and Medvedev were essential for the development of mutual trust between them, which, in turn, shaped the formal negotiations on the NST, especially its verification provisions. The 'dance' of trust discussed in Chapter 2 (Morrison and Saunders, 2019) was prominent in this case, revealing the role of both Obama and Medvedev in co-creating trust through their performances. The idea that both the trustor and the trustee are essential in the development of trust applies to all the cases. It is this last case, however, that makes explicit how a shared vulnerability together with an

empathetic process of aligning practices of bargaining is essential for increasing the likelihood of mutual trust. The findings in this chapter support the study's proposition that mutual trust is more significant for an agreement on nuclear arms control than asymmetric trust. Key decisions made by both Obama and Medvedev regarding verification in the NST were contingent on the mutual trust that had developed between them during the secret talks on missile defence and Iran. The findings thus challenge traditional bargaining approaches which emphasise the quid-pro-quo between the two sides. In addition, the findings supplement existing explanations about the case which highlight the importance of the relationship between the two presidents in reaching consensus on the verification terms negotiated to manage the transparency-security trade-off.

Overall, the three case studies have demonstrated the analytical value of the DoT framework and the suitability of the associated practice-based methodological approach to capturing the process of trusting and its influence on decision-making. The findings in the cases collectively make clear that actors' performances during nuclear arms control negotiations help constitute and reveal trust. Even in cases where national interests heavily influence decision-making, the DoT framework is still analytically relevant. The DoT framework has challenged purely rationalist bargaining approaches to nuclear arms control and has supplemented social constructivist perspectives. This has resulted in more comprehensive explanations for how leaders influence the transparency-security trade-off decided during nuclear arms control negotiations. In short, the DoT framework holds the promise of descriptive accuracy and richer accounts of nuclear arms control negotiations. The findings in the thesis have theoretical, methodological, and practical implications discussed in the following two sections.

6.3 Contributions and implications for IR

This thesis has sought, first and foremost, to produce a rich understanding of the relationship between trust and verification in nuclear arms control negotiations. The overall contribution has thus been to develop a conceptualisation of trust to address the current limitations of nuclear arms control theory with regard to how verification is negotiated, and then to test its utility in three cases of nuclear arms control negotiations. That the DoT framework's propositions have been largely substantiated in the case studies can increase our confidence in the framework. The conceptual implications of this thesis are at the same time vast and narrow. They are vast because this study is one of the few, if not the only, instances in IR where the concept of trust is theorised and examined systematically in the context of nuclear arms control negotiations. However, the conceptual implications are also narrow because of the focus of this project on the application of the DoT framework to the specific issue of verification in nuclear arms control negotiations.

The contribution of this thesis can be divided into three key areas. The first contribution is to theoretical understandings of trust in IR and I will discuss three critical implications that follow from my core theoretical claim. The second contribution is to methodological approaches to trust, whereas the third is the empirical contribution of this thesis.

As I have already emphasised in this conclusion (and discussed at length in Chapters 1 and 2), the concept of trust has often been neglected in traditional nuclear arms control theory. While a few studies and researchers have praised its importance for nuclear arms control (Oelrich, 1990; Larson, 1997a; Freedman, 2009, p. 4; Lebovic, 2013; Williams,

2017a+b; Wheeler *et al.*, 2016), the concept has remained undertheorised and its role unspecified. The key theoretical contribution that this thesis makes to IR theory is in relation to the questions of *the extent to which* and *how* trust shapes the verification terms negotiated in nuclear arms control agreements to manage the transparency-security trade-off. This study has developed a conceptual framework to illuminate the nature and role of trust with regard to verification in nuclear arms control. There are three key implications for IR which need to be highlighted.

The first is that, by examining trust as a practice – *the diplomacy of trusting* – it is expected that actors' social practices will constitute and reveal trust in a continuous process of trusting which can capture how the trustor and the trustee can experience both roles in the relationship (see Morrison and Saunders' discussion on the 'dance of trust', 2019). The core of the conceptual framework has outlined the differences between two types of trust – asymmetric and mutual – that have not been explored in the field of IR to provide a more comprehensive view of dyadic trust. The investigation of the two research questions in this thesis has confirmed the initial assumptions that shared procedural practices facilitate mutual trust, whereas distinct procedural practices create asymmetric levels of trust. Furthermore, introducing the notion of *relational* or *shared* vulnerability has helped to make explicit the impact of reciprocity on the relationship between individuals. The case studies have revealed that both the trustor and the trustee can have a shared vulnerability that can engender or hinder the development of trust (both dependent on their actions), alongside their individual asymmetric vulnerabilities. As such, the findings offer empirical support to Korsgaard *et al.*'s (2016) differentiation between symmetrical and asymmetrical dyadic trust. This

contribution is especially significant as it furthers the knowledge on dyadic trust in IR and, in particular, in the context of arms control.

The second implication, related to the first, is that both the trustor and the trustee co-create trust through their repeated interactions and performances. This aspect has not been fully explored in the literature on trust – both inside and outside IR – although it is a crucial aspect of a social and relational understanding of trust. I argue that both asymmetric and mutual trust are contingent on the entangled performances of the trustor and the trustee. All three cases in the thesis have examined the actors' performances in the context of their relationship at a particular time. Assuming the ontologically relational and processual nature of trust, this thesis goes beyond acknowledging the salience of time and context for the study of trust. The thesis offers both theoretical and empirical insights to support the idea that both the trustor and the trustee co-create trust through a process of trusting, contributing to the work of Child and Möllering (2003) and Morrison and Saunders (2019) but also developing it further.

The third implication for IR is that the power dynamics between the trustor and the trustee has a significant impact on the development of trust between them. The thesis has introduced the distinction between asymmetric and mutual trust and, using a practice-based approach to examine the process of trusting, it has shed light on the role of actors' performative power in engendering trustworthiness and opening the door to trust-building. The empirical findings support the view that power involves a certain competence that is socially recognised by an audience within a particular context. By distinguishing between deontic and performative power, the thesis has shown that performing procedural practices

is dependent on the actors' display of both types of power. The findings contribute to the accumulating body of literature on the role of performative power in producing images of trustworthiness (Beckert, 2005, 2006; Frederiksen, 2014). In other words, the development of trust is contingent on the actors' entangled performances of procedural practices which create impressions of trustworthiness.

Methodologically, the thesis contributes by being one of, if not the first to study trust as a process in IR. In using practice-tracing to examine the process of trusting, the thesis has managed to capture both the visible/articulate and the inarticulate aspects of trust and its role in shaping the construction of the leaders' choices. In particular, with the help of the analytic tools of 'sliding door' moments (Gottman, 2011), 'challenge' (Lagerspetz, 2015), and 'betrayal of disengagement' (Brown, 2012), the study has sought to capture the 'unself-conscious' nature of trust missing in the trust literature in IR. The implication of neglecting this aspect is that it paints a picture of trust as entirely cognitive and intentional.

The empirical contributions of this thesis were to show how the actors' experiences of trust can impact on the verification terms negotiated in nuclear arms control agreements. By examining and making explicit the role of trust, the study challenged the rationalist literature on bargaining in nuclear arms control and revealed the discrepancy between the intellectual underpinnings and the actual practice of nuclear arms control negotiations. In doing so, the thesis has enriched social constructivist approaches to bargaining and has added to our understanding of trust in IR, in particular, the role of trust in nuclear arms control negotiations.

6.4 Implications for policymakers

Drawing general conclusions on the basis of only three case studies carries the risk of extrapolating aspects of this research to a class of events that are, actually, specific to a certain case or group (Markwica, 2019, p. 265). I, therefore, limit myself to some contingent policy recommendations that apply only to instances of bilateral nuclear arms control between the United States and Russia. Any wider extrapolations would necessitate further empirical analysis across a broader sample.

Disentangling the history of the conceptual underpinnings from the history of the actual practice of nuclear arms control has shed light on the importance of reconceptualising nuclear arms control theory to address the challenges of national and international security in the twenty-first century. The findings offer empirical support by revealing the role of trust in shaping the verification provisions during the arms control negotiations, emphasising the need for new conceptual approaches to nuclear arms control. There are thus two key policy implications that result from operationalising the diplomacy of trusting framework.

First, the findings indicate that actors' performances during negotiations shape the verification provisions. Actors' performative power makes possible the development of trust by creating images of trustworthiness that produce the basis for trust. The policy implication is that political leaders should be aware of the power of their performances that can shape the level of verification agreed to during negotiations. The case of the Moscow Treaty shows how Putin's performative power was essential in influencing Bush's perception of Putin's trustworthiness, leading to his decision to agree to a legally binding treaty with Russia against his initial interests. It appears that the mainstream view on arms control negotiations

that they are driven solely by predefined national interests does not accurately represent the practice of arms control. The reconceptualisation of traditional nuclear arms control theory as suggested by this thesis appears more necessary than ever. The DoT framework offers an initial step in this direction.

Second, political leaders may have their own perceived vulnerabilities but, what is crucial to this thesis is that they can co-create and manage shared vulnerabilities that can lead to trust-building. This thesis has shown the importance of both formal and secret talks for increasing the likelihood of trust-building. In other words, how actors manage the secrecy of diplomacy has a direct impact on the process of trusting. A key policy implication is that, although continuous talks and dialogue do not determine trust, the case studies have shown that, without any empathising with the other side's security concerns during dialogue, the chances for trust to develop are rather slim. As the findings in the case of the New START Treaty have revealed, trust-building developed in the context of one topic (i.e. missile defence as discussed in Chapter 5) can have significant consequences on other areas in the relationship (i.e. nuclear arms control negotiations). In light of the current tense United States-Russian relations and the fact that the prospect for extending the NST beyond 2021 is unclear, it is essential that both sides are able to empathise with each other's interests. Equally, both sides need to align their understanding of how agreement on arms control can actually be reached in order to increase the likelihood of an extension to the treaty.

6.5 Limitations and suggestions for future research

It is inevitable, despite the contributions of this research, that it has certain limitations and that there is scope for further research to improve our understanding of the relationship

between trust and verification. To conclude, I will discuss some key limitations, while suggesting two broad avenues for future research to build on the theoretical, methodological, and empirical work of this study.

The most evident limitation of this thesis is that the DoT conceptual framework is designed to shed light on one particular aspect of nuclear arms control, namely, the verification provisions negotiated to manage the transparency-security trade-off. I argue trust must always be situated within a given context to illuminate its role, although I acknowledge that this restricts its applicability to other areas of IR. Empirically, the thesis has not aimed at proposing a 'general' framework on the nature and role of trust. As highlighted in the previous section, there are various important recommendations that apply to bilateral nuclear arms control negotiations. The DoT model has been used to examine cases of nuclear arms control negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union or Russia.

A comparison of this research to other bilateral negotiations of nuclear arms control agreements if the sources become available would be instructive and would enhance the explanatory value of the DoT model. In addition, the model could be expanded to examine the role of group dynamics, for instance the relationships of trust between the leaders and their advisers and their influence on how the leaders negotiate the verification terms in nuclear arms control agreements. As Jervis notes, there are limits to the influence of leaders in foreign-policy decision-making (2013). Moreover, a longer project could build on this research to develop the DoT framework and apply it to cases of arms control of space-based

weapons or multilateral negotiations such as the 2015 The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

A second limitation is that the method that this thesis employs to trace the process of trusting is far from perfect. For instance, there are cases where actors might talk about their trust and their actions might count as trusting behaviour, but an individual's expression of trust is rarely congruent with his experience of trust. Rather, an intrinsic feedback dynamic is at play: expressions shape experiences and vice versa (see Adler, 2019). For instance, in 2001 when Bush famously looked Putin in the eye, peered into his soul, and found him 'trustworthy', just by saying that, Bush changed the dynamic of their relationship and also triggered a process of self-reflection to reassess whether his statement was close to being accurate. Conversely, the articulation of his suspicion and a lack of trust in Putin might have led to tensions in his relations with the Russian president. Since this project relies on verbalised self and observer reports and, like most studies in IR, cannot access the key players during their involvement in nuclear arms control negotiations, it captures only a fraction of the actors' experience of trust. When sources become declassified, more access to a variety of tapes and videos, including more information on the Russian side of the research, could perhaps enhance the findings I have displayed here and provide the basis for further research on trust.

Within this thesis, I focused on offering a window into the practice of nuclear arms control negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union/Russia. The findings reflect a discrepancy between the theory of arms control and the actual practice. To better understand how verification provisions are negotiated, it is necessary to take into account the

role of trust between political leaders and their performative power in creating images of trustworthiness during arms control negotiations.

Appendix A: List of interviewees

Name	Location and Date	Position (at time of interest)
Jack Matlock	Birmingham, UK 19 November 2015	Ambassador to the Soviet Union, 1987-1991 Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs and Senior Director for European and Soviet Affairs on the National Security Council Staff, 1983-1986
Anatoly Adamishin	Birmingham, UK 19 November 2015	Deputy Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, 1986-1990
Interview 1	New York City 23 February 2016	Policy analyst 15 years of experience in arms control
Interview 2	New York City 25 February 2016	Policy analyst 10 years of experience in arms control
Interview 3	New York City 8 March 2016	Policy analyst 20 years of experience in arms control
Interview 4	New York City 9 March 2016	Policy analyst 10 years of experience in arms control
Interview 5	New York City 9 March 2016	Policy analyst 10 years of experience in arms control
Interview 6	New York City 10 March 2016	Retired US Department of Defence official
Interview 7	New York City 15 March 2016	Policy analyst 15 years of experience in arms control
Interview 8	New York City 15 March 2016	Policy analyst 10 years of experience in arms control
Linton Brooks	San Diego, CA 20 July 2017	Administrator of the National Nuclear Security Administration, 2003-2007

		Deputy and then head of the US Delegation on Nuclear and Space Talks and Chief Strategic Arms Reductions Treaty (START) negotiator, 1989-1996 Supervised the final preparation of the START II Treaty as de facto chief negotiator. Director of Defense Programs and Arms Control at the National Security Council, 1986-1989
William Tobey	San Diego, CA 19 July 2017	Deputy Administrator for Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation at the US National Nuclear Security Administration, 2006-2009. He has participated in international negotiations ranging from the START talks with the Soviet Union to the Six-Party Talks with North Korea.
Brad Roberts	San Diego, CA 25 July 2017 Skype interview 7 August 2019	Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear and Missile Defense Policy, 2009-2013 Policy Director of the Obama administration's Nuclear Posture Review and Ballistic Missile Defense Review and had lead responsibility for their implementation
Laura Holgate	San Diego, CA 19 July 2017	Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Weapons of Mass Destruction Terrorism and Threat Reduction on the National Security Council, 2009-2016.

Rebecca Hersman	San Diego, CA 19 July 2017	Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for countering weapons of mass destruction (WMD), 2009-2015
Interview 9	Moscow, Russia November 2018	Russian academic, member of the Soviet delegation at START 1 negotiations
Interview 10	Moscow, Russia 21 November 2018	Russian academic, expert on arms control
Interview 11	Moscow, Russia 23 November 2018	Russian academic, expert on arms control
Interview 12	Moscow, Russia November 2018	Retired Russian General involved in the New START Treaty negotiations
Angela Stent	Telephone interview 1 August 2019	Director of the Center for Eurasian, Russian and East European Studies and Professor of Government and Foreign Service at Georgetown University, USA Adviser on Russia under Bill Clinton and George W. Bush Foreign policy expert on US-Russia relations and Russian foreign policy
Interview 13	Telephone interview August 2019	Senior Obama administration official
Jane Vaynman	Skype interview 8 august 2019	Assistant Professor of Political Science at Temple University, USA Academic research focused on security cooperation between adversarial states and the design of arms control agreements
Paul Mitchell	Skype interview 21 August 2019	Series Director of *Putin, Russia and the West* (2012)

Appendix B: Widely used definitions of trust (Isaeva, 2019)

Definition of Trust	Common Themes
An individual may be said to have trust in the occurrence of an event if he expects its occurrence and his expectation leads to behaviour which he perceives to have greater negative motivational consequences if the expectation is not confirmed than positive motivational consequences if it is confirmed. *Deutsch, 1958, p. 266*	• Willingness to be vulnerable • Positive expectations
An expectancy held by an individual or a group that the word, promise, verbal, or written statement of another individual or group can be relied upon. *Rotter (1967, p. 651)*	• Expectancy • Reliability • Integrity
Trusting behaviour… is … consisting of actions that (a) increase one's vulnerability, (b) to another whose behaviour is not under one's control, (c) in a situation in which the penalty (disutility) one suffers if the other abuses that vulnerability is greater than the benefit (utility) one gains if the other does not abuse that vulnerability. *Zand (1972, p. 230)*	• Behaviour • Willingness to be vulnerable • Risk • Benevolence
An expectancy held by an individual that the behaviour of another person or a group would be altruistic and personally beneficial. *Frost, Stimpson, and Maughan (1978, p. 103)*	• Expectancy • Benevolence • Beneficial
Accepted vulnerability to another's possible but not expected ill will (or lack of good will) toward one. *Baier (1986, p. 236)*	• Willingness to be vulnerable • Benevolence
Trust is a type of expectation that alleviates the fear that one's exchange partner will act opportunistically. *Bradach and Eccles (1989, p. 104)*	• Expectancy • Integrity • Risk
The expectation that arises within a community of regular, honest, and cooperative behaviour, based on commonly shared norms, on the part of other members of that community. *Fukuyama (1995, p. 26)*	• Expectation • Honesty • Cooperative behaviour • Shared norms
The expectation by one person, group, or firm of ethically justifiable behaviour-that is, morally correct decisions and actions based upon ethical principles of analysis-on the part of the other person, group, or firm in a joint endeavour or economic exchange. *Hosmer (1995, p. 399)*	• Expectation • Morality, ethics • Economic exchange
Perceived likelihood of the other not behaving in a self-interested manner. *Madhok (1995, p. 120)*	• Integrity
Willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party. *Mayer et al. (1995, p. 712)*	• Willingness to be vulnerable • Expectation • No control

One's expectations, assumptions, or beliefs about the likelihood that another's future actions will be beneficial, favourable, or at least not detrimental to one's interests. *Robinson (1996, p. 576)*	• Expectations, assumptions, beliefs • Positive expectations
Trust is one party's willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the belief that the latter party is 1) competent, 2) open, 3) concerned, and 4) reliable. *Mishra (1996, p. 265)*	• Willingness to be vulnerable • Competency • Reliability • Openness • Concern
An actor's expectation of the other party's competence and goodwill *Blomqvist (1997, p. 282)*	• Expectation • Competence • Benevolence
A psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behaviour of another. *Rousseau et al. (1998, p. 395)*	• A psychological state • Willingness to be vulnerable • Positive expectations
A willingness to rely on another party and to take action in circumstances where such action makes one vulnerable to the other party. *Doney et al. (1998, p. 604)*	• Willingness to be vulnerable
Positive expectations regarding another's conduct. *Lewicki et al. (1998, p. 439)*	• Positive expectations
One party's willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is (a) benevolent, (b) reliable, (c) competent, (d) honest, and (e) open. *Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000, p. 556)*	• Willingness to be vulnerable • Benevolence • Reliability • Competence • Openness
Trust (or, symmetrically, distrust) is a particular level of the subjective probability with which an agent assesses that another agent or group of agents will perform a particular action, both before he can monitor such action (or independently of his capacity ever to be able to monitor it) and in a context in which it affects his own action. *Gambetta (2000, p. 218)*	• Subjective probability • No control
A process of building on available good reasons and suspending irreducible social vulnerability and uncertainty *as if* they were favourably resolved. *Möllering (2005, p. 33)*	• Process • Good reasons • Suspension • Willingness to be vulnerable • Uncertainty
Psychological willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party (individual or organisation) based on positive expectations regarding the other party's motivation and/or behaviour. *Pirson and Malhotra (2011, p. 1088)*	• Psychological state • Willingness to be vulnerable • Positive expectations

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