Using the Multiple Streams Framework to explain the establishment of the INF treaty: Applying the framework to an international setting and assessing the treaty's relevance vis-à-vis the current nuclear hostilities

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I. Introduction

The signing of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) in 1987 was a major step towards the end of the Cold War. Even though the hostilities between the Soviet Union and the US seemed to be reaching their ultimate peak in that period, the USSR-president Mikhail Gorbachev and the US-president Ronald Reagan got together and signed a bilateral agreement to end the ongoing fear that either of the parties would be tempted to use (short range) nuclear weapons. The treaty prohibited the creation, possession and flight testing of ground-launched ballistic- and cruise missiles with a range between 500 and 5,500 kilometers, together with an additional ban on its launchers. Next to these concrete disarmament efforts, the two countries also agreed on a mutual inspection mechanism, that allowed both countries to cross-check and verify the opponent's nuclear arsenals.

The signing of this treaty remains a rather remarkable event in the history of Russian-American relations, as it seems a point of light in continuing dark ages. If scholars would be asked to characterize the relationship between Russia and the United States over the last decades, they would probably have no other option than to state that it is one of extreme discomfort, despite the promising INF-agreement. The relationship never truly stabilized. The first approximately thirty years after the end of the Cold War instigated a situation in which the recognition or denial of Russia's status as a global superpower gained prominence (MacFarlane, 2006; Forsberg, 2014). Bill Clinton once said he dealt with Russia as if it no longer counted (Gates, 2014), which was clearly rather insulting towards the Russians. Such emotions, misunderstandings and cultural perceptions do play a big role in their uneasy relationship. Forsberg (2014) stated: 'What really matters is not so much an objective status but rather perceptions thereof and there seems to be a gap of how Russia and the West perceive Russian status and in particular Western acts in honoring or ignoring it' (p.329). In 2006, Neil MacFarlane even believed that Russia did not deserve its permanent seat in the UN's Security Council, as such a level of influence was perceived disproportionate when taking Russia's capabilities and their declining global influence into account.

Following up on such statements, Larson & Shevchenko (2014) warned that the Russians perceived such a denial of Russian status as humiliating. They wrote: 'Continued indifference to Russia's great power aspirations, especially in the former Soviet space, will encourage Russian elites' sense of injury and humiliation, possibly leading to further conflict'

(p.277). In response to the situation, Russia predominantly tried to restore its global influence by first focusing on former Soviet Union countries. Through regional initiatives and pressure-building, it intended to gradually retake its global importance (Larson & Shevchenko, 2014). Practical examples are the Russian attitude during the Russo-Georgian war in 2008 and the annexation of Crimea in 2014. In the meantime, the Russians have also gained themselves the status of a decision-making spoiler in the UN SC , with 'Syria' being the most prominent example. It leaves Forsberg, et al. (2014) to note that: 'Today, being a great power -and being recognized as one- is a foreign policy goal that appears more attractive than ever to the Russian foreign policy elites' (p.262).

In these ongoing hostilities, nuclear weapons have also claimed their role again, which puts the INF treaty under immense pressure. While the treaty actually celebrated its thirtieth anniversary in 2017, many researchers and journalists question whether the treaty has a future. Both Russia and the United States accuse each other of violating the treaty, which leads to even bigger tensions. According to Vladimir Kozin (2017), a former Russian Diplomat, the American accusations that Russia violates the treaty have been repeatedly alleged almost annually from 2012 onwards. In that year, Russia tested a far-reaching intercontinental ballistic missile, which was technically, due to its range beyond 5,500 km, not constrained by INF regulations. Such rhetoric that Russia violates the treaty reiterated strongly after Donald Trump entered the White House, as his administration attaches a lot more value to nuclear arsenals in their national defense policy than Obama used to do. Unlike Trump, Obama was openly dreaming of a world without such weapons (Allison, 2010).

Trump's position towards nuclear arsenals, as explained in the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review (which I will touch upon in chapter V), causes a situation of bilateral ambiguity and mistrust. According to Kozin (2017), the accusations of Russian non-compliance actually provide the US with an excuse to deploy defensive cruise missiles in Europe, to technically invest in their nuclear arsenals again and to better cope with the current (geo)political developments (Kozin, 2017). These developments include the nuclear-testing by North-Korea, the Iran-deal, the treat of non-state actors and the concern that China can unboundedly build on their nuclear arsenals without being constrained by an INF- alike treaty. In the United Nations Conference on Disarmament (UN CD), the Russian Minister of

Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov echoed Kozin's words, stating that the US recently installed 'ready-for-use tactical weapons in Europe, which is not just a rudiment of the Cold War, but clearly an aggressive stance' (Lavrov, 2018, Feb. 11). Such an act would inherently mean a violation of the INF. Though the US declared this to be complete nonsense, it clearly illustrates the lack of trust and the increased level of ambiguity towards one another.

Due to the these tensions, the former USSR-president Mikhail Gorbachev, who personally signed the INF treaty, felt the urge to ventilate his deep concerns. In a column in the Washington Post (2017) he wrote:

'Both sides have raised issues of compliance, accusing the other of violating or circumventing the treaty's key provisions. From the sidelines, lacking fuller information, it is difficult to evaluate those accusations. But one thing is clear: The problem has a political as well as a technical aspect. It is up to the political leaders to take action. Therefore I am making an appeal to the presidents of Russia and the United States. Relations between the two nations are in a severe crisis. A way out must be sought, and there is one well-tested means available for accomplishing this: a dialogue based on mutual respect. It will not be easy to cut through the logjam of issues on both sides. But neither was our dialogue easy three decades ago. It had its critics and detractors, who tried to derail it. In the final analysis, it was the political will of the two nations' leaders that proved decisive. And that is what is needed now. This is what our two countries' citizens and people everywhere expect from the presidents of Russia and the United States'.

The nuclear crisis that we are facing today thus also seems to ask for an INF treaty alike agreement, in which two world leaders would overstep the current concerns and tensions. With the INF treaty, Gorbachev and Reagan engaged in dialogue, even though the Cold War was at its peak. As the amount of tension around 1987 seems comparable to the situation now, I think it is extremely valuable to research to what extent the mechanisms that led to establishment of the INF treaty in 1987 would also be able to settle the current nuclear hostilities. For that purpose, I will use John Kingdon's Multiple Streams Framework, a theory that aims to describe (sudden) policy change. It focuses on how 'problem', 'policy' and 'political' factors, while being subject to timing and circumstances, converge and lead to new policies. Taking this ontological framework into consideration, my research question is:

'How does the Multiple Streams Framework help to explain the establishment of the INF treaty in 1987 and what is the value of those mechanisms in the context of the current day nuclear hostilities?'

The answer to this research question is relevant due to two reasons. First, the current nuclear hostilities in the world ask for a better understanding. I think it is essential to not step in the 'nuclear-threat trap' that the passing of time seems to provide us. What I mean here, is that a retrospective look on nuclear hostilities instigates researchers to underestimate the severity of the threat at the time it happens. A good example is how researchers have classified the Korean war of the 1950's. Some have stated that the use of a nuclear weapon in that war was unthinkable, and that the weapons were only used as instruments of policy-making and deterrence (Trachtenberg, 1988). However, Trachtenberg (1988) countered that several declassified historical documents from that period showed a very different picture, revealing that the use of nuclear bombs was actually a very realistic and concrete possibility. Also when it comes to the analysis of the Cold War, many prominent researchers, like John Mearsheimer (1990), have argued that the mutual deterrence, paradoxically enough, caused a relatively stable situation. Despite such theoretical assumptions, the threat of nuclear war was real during the Cold War and such theories can simply not account for the probability of nuclear accidents, nuclear risks and the increasing accessibility of nuclear material (I will also touch upon this in the reflections). In this light, I find comprehensive historical awareness essential to fully grasp contemporary developments. Walt (2014) agrees and states: 'We cannot evaluate the uniqueness or the salience of any event without a sense of historical backdrop against which it occurs' (Walt, 2014, p.3).

Second, I this research is a valuable contribution to the literature on the Multiple Streams Framework (MSF) by John Kingdon (2014). I believe that it is important to understand how the dynamics within the MSF lead to the establishment of institutions and agreements. Such agreements typically embody some sort of consensus among sovereign countries, thus transcending the purely self-interested national concerns. In a world that is highly globalized, interconnected and compressed in time and space, international agreements are highly vital for maintaining or creating international peace and security. The study will provide guidance to what factors need to come together in order to settle severe

political disputes in times of crisis. Though the MSF could be considered a classical theory and has been applied to various contexts, it still lacks application to international and bilateral situations. I want to act upon Cairney & Jones' (2016) statement that 'even though the empirical impact of MSF has been considerable, the untapped potential for theoretical and empirical advance is far greater' (p.51). I believe the MSF could be highly valuable to explain the complex and sensitive nature of international agreements. In this regard, however, it is important to contextualize both international and domestic contexts, as 'the preferences of decision-makers largely depend on the international and domestic environment in which they act' (Risse-Kappen, 1991, p.175).

My thesis will consist of six main parts. After the introduction, I will provide a theoretical framework. In this section, I will address what institutions are, how the neo-functionalist view explains the establishment of international institutions and how important discursive institutionalism is in the process of (international) public policy-making. Then, I will explain what the Multiple Streams Framework is, the criticism and modifications the theory has faced over the years and what causal mechanisms I identified to explain the establishment of the INF treaty. In the third section, on research design, I will clarify my methodological approaches and I will clarify the operationalization of the MSF in relation to the INF to explain the establishment of the treaty. I will use an inductive single case study approach based on interpretivist process-tracing. An interpretivist approach aims to explain how a certain actor, who operates within a certain context, makes sense of the circumstances and the timeframe around him. The most important premise of this method is that it acknowledges that in the social world, the political process can be decisive to an outcome, but so can it be the activity within the brain of an actor (Guzzini, 2012). As such, a direct X to Y relationship is hard to establish, as many contextual factors may have had its effect on the outcome. That is where process-tracing comes in, because it features the inclusion of individual events and facts, it mediates between structure and agencies and it allows to connect abstract ideas with concrete factors to explain certain phenomena. In the analysis, the fourth section, I will conduct my process-tracing encounter and apply the MSF to the INF. In the fifth section, I will reflect on the application of the MSF-model and state its relevance and limitations when applying it to international politics. This interpretation will thus focus on my study's implications for the MSF-theory and on the value these results bear

in relation to the current day nuclear hostilities. In the last section, the conclusion, the research question will be answered and here I will also address the relevance of my findings, their broader implications for society, the limitations of the study and some suggestions for further research.

II. Theoretical Framework

In order to be able to answer the research question, it is important to theoretically understand what international institutions are and why such international structures come into existence. In this chapter, I will touch upon this by using the neo-functionalist theory. The neo-functionalist theory fits the idea of the MSF and the INF, because it focuses on why countries decide to work together, while also indicating the possible limitations and exceptions to such a cooperation. Globalization might have accelerated the interconnectedness among countries in many aspects, but domestic concerns often still prevail. Only when such domestic and international concerns match, an international agreement becomes possible. As we will see in the coming chapters, the INF is a good example of this. I will also address the importance of discursive institutionalism and the power of ideas in this chapter, which are crucial aspects in the formation of institutions and are often overlooked by other theorists. After having touched on these theoretical schools, I will explain the Multiple Streams Framework, the criticisms and modifications the MSF faced over the years and the three causal mechanisms I identified to explain the establishment of the INF treaty. In the last paragraph of the chapter, I will address the relationship between interpretivist process-tracing, the MSF and the INF.

Neo-functionalism and the rise of international organizations

It is clear that globalization, which caused growing economical, cultural and humanitarian interconnectedness across countries, has instigated an increase of international institutions since 1945. According to North (1991), institutions 'are the humanly devised constraints that structure political, economic and social interaction. They consist of both informal constraints (sanctions, taboos, customs, traditions, and codes of conduct), and formal rules (constitutions, laws, property rights). Throughout history, institutions have been devised by human beings to create order and reduce uncertainty in exchange' (p.97). An important characteristic of an institution is that it is a social arrangement to reduce transaction costs. Without institutions, the market defines the costs of interaction. Price movements direct production, meaning that certain goods can only be produced when the other trading party is willing to pay the transaction costs for that particular good. In such a situation, the reduction of transaction costs thus fosters international trade, because it allows the exchange of specialized goods between regions that otherwise would have been impossible.

Coase (1937), one of the founders of the theory, writes: 'Within a firm [institution], these market transactions are eliminated and in place of the complicated market structure with exchange transactions is substituted the entrepreneur-coordinator, who directs production' (p.388). In my particular study, it means that an international arms treaty, with an effective verification mechanism, would lower the resources that countries need to devote to nuclear arms in order to protect themselves.

Rodrik (2012) believes that institutions come in three forms. They can be based on a long term-relationship build on trust and companionship, they can come into existence due to similar belief systems or institutions enable third party enforcement, such as courts or rights enactors. Institutions, in a theoretical sense, help us to define the rules of the game that we, the members of the (inter)national society, find ourselves in. Within that structure, organizations largely decide which values, customs and habits deserve saliency, and they structure themselves along these components. An institution is a socially constructed phenomenon which facilitates a continuous interaction between the structure of the institution and the behavior of the actors within it. This means that the actors adapt to the structure they find themselves in, but simultaneously the actors also modify the structure by continuously testing and using these institutional boundaries.

Functionalism, an early 1900s theory that builds on the concept of globalization, describes how and why international border-transcending institutions are formed. The theory goes beyond the primarily economic explanation that institutions reduce transaction costs. Functionalism entails that states have common interests and needs, that will be addressed and satisfied by elevating these common national concerns to international institutional structures (Hurrell, 2007). This whole process would, according to functionalists, eventually diminish the prominence of state sovereignty in international politics. However, this premise could not stand the time, because 'the functional demand for institutions is in many cases not met because it does not mesh with the interests and incentives of powerful political and economic agents' (Hurrell, 2007, p.201). In reaction, several scholars took account of this critique and reaffirmed the significance of nation-states in the world order. For Mitrany (1948), the United Nations is the perfect example of an international institution that underlines the importance of state sovereignty. He (1948) writes: 'The League of Nations and now the United Nations, as their names imply, rest upon national separateness.

They are loose associations for occasional specific joint action, in regard to each of which each member remains on the whole free to participate or not' (p.351). An important pillar of Mitrany's (1948) functionalist approach is the intrinsic will of countries, despite the distinct national interests of states, to unite and use international institutions and arrangement as a tool to maintain peace and security. Again, the INF treaty is an example of this.

Based on Mitrany's changes to functionalism, Haas (1958) formulated a neo-functionalist theory in which (regional) integration was key. It referred to the process 'whereby political actors in several distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities toward a new centre, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing national states. The end result of a process of political integration is a new political community, superimposed over the pre-existing ones' (Haas, 1958, p.16). The Special Verification Commission on the INF treaty, that checks both countries on compliance, is an example of how the verification was shifted to a new bilateral and international centre. Unsurprisingly, however, many scholars have also challenged Haas' assumptions, fueled by the international political situation that arose during and after the Cold War. Countless amounts of examples explain how the structure and the value of international institutions is easily trespassed when national identity, sovereignty or pride is at stake. This is a practice that Haas did not necessarily foresee. In those cases, functionalist theories are not sufficient to explain the complex interplay between international and domestic politics. As such, even though I still believe that neo-functionalism is very helpful to explain why and how international institutions and agreements come into existence, it has shown its limitations when applying the theory to the current world order.

The importance of ideas

The creation of international institutions, their formal and informal rules and the humanly devised constraints (Douglass North, 1991) get institutionalized through decision-making, a reoccurring process that determines and reshapes the purpose of an institution. The elusive nature of the decision-making process has triggered many scholars to develop different theories around it, such as rational choice institutionalism, sociological institutionalism and discursive institutionalism. Though it is important to realize that these theories do not exist in a vacuum and do not necessarily always exclude one another, discursive institutionalism,

which focuses on the 'power of ideas', is a crucial paradigm in order to comprehensively understand decision-making. Therefore, in light of the important role of ideas, decision-making can be best defined as a process in which actors make a deliberate choice between alternatives, based on their expectations (or calculations), their personal heuristics and the structure they find themselves in. Every policy decision has its own unique characteristics and footprint, in which the actors' expectations, bounded knowledge, expertise, heuristics and environment all determine the outcome to a variable extent.

Vivien Schmidt (2008) is one of the key scholars to recognize the importance of ideas in decision-making. Contrary to the more structural and sticky approaches to institutions, she believes in the importance to consider loosely floating norms and ideas. She assumes that an institutional structure can constrain actors, but simultaneously, the actors also create and modify the structure themselves. So even though structure is important, ideas play a supplementary role and help to fill in much of the gaps of other explanatory models. Where those theories focus on static equilibriums in decision-making, Schmidt (2008) believes it happens in a dynamic and unconstrained way without clearly working towards practical milestones. Inherently, however, it sometimes remains hard to explain why some ideas attract attention while others do not. Much of these reasons should be sought in the environmental conditions, such as the international context in which an idea is presented (Schmidt, 2008). Adding to Schmidt's theory, Panizza & Miorelli (2013) mention the importance of considering political power structures, which often determine or at least influence the saliency of certain ideas over others.

Complementary to these approaches, Culpepper (2008) states that institutional change is caused by the ability of actors to create new understandings of certain problems. Common knowledge, which is often used in decision-making due to the bounded rationality of actors, is subject to change and new interpretations. In this process, the role of persuasion is not to be underestimated. Persuasion could influence how actors perceive the world, and so modify institutions (Culpepper, 2008). Along those lines, Risse-Kappen (1994), who researched the dynamics leading up to the end of the Cold War, states: 'The role and impact of ideas must be conceptualized as intervening variables between structural conditions and the definition of actors' interests and preferences. Studying ideas does not offer alternative accounts to structural explanations, but the latter are notoriously

insufficient if we want to understand the way actors define and interpret their interests'
(p.214).

Within this paradigm of discursive institutionalism, the Multiple Streams Framework
by John Kingdon, first published in 1984, is a protagonist theory that I will use to analyze the
establishment of the INF treaty. I will explain Kingdon's theory below, together with its main
refinements and the criticism it faced.

The Multiple Streams Framework explained

The Multiple Streams Framework (MSF), that was designed by Kingdon in the 1980s, is a
theory that has been extensively used to explain policy-making phenomena, as I will show in
the next sub-section. The theory defines why certain issues get prominence over others, and
why one problem gets translated into public policy mechanisms while others are not. The
MSF thus pays close attention to the dynamics between agents and the structure of an
institution, as well as to the environment around it. In that whole process, context and time
are crucial elements that shape policy decisions (Kingdon, 2014). Ackrill et al. (2013) add:
'The MSF explores which issues get attention and when, how and which actors are mobilized
to participate in a given choice opportunity, how issues are framed and meaning is
generated, and how the process is politically manipulated by skilled policy entrepreneurs'
(p.872). Kingdon (2014) believes that public decision-making is best explained by structuring
those various complex processes in three separate and parallel streams. These streams are
the problem, politics and policy stream. Policy change occurs when the three initially
independently operating streams get coupled by policy entrepreneurs during a window of
opportunity. 'Policy entrepreneurs are people willing to invest their resources in return for
future policies they favor. They are motivated by combinations of several things: their
straightforward concern about certain problems, their pursuit of such self-serving benefits as
protecting or expanding their bureaucracy's budget or claiming credit for accomplishment,
their promotion of their policy values, and their simple pleasure in participating' (Kingdon,
2014, p.204). The entrepreneurs can manifest themselves during and within several stages
and streams of policy-making. They can try to dominate the agenda-setting process that
largely unfolds in the problem stream, they can soften up the political environment for
certain policy proposals, they can influence policy-makers with certain ideas or they can
even take the role of the overarching actor that concentrates on coupling the three streams.

Due to these different roles that the entrepreneurs can play, the entrepreneurs do not necessarily match predefined characteristics. They can be civil servants, lobbyists, journalists, scholars, researchers or elected political officials (Kingdon, 2014).

In the problem stream, the society gets convicted that a problem exists and that something needs to be done to overcome its complications (Brunner, 2008). An important element is that, according to Kingdon (2014), 'problems are not simply the conditions or the external events themselves; there is also a perceptual, interpretive element' (p.110). This implies that the public subjectively decides which problems deserve prominence. The problem stream can become activated by governmental multi-year indicators, reoccurring cycles or, in the case of the INF treaty, by focusing events. Birkland defines focusing events as 'an event that is sudden; relatively uncommon; can be reasonably defined as harmful or revealing the possibility of potentially greater future harms; has harms that are concentrated in a particular geographical area or community of interest; and that is known to policy makers and the public simultaneously' (Birkland, 1998, p.54). Though the media play an important role in airing the focusing event, Kingdon (2014) doubts whether the media are influential when it comes to policy-making. He reiterates the very short attention span of the media, causing that the attention will already be redirected to something else well before serious policy proposals can be considered and implemented. Kingdon states: 'The media has some importance, but it's slight. Either media people are reporting what we [the policy-makers] are already doing, or they are reporting something that we are already aware of' (p.59). Kingdon also underlines that although media can accelerate certain messages while neglecting others, having influence on the agenda is something completely different than impacting the eventual policy outcome.

Only after the abovementioned problem appears, the search for a solution can begin (Brunner, 2008). The policy stream addresses the process in which policy proposals are generated, refined, advocated, debated and considered. Kingdon (2014) calls this mix of all the alternative solutions to a problem the 'policy primeval soup'. In this soup, policy proposals float around and will eventually rise to the top when the circumstances allow the appearance of the proposal. Consequently, possible solutions to yet undefined problems float around continuously. Some float to the top to be considered, while others will never reach the surface. Kingdon (2014) believes that environmental or societal 'focusing events'

are only exploited to direct attention to proposals that actually already existed. The proposals floated around already, but environmental factors now make them ripe for consideration. Therefore, the involved policy entrepreneurs do not only need to influence and persuade decision-makers, they also need to have a good feeling of timing. This 'softening up' seems to be necessary before a proposal is taken seriously. 'Many good proposals have fallen on deaf ears because they arrived before the general public, the specialized publics, or the policy communities were ready to listen' (Kingdon, 2014, p.130). In addition, the proposals constructed by the policy communities also need to fit a few practical criteria in order to survive. The plans need to be technically feasible, they need to match the common values of involved stakeholders (so also the public) and they need to be cost-effective (Kingdon, 2014).

Despite the fact that Kingdon rewarded 'the politics' with a separate stream, which will be discussed in the paragraph below, it is important to note that both the problem and the policy streams are also considerably influenced by political concerns and motivations. Brummer (2008) found in relation to environmental issues in Germany that: 'Politicians find little vote payoff in discussing those rather technical issues. Often very technical issues bring a lot of debate and little public reward' (p.504). Though technical policy-proposals are not necessarily politically-laden or should not directly be interpreted as such, it is clear that they are not developed in an ivory tower.

The politics stream, the last of the three, largely facilitates for the convergence of the two other streams (Kingdon, 2014). The political processes comprise organized political forces and mobilization, interest group pressure, the behavior of political elites and, important when taking the INF negotiations into account, changes in administrations. Here it is obvious that different personalities have different values and ideas, consequently resulting in different priorities and eventually other policy proposals. Whereas the policy stream focuses on persuading actors with certain policy alternatives, the political stream includes the process of bargaining. This mechanism of bargaining also became visible during the various summits that were organized by Russia and the US since 1985, as I will show in chapter IV.

Other scholars on the MSF

Though Kingdon's theory is considered a cornerstone in the field of public administration, scholars have intensively refined and criticized (elements of) the MSF. The flexibility and the interpretive freedom that the theory bears are often referred to as strong and realistic features, as policies are shaped within complex environments. However, this abstractness also causes that the theory is inherently better suited for description than prediction (Cairney & Jones, 2016; Zohlnhöfer et al., 2015; Zahariadis, 1995; Zahariadis, 1998), because accounting for all mechanisms and conditions in advance is almost impossible. To overcome these limitations, several scholars have acknowledged that the theory works best when not applied in a vacuum, but when linked to other theories such as rational choice theory, historical institutionalism, discursive institutionalism and sociological institutionalism (Cairney, 2013; Cairney & Jones, 2016). Zahariadis (1998) also underlines that the theory becomes complex when its four elements, namely problems, policies, politics and policy windows start to interact in often fluid and context-dependent ways. In that regard, the MSF 'acknowledges the role of chance in choice' (Zahariadis, 1998, p.444), meaning that it leaves room for interpretation. Rawat and Morris (2016) also believe that this flexibility of the theory and its conceptual elements inherently explains the delicate and sometimes unpredictable nature of policy-making. Somewhat contrary to this, Cherlet and Venot (2013) have argued, while doing research in Mali and Burkina Faso, that structural conditions are much more decisive in the process of policy-formulation than the extent that Kingdon (2014) accounts for. Lastly, Weir's (1992) raises the critique on Kingdon's model that the theory is 'ahistorical'. He believes the MSF does not pay enough attention to how previous policies affect current debates and how learning process will affect new policy outcomes.

The MSF itself has been applied to domestic, presidential and sub-national systems, but many scholars also focused on specific concepts within the framework, without embedding these in the overarching Multiple Streams Framework (Zohlnhofer, Herweg & Rub, 2015). While focusing on these specific concepts within the theory, Bundgaard and Vrangbæk (2007) criticize Kingdon for not providing the tools to conduct a stream-specific analysis, which would enable to zoom in on 'interrelated games' (p.515) within a stream. Similarly, Exworthy and Powell (2004) believe that the policy stream contains much more than just policy proposals, such as policy strategies, goals, resources and feasibility. These

dynamics also play a role in policy formulation and would, according to Exworthy and Powel (2004), need its own mini-stream. Ness (2010) on his part, states that the policy-formulation in itself should not be seen as a separate stream, but as an environmental 'policy milieu' (p.52) that is floating around the politics and problem stream. Others have also pointed at Kingdon's (2014) definition of policy entrepreneurs, stating that their role is too vaguely defined. This eventually makes the empirical identification of those actors harder (Bundgaard and Vrangbæk, 2007).

In the analysis, chapter IV, I will apply the MSF to the INF negotiations. To that end, I will link Kingdon's problem, policy and politics stream to three overarching causal mechanisms that characterize these three streams. The problem stream corresponds to crises, the policy stream to epistemic communities and the politics stream to summitry. These overarching mechanisms are necessary to be able to explain how the domestic preferences of the Soviet Union and the US converged on the international level. The next subsections are devoted to explaining the theoretical assumptions behind these overarching mechanisms. Then, I will further touch upon those in Chapter IV.

The problem stream: Crises

It is obvious that crises instigate decision-making, as actors try to solve the complications and the tensions of that situation. The Oxford Online Dictionary defines a crisis as 'a time of intense difficulty or danger' and a 'time when a difficult or important decision must be made' (Oxford Online Dictionary, May 4, 2018). In the problem stream, I will define the different crises that erupted which largely shaped the environment for the INF negotiations (see the section 'operationalization of the problem stream'). The several incidents were domestic as well as international in nature. Domestic pressures that contributed are the economic crisis in the Soviet Union and the Iran-Contra affair in the United States. On a bilateral, international level, the relationship was shaped through the history of the Cold War. In this regard, the starting point for my thesis is the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan. When it comes to the nuclear crisis that eventually ended with the agreement on INF's, the Russian deployment of the SS-20 in 1977 was an important starting point. This focusing event instigated a new chain of nuclear events and reactions that deteriorated the relationship between the US, the Soviet Union and Europe, before concrete actions were to stabilize the situation.

The policy stream: Epistemic communities

Epistemic communities have a direct impact on the policy-making process. Haas (1992) defines the epistemic community as 'a network of professionals with recognized expertise and competence in a particular domain and an authoritative claim to policy-relevant knowledge within that domain or issue-area' (p.3). The epistemic communities share normative and causal beliefs, perceptions of validity and a common set of practices associated with a common set of problems (Haas, 1992). At the international level, the epistemic communities are generating and distributing new ideas towards the responsible decision-makers (Campbell, 2002). Despite the fact that it might be hard to establish a causal link between the ideas within such communities and the decisions of a politician, the epistemic communities have the important role to soften up the climate for a specific policy. As I will show in the policy stream, transnational epistemic communities were especially successful in influencing Mikhail Gorbachev.

The epistemic communities are not necessarily a pre-defined set of actors. Sometimes they can be influential academics or (civil servant) experts, in other situations they can be diplomats. Classic examples of the epistemic community of diplomats can be found in the history of the European Union, as for instance the treaty of Westphalia (1648) and the one of Maastricht (1992) drove on an epistemic motor (Mai'a & Cross, 2007). In more contemporary examples, such as the 'United Nations Group of Experts' on issues like fissile material and lethal autonomous weapons, the policy-makers consult experts to bring in their expertise. The ultimate conviction of these epistemic communities is that they move on behalf of society, and that they influence policy-making for the sake of creating a more prosperous world (Haas, 1992). Epistemic communities are increasingly consulted by policy-makers because of the technicality of issues, time-constraints and their ability to provide specialized knowledge. This technical knowledge can instantly be accessed in such a community when the time is ripe, as, according to the primeval soup theory of Kingdon (2014), the policy proposals float around already. In my INF case study, the epistemic communities manifested itself in two different ways. We have the diplomats that were engaged in the multilevel negotiations, but also the more fractured transnational communities that influenced Gorbachev's way of thinking.

The politics stream: Summitry

Especially in international settings, the mechanism of summitry is indispensable to explain the activities that took place within the politics stream. This is because the summits help to channel the domestic and the international political preferences of the different political actors, and concretely put them on a joint table for dialogue. Without such dialogue, the distinct political circumstances would never have the opportunity to merge and make a bilateral treaty impossible. The summits thus help to create the political momentum to instigate policy change.

The use of the term 'summitry' has proliferated over the years. This is especially due to the interconnectedness of countries and the rise of international institutions as described earlier in this chapter. Though the meaning of summitry is ambiguous, and sometimes politically laden, Plischke (1979) states that: 'It is diplomacy engaged in by political principles above the cabinet or ministerial rank, including the participation of chiefs of state, heads of government, a few others who qualify by virtue of their official positions (such as presidents-elect, crown princes, and the ranking officers of international organizations), and certain agents of heads of government who genuinely represent them at their level' (p.170). The idea of summitry is definitely not a one-size-fits-all encounter. Sometimes the summits can be largely symbolic (as media staging events and confidence-building measures) and in other occasions they present a momentum for substantial dialogue (Dunn, 2016). Sometimes the substance is largely pre-negotiated, while in other instances the national leaders trespass such diplomatic paths. Furthermore, the level of institutionalization of summits differs per institution or initiative, and, as with all political issues, its outcomes are continuously subject to great debate (Dunn, 2016). Eban (1983) states that summitry should only take place under exceptional circumstances, for instance when deliberations between diplomats bear no results. Summitry should therefore be seen as an ultimate resort, because there is simply no higher political level available that can credibly settle the issue when a summit is unable to do so.

Especially in the 1980s, the period I am writing about, summitry was often referred to as 'Great Power Summitry', a term invented by Nixon (1985) to refer to the bilateral meetings between the Soviet Union and the United States. These summits were not intended to overcome ideological and geopolitical differences, but to underline that both

countries possessed the (nuclear) key to the other's survival. This resulted in a chain of summits that ultimately brought about the INF treaty. Dunn (2016) states: 'As the Cold War continued, the feeling developed among politicians that diplomacy in the nuclear age was too important to be left to the diplomatists. Thus developed the trend for greater involvement by political leaders in the detailed process of international dialogue' (p.5). However, in the analysis (Chapter IV) I will show that, despite the less visible role of diplomats due to these summits, they still largely contributed to setting the right conditions in the policy stream.

In the next subsection, I will explain the interaction between the MSF, process-tracing and the INF treaty.

The MSF, process-tracing and the INF treaty

I believe that the MSF is very well-suited to explain the establishment of the INF treaty, because it takes multiple streams and circumstances into account. This makes the theory very dynamic, comprehensive and complete. The MSF allows to contextualize and categorize decisions, as sometimes unexpected events or occurrences can bring about an agreement. The MSF leaves room for discursive approaches. As Brunner (2007) puts it: 'This MSF-perspective emphasizes the role of ideas and agenda-setting in the policy process. Change occurs when advantageous developments in three different streams (problem, policy, and politics) converge in a 'policy window'. In this view, change partly relies on exogenous factors and is fairly random' (p.501). Using this theory to explain the occurrence of a landmark treaty in nuclear history (EU Statement in UN CD, 2018). has two benefits. It helps to underline the extraordinary nature of the treaty, while it also helps to identify historically successful circumstances that settled a dispute. These insights could then be applied to contemporary problems.

The MSF thus underlines the complicatedness and sensitivity of a process and the importance of the occurrence of a policy window. Taking out one of the causal pillars would quickly lead to a different result, and therefore counterfactual analysis is inherent to using this theory. The MSF is better suited to explain more sudden, unexpected context-driven change than models of incrementalism and the rational choice theory. For example, it is very hard to defend that the agreement was based on earlier legislation, or that it was the most

rational choice to do at the time. In retrospect it seemed rational, but European concerns as well as the anti-Soviet public rhetoric did not directly facilitate the establishment of a treaty which would eliminate the short-range nuclear missiles on both sides. Moreover, the geopolitical situation at the time did not necessary make the double-zero approach, as the INF is also called, the most logical. Other states (China, India, Pakistan, UK, France, and Israel) also possessed nuclear weapons. Watson (2011) writes about this: 'It would not be in the best interest of either the US or Soviet Union to completely dismantle their nuclear arsenal in a world where the lack of such weapons would be a geopolitical disadvantage' (p.36).

The MSF allows researchers to take all contextual and causal dynamics into account that shaped a treaty, without only focusing on particular aspects. Risse-Kappen (1991) also underlined that more attention has to be paid to the domestic and international environment in which arms-negotiations take place. He states: 'Scholarly attention should, therefore, focus on the interaction of these factors with bargaining strategies in order to explain cooperative outcomes' (p.166). He believes that not enough scholarly attention is paid to the 'soft' side of policy-making, such as public opinion, interest groups or parliamentary processes. However, this is important because 'a good bargaining strategy cannot make up for a bad environment that is not conductive to operation' (Risse-Kappen, 1991, p.186). The available (secondary) literature on the INF, that I will incorporate in the sections to come, tends to identify the applicability of only one or two of the MSF-streams, without comprehensively sketching the overarching picture. Such an approach, however, is important to fully grasp how ideas affect policy making. Due to its comprehensive nature, the method of process-tracing is very useful to reveal those dynamics (Campbell, 2002). In the next section, I will further elaborate on my methodology. To explain the establishment of the INF treaty, I will combine interpretivist process-tracing with the MSF theory.

III. Methodological design: interpretivist process-tracing

In the theoretical framework, I have shown what institutions are, why they are formed and what factors could impede its formation. Ideas play an important role in this process, as these largely determine how decision-makers perceive the world they find themselves in. The Multiple Streams Framework (Kingdon, 2014) complements these theoretical assumptions, as it contextualizes and categorizes decisions and circumstances. The MSF allows room to explain the fragile way how several occurrences interact. Only when factors in the problem, policy and politics stream come together in a window of opportunity, international institutions or treaties can be formed. In this section, I will further elaborate on my methodological choices and my operationalization to explain the establishment of the INF treaty and its value in relation to the current nuclear hostilities.

The design of my study

In order to be able to answer the research question, I will use an inductive single case study approach, as I want to distill theoretical assumptions from the problem at hand. A single case study tries to explain a phenomenon or an event that happened at a certain point in time (Toshkov, 2016). The outcome of such study is often softer and not necessarily providing hard (or statistical) explanations, and can therefore be best explained as a way to provide insight or to present a 'novel idea' (Toshkov, 2016, p.292). Consequently, the outcome of a single case study is often a little speculative, but due to the severe nuclear crisis that we are facing nowadays, such conclusions, based on historical interpretations, are still very valuable. Explaining the dynamics that led to the INF treaty can help to contextualize and theorize the current nuclear crisis and more importantly, teach us how effective (nuclear) decision-making could be established during crises. When considering the research question, it is clear that identifying a single X-Y relationship is not enough to capture the entire context in which the decision was made (Gerring, 2006). Single case research aims to control for as many factors leading up to the outcome as possible, so it relies heavily on contextual evidence (Toshkov, 2016). For example the media, personal networks, social movements, heuristics, historical spill-overs, accidents and sometimes even luck can all have an influence on the outcome.

Moreover, to conduct my single case study, I will use an interpretivist approach. This approach aims to explain how a certain actor, who acts within a certain context, makes sense of the circumstances and the timeframe he operates in. The most important premise of the interpretive approach is that it acknowledges that, in the social world, several processes, that are very different in nature, can be decisive to an outcome. For instance, it can be a certain political process, but so can it be the activity within the brain of an actor (Guzzini, 2012). In many socially constructed situations, it is rather hard to say whether the former or the latter had the biggest effect on the outcome. Conducting an interpretivist approach therefore helps to explain a phenomenon that is not easily captured through one single-effect relationship. It allows to control for circumstances that make actors behave the way they do. Thus, the interpretivist approach assumes that automatisms, or clear-cut relationships do not exist and that, because a certain phenomenon is rooted within a particular context, the case at hand is inherently unique (Guzzini, 2012).

The interpretivist approach implies two important but somewhat contradictory notions. First, it is based on counterfactual ideas, meaning that it assumes that changes in the circumstances will differ the outcome. Secondly, however, it also acknowledges that the presence of the same causal mechanisms in another case does not necessarily lead to the same outcome. This implies that the approach is not necessarily consistent in different contexts (Guzzini, 2012). Nonetheless, these contradictions illustrate the complex nature of the socially constructed world around us. As a result, in an interpretive study, the theoretical assumptions made by the researcher are of special importance. Those assumptions are the glasses through which the researcher sees the empirical reality. Guzzini (2012) states: 'In interpretative studies, the empirics and the theory are far more intertwined, because interpretivists approach theories mostly through their constitutive character: it is through theory that the empirical analysis becomes possible in the way that it does' (p.73).

Among the methodological choices that an interpretivist approach incurs, I believe that process-tracing is best suited to explain the INF-phenomenon at hand. Bennett and Checkel (2015) define process-tracing as 'the use of evidence from within a case to make inferences about causal explanations of that case' (p.4). An important characteristic of process-tracing is that it employs multiple types of evidence to explain the inferences and the mechanisms that connect X and Y (Gerring, 2006). In that sense, it is very

complementary to my interpretivist single case study. Process-tracing inherently identifies a causal chain of events and mechanisms that enable a certain outcome to become possible. In short, 'process-tracing incorporates individual events and general facts, mediates between structure and agency, and shifts between the abstract and the concrete when building explanatory accounts' (Toshkov, 2016, p.300). Process-tracing allows a very comprehensive, multilayered and historical study of phenomena (Guzzini, 2012). In my case, I will outline how domestic, international, personal and interpersonal circumstances led to the singing of the INF treaty.

With process-tracing, the analysis and interpretation of the events and their observed linkage is left to the researcher, as the information obtained is not necessarily always directly comparable. 'Each stage of the case study is qualitatively distinct, creating a series of nested research designs. Thus, evidence for one link in the chain has no bearing on the next or the previous link' (Gerring, 2006, p.174). The evidence that is used to construct the argument can be both qualitative and quantitative in nature. This means that many different sources can be used to obtain and triangulate evidence. Sources can be interviews, transcripts of meetings, newspapers, grey documents, online sources, government documents, documentaries, tv-shows, public discourse, pictures, biographies and academic literature. As Toshkov (2016) puts it: 'process-tracing research is recovering in as much detail as possible the institutional context and reconstructing the chronology of events leading to an outcome of interest' (p.300). In the next sections, I will use interpretivist process-tracing to assess how the causal mechanisms of crises, epistemic communities and summitry unfolded in the problem, policy and politics stream. First, however, I will explain my data collection and the operationalization of the streams.

Data Collection

In order to reconstruct the sequence of events that led to the establishment of the INF treaty, I will use both secondary as well as primary sources in a dynamic way. With this I mean that I will use the primary sources to do the analysis myself, or I will use them to triangulate, meaning that I want to confirm the cause of events stated in other (secondary) sources. Due to the loose character of process-tracing and the fact that the analyzed sources are different in nature, it is hard to follow a standardized way of coding. Each stream will therefore be analyzed on the basis of different sources. My job as the researcher is to assign

all the identified circumstances to the streams designed by Kingdon (2014), and analyze the cases in which misfits or irregularities occur.

When it comes to the primary sources, I will rely on press statements, reports, declassified documents and newspaper articles. Due to the fact that much of the negotiations took place behind closed doors, the openly available primary documents form the basis of my research. The obtained primary documents allow me to analyze how the situation was perceived when the event was actually happening. To gain access to such historical documents, I have used several databases. I have obtained the public press statements by Ronald Reagan through the Reagan Foundation and the Reagan Library[1]. The newspapers of that period were accessible through the Proquest Historical Database[2], or in a few cases through the newspaper's websites. In addition, I have also used some declassified documents about Gorbachev that I accessed through the National Security Archive[3]. To be as transparent as possible about the primary and secondary sources that I used to construct each of the streams, I listed all of them in the appendix, together with the content of the source and its keywords. The structure of the appendix is outlined in the table below.

Sources used to construct the three streams (see appendix)	Pages
The problem stream: antecedent conditions	pp. 87-88
The problem stream: the nuclear crisis	pp. 89-90
The policy stream	pp. 91-92
The politics stream	pp. 93-95

FIGURE 3A. SOURCES USED TO CONSTRUCT THE STREAMS (SEE APPENDIX).

I am aware, however, that primary documents all contain a certain amount of bias. Even the declassification of certain memoir, while keeping another classified, is in essence a political activity. The documents inherently reflect the view of the person who produced them, because the actor produced and released the documents in a certain cultural, political and cultural setting. This particularly holds true for newspaper articles, which are written by journalists that are not directly involved in the policy making process. Despite these

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[1] I have accessed this content through their respective YouTube channels
[2] The database can be accessed through https://search-proquest-com
[3] This archive can be accessed through https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu

disadvantages, I still believe that such documents best allow me to reconstruct the course of events in an interpretivist, bottom up manner. The historical documents provide me with the closest and most pure look at the phenomenon. They are traces of history that are often relatively free of analysis by others, because the outcome was unknown.

In the next subsections, I will further touch upon the operationalization of the problem, policy and politics stream.

The operationalization of the problem stream

Especially when it comes to the operationalization of the problem stream, important methodological choices have to be made. Kingdon's (2014) model leaves room for interpretation and specification, which forces me to clearly set the boundaries of the problem stream. This is not an easy task, as in international relations, antecedent conditions largely shape the relationship between countries. The antecedent conditions that shaped the relationship between Russia and the US could be traced back as far as the researcher wants, even decades before the treaty was signed. Metaphorically, it comes down to whether investigators include a traumatic incident during the youth of a murderer in the dossier about his assault. To what extent are these events (causally) related? Is this traumatic event still an issue when the murder is committed twenty years later? The chances are high that different experts will not agree on this question, and the same applies to my research.

Therefore, I will divide the problem stream in two distinct sections. In the first section, I will define the antecedent 'problem' conditions that largely shaped the relationship between the Soviet Union and the United States from 1977 onwards (from the moment when the focusing-event took place) and the domestic conditions that proved favorable to the INF-agreement. Though such antecedent conditions are hard to directly and causally link to the specific outcome, and happened before as well as during the INF-negotiations, they were largely responsible for creating the atmosphere in which the actors operated. In that sense, the antecedent conditions float around in the problem stream, even though it is hard to factually define its practical impact. In the second section, I will identify the specific factors that led to the deteriorated nuclear situation between the two superpowers. Different from the aforementioned antecedent conditions, these factors formed the

concrete basis of the agreement that was made years later. The impact of this 'problem' was felt throughout the entire negotiations and the problem continued to exist over time. Though I thus decided to divide the problem stream in two separate sections, they have one common denominator: they both appeared during the Cold War crisis and greatly influenced the relationship between the US and the Soviet Union. They both contributed to the public climate in which the policy and the politics stream had to manifest itself.

The operationalization of the policy stream

In the policy stream, I will focus on how the epistemic communities have influenced and initiated policy proposals. This operationalization, combined with interpretivist process-tracing, allows to see the path towards the final proposal and indicates how the environment gradually became 'softened up' to seriously consider the full elimination of INF's. It simply took time before new ideas were considered. The susceptibility of the decision-makers to certain ideas while neglecting others, are important elements in policy change and those will be addressed in the policy stream. This section therefore follows a discursive institutionalist approach, meaning that it takes the power of ideas seriously, even though ideas can often not be classified in predefined categories or overt structures (Schmidt, 2008). I will identify two distinct epistemic communities that had a great influence on the policy outcome, which were the transnational communities that influenced Gorbachev and the epistemic communities of diplomats that conducted and steered the multilevel negotiations. This policy section will be concluded with a process-tracing figure to illustrate these dynamics within the policy stream (see p.49).

The operationalization of the politics stream

The politics stream will focus on the political factors that brought about the INF treaty. As the Soviet Union and the US were both dealing with different political circumstances at the time, the mechanism of summitry was indispensable to link these preferences together and to open up the space for dialogue. Without the existence of the summits, such political momentum could not have been created. The politics stream will also follow this sequence, so going from domestic to international concerns. It will first indicate Gorbachev's and Reagan's separate motivations to engage in the negotiations, and the national mood surrounding the issue. Then, I will show how the summits in Geneva and Reykjavik helped to

relax the tensions while they also made the path towards an agreement more concrete. The section on the politics stream will be concluded with a process-tracing figure to illustrate these dynamics .

IV. The Analysis

In the analysis, I will apply John Kingdon's (2014) Multiple Stream's framework to the establishment of the INF treaty. With the help of interpretivist process-tracing, I will identify all the factors that were relevant to the establishment of the treaty and allocate them to the three separate streams. It will become clear that Kingdon's model is very useful to explain international policy change, even though some issues might show up in more than one of the streams. This is due to the fact that some events are interrelated and have various (multi-level) effects. As mentioned before, I have used both primary and secondary sources to construct this analysis. The sources I used for each stream can be found in the appendix (p.87). The problem stream will be addressed first, then the policy stream and lastly the politics stream.

The problem stream: the antecedent conditions

In order to fully grasp the circumstances in which the INF-deal was made, it is inevitable to sketch the international context (and its forthcoming crises) before and during these negotiations took place. As mentioned in the former section, I call those antecedent conditions. I will argue that one international bilateral crisis and two domestic crises indirectly set the stage for the INF treaty. These are: the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan in 1979 (together with its idea of modernization and the other communist-capitalist proxy wars), the economic crisis in the Soviet Union and the Iran-Contra affair in the United States (see the table below). I will also touch upon the latter two in the politics stream, as they opened up domestic space for the forthcoming US-Soviet summits.

	Important antecedent conditions for the INF treaty (CRISES)	How it contributed to the problem stream
1	**Bilateral:** The Soviet invasion in Afghanistan in 1979	The communist-capitalist divide put pressure on the US-Soviet relationship. Nuclear weapons were an important instrument in this Cold War struggle.
2	**Soviet Union:** Economic hardship causes a call for reform	The Soviet Union could hardly maintain the high military expenditures due to the economic hardship. Their priorities were shifting.
3	**USA:** President Reagan gets involved in the Iran-Contra affair	The affair negatively affected the domestic popularity of president Reagan. Reagan needed a political success to steer the public opinion in his favor again.

FIGURE 4A. IMPORTANT ANTECEDENT CONDITIONS.

The Soviet invasion in Afghanistan

The Soviet invasion in Afghanistan caused the American-Soviet relations to deteriorate, after a relatively calm period of detente in the early 1970s. In Afghanistan, both superpowers wanted to expand their spheres of influence. The Soviet Union hoped to spread communism through the central-Asian country, whereas the Americans were keen to teach the Afghans their values of capitalism and freedom (Kalinovsky, 2010). While this war is generally well known, the proxy war actually followed up on an economic Soviet-American 'modernization' battle in Afghanistan that already manifested itself during the 1950s and the 1960s. In essence, the Soviets and the Americans agreed on the two underlying principles of modernization. First, they both believed that modernization would elevate the country from a traditional society to a modern one. Such a development was necessary to sparkle economic development across the world. Second, they believed that, tough countries moved at different paces, they would all end up at the same destination of ultimate modernization (Latham, 2011). These assumptions were based on an idea by Karl Marx, who wrote in 'Das Kapital' in 1867 that: 'A country that is more developed industrially only shows, to the less developed, the image of its own future' (p.7). However, as stated before, the two powers wanted to achieve their goals through different means and values, based on communist or capitalist ideals. For the Americans, the Afghan acceptance of their offers was perceived as the acceptance of the American ideology (Cullather, 2002), but the Afghans looked at it in a

more pragmatic way. The quest for power in the region allowed the Afghan officials to kindly accept development aid from both the Soviets and the Americans. Years later, after the Soviet invasion in 1979, Afghanistan became the playing field for the Soviets and the US again.

The War in Afghanistan was not a standalone incident. It coincided with other proxy wars in Nicaragua, Mozambique, Angola and Cambodia, and it suited Ronald Reagan's 'Rollback Doctrine'. This focused on rolling back the communist influences in the Third World, while simultaneously promoting the idea of American freedom (LeoGrande, 1986; Pach 2006). These tensions, during which both parties also boycotted their adversaries' Olympic Games in 1980 in Moscow and in 1984 in Los Angeles, also paved the way for new nuclear proliferation measures on both sides. Nuclear weapons continued to be an important asset to the United States and its NATO allies, as they realized that the Soviet Union and the countries under the Warsaw Pact had a numerical advantage in conventional forces. Without having the possibility of nuclear deterrence, the Western alliance feared to be defeated in a conventional conflict (Woolf, 2017). I will come back to this in the subsection on 'The nuclear crisis'.

Economic hardship in the Soviet Union
The successful conclusion of the INF treaty a few years later cannot be understood without referring to the deteriorating economic situation in the Soviet Union. Next to the fact that the proxy wars described earlier demanded a huge amount of economic resources, there were also domestic factors that led to economic hardship in the beginning of the 1980s. According to Brunce (1983), the reasons were fourfold. First, 'Soviet dominance within Comecon -the association governing trade relations within the region- and the commitment of the bloc to regional economic autarky had given way to growing and asymmetrical interdependence between the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and between East and West' (Bunce, 1983, p.230). Second, instead of improving the living conditions of the 'poorer' citizens in cities and the country sides, the Soviet policies were established to enhance the power and resources of already privileged groups. Third, the GDP simply stagnated in 1982 and fourth, positions of older generations were extensively secured, which frustrated the chances of employment for the younger generations (Brunce, 1983). The Soviet citizens

started to pay the price for the lack of personal incentives and the absence of competition that were inherently part of the communist system.

The pessimistic view of the Soviets towards their own economic situation was also an important factor to instigate reforms. Such ideas were fueled by increased materialist sentiments across the middle class, as well as by the possibilities to make comparisons with other countries (Hanson, 2014). In the years between Brezhnev's death and Gorbachev's appointment, the presidents Andropov (1982-1984) and Chernenko (1984-1985) simply did not have the time to make the economy flourish again. However, this period in between was important in Soviet economic history, because public debate and internal policy discussions flourished during these years (Hanson, 2014). 'Many Soviet economists and managers believed by now that the centralized economic administration was part of the problem' (Hanson, 2014, p.111). In essence, Gorbachev, after his appointment in 1985, continued building on the premises of loosened public debate and the increased appearance of policy discussion in public (Hanson, 2014). Unsurprisingly therefore, the *Perestroika* (restructuring of the economy) and *Glasnost* (openness), became prominent pillars during Gorbachev's reign. These domestic factors also had direct consequences for the policy and the politics stream, which I will discuss in the designated sections.

The Iran-Contra affair in the United States
Where the Soviets hoped to revitalize their economy in the 1980s, Ronald Regan got engaged in the Iran-Contra affair, which lasted from 1985 until 1987. On 7 December 1986, The *Washington Post* published a chronological reconstruction of the scandal. It was revealed that the Reagan administration had secretly shipped arms to Iran, despite an arms embargo that prohibited such acts. In fact, the administration wanted to loosen the embargo to free kidnapped Americans that were held hostage by pro-Iranian extremists in Lebanon. Despite Reagan's remarks on 8 July 1985, when he mentioned that the state of Iran was a member of a 'confederation of terrorist states' (Pichirallo & Preston, 1986), several arms shipments, brokered by Israel, took place in 1985 and 1986. After the affair became publicly known, which caused domestic unrest in the US, Reagan felt the need to clarify the situation in a televised speech. He mentioned that his administration only underwent secret diplomatic efforts with Iran, in order to improve the bilateral relationship. He believed such secrecy was needed in order to make progress, but he assured that federal law was

respected by his officials at any time. Reagan finished with his famous lines: 'We did not, repeat, did not, trade weapons, or anything else, for hostages. Nor will we' (The Reagan Library, 2016). Very soon though, it became clear that this was a lie. White House officials declared that Reagan signed a document to ratify the deal on 17 January 1986 (Pichirallo & Preston, 1986), so long before his public speech. In a press conference only six days after his public denial, Reagan indeed confirmed that he, as the president of the US, was solely responsible for the arms deal (Pichirallo & Preston, 1986).

In the period to come, the public domain speculated about whether Reagan was actually aware of the deal, or whether it had taken place without his direct approval. In January, Sean Cronin wrote in the *Irish Times* (1987) that the disclosed reports did not provide 'smoking gun' evidence that Reagan was directly involved, whereas *The New York Times* had accessed personal notes in July that indicated that Reagan personally helped to hide data about the affair (Johnston, 1987). After the congressional committees that investigated the encounter concluded that Reagan was to blame for the illegally run operation (Koh, 1987), this negatively affected the domestic popularity of the president. Brody & Shapiro (1989) found that 'the polls following the initial revelations in the Iran-Contra affair record 15 to 21 percentage-point declines in the president's level of approval' (p.353). This made clear that Reagan needed some positive results to steer the public opinion in his favor again.

In the next section, I will address the nuclear crisis between the US and the Soviet Union.

The problem stream: The nuclear crisis

The difficult relationship between the US and the Soviet Union, as mentioned above, also manifested itself in a nuclear crisis. This crisis was illustrated by three components. First, the hostilities caused a situation in which both countries saw the nuclear deterrence of the other party as their ultimate goal. This instigated an arms race, leading to quick technological advancement in nuclear weapons and even greater insecurity. Second, the Soviet Union and the US believed that nuclear (INF) weapons were needed to protect their sovereignty and they continued to show the adversary that they were ready and able to strike when the situation would ask for it. Third, this palpable option of a nuclear strike made the international public even more concerned and they got involved with public protests. In this section, I will touch upon the details of this nuclear INF crisis that unfolded in the problem stream. The sequence of INF related events in the problem stream (before the continuation of talks in 1985) is also made visible in the table below.

Sequence of INF related events in the problem stream before 1985 (CRISIS)	
1	'Focusing Event': The creation of SS-20 missiles by the Soviet Union in 1977
2	NATO uses the SS-20 focusing event to release the Dual Track Decision
3	Operation RYAN, Able Archer-83 and the shooting of KAL-007 further deteriorate the situation
4	Strong anti-nuclear demonstrations in Western Europe and the US in the early 1980s
5	Due to tensions, the first INF negotiations fail (1981-1983)

FIGURE 4B. SEQUENCE OF INF RELATED EVENTS IN THE PROBLEM STREAM BEFORE 1985.

The focusing event

An important factor that brought the particular problem of short and intermediate range nuclear missiles to attention, was the deployment of the new nuclear SS-20 missiles by the Soviets in 1977, close to the Western-European borders (Davis, 1988; Risse-Kappen, 1991). This Soviet action contained all the characteristics of a focusing event as defined by Birkland (1998). The SS-20 was an innovative, and highly mobile nuclear weapon that featured several mobile nuclear warheads with a range of about 300 miles, making it even more devastating than older models. The SS-20 deployment became known to the public and the policy makers simultaneously, and the incident was sudden and relatively uncommon. The potential geographically bounded harm was also clear, as the Soviets put the weapons near their borders and directed them towards Western Europe (Davis, 1988; Woolf, 2017). The

fact that the SS-20's were capable of instantly destroying Western-European civilization, evoked big public concerns in Europe (Davis, 1988). For the Soviets, however, the SS-20 deployment was a new phase in their quest for powerful deterrence. According to Watson (2011), 'It was a strategic move, a threat, that if either the US or any of its NATO allies attached the Soviet Union or any of its Warsaw Pact allies, massive retaliation could be a reality for any or all of them, some within just a few minutes' (p.25).

When the incident happened, the United States did not necessarily see the new SS-20s as a new threat (Bohlen et al., 2012). They pointed at the other, but older, nuclear warheads that were already stationed close to Europe. Helmut Schmidt, Chancellor of West-Germany, held an appealing speech on behalf of Western Europe to ask America to act (Risse-Kappen, 1991), because according to him, Europe was about to enter a new phase of Soviet nuclear pressure. The American reasons to act on the deployment were therefore not directly motivated by the military concerns, but more by motivations of 'alliance management' (Risse-Kappen, 1991, p.177). In the months to come, the SS-20 accident helped to persuade social democrats in West-Germany, the UK and the Netherlands, whose backing was considered crucial (Risse-Kappen, 1988), to take the next step in nuclear deterrence: the NATO Dual Track decision. This initially stepped up the arms race.

The NATO Dual Track decision
The Dual Track decision was designed to facilitate the modernization of nuclear arms together with negotiations on arms control policies. NATO hoped that the further modernization of their arsenals would increase the value of their deterrence, thus increasing the need for the Soviets to start negotiations about arms control. This was envisioned to lead to simultaneous progress, as negotiations would then, when successful, eventually decrease the need for further modernization (Davis, 1988; Risse-Kappen, 1991). In practical terms, the decision meant two things. The Americans installed Pershing-II (INF) weapons in Europe, which were able to reach all major Soviet cities (Watson, 2011), while at the same time, Europe and America asked to Soviets to engage in further negotiations on arms reductions. The motivations to negotiate on reductions parallel to INF-deployment were sparked by the need to appeal to public opinion in Europe, as the anti-nuclear sentiments were strong (Davis, 1988; Woolf, 2017). Many countries, such as the Netherlands and Belgium, suspended the deployment of missiles on their territory as they faced such public

resistance. At the same time, however, Reagan, the British prime-minister Thatcher and their policy-makers remained convinced about the need for INF-deployment in order to secure Europe (Davis, 1988).

The NATO Dual Track decision actually always remained a rather ambiguous policy, as the exact relationship between modernization and negotiations was unclear for policy-makers (Davis, 1988). The 'arms control' track of the decision instigated a first round of negotiations about INF's from 1981 up to 1983. It invited Reagan to propose the INF 'zero' option for the first time in 1981. This would mean the full elimination of the Soviet SS-20's, while NATO would cancel its Pershing-II deployment plans in return (Woolf, 2017). At the time, Reagan's proposal appealed to the public. The president believed he could easily make such proposal without having to think about the strategic implications, as the odds that the Soviets would accept the policy were ironically enough also zero (Davis, 1988; Risse-Kappen, 1991). The Soviets, on their side, proposed the phased reduction of medium-range missiles, while including the nukes from France and the United Kingdom in the deal (Risse-Kappen, 1991). This was also not a very realistic demand. In that period, under Brezhnev's rule, the Soviet Union practically did not yet show any readiness to accepts cuts in their arsenals. Brezhnev played the game of deadlock, in which 'the two most preferred outcomes involve defection by the side whose preferences they reflect' (Downs et al., 1985, p.122). As the two parties held on to their extremes, there was practically no room for cooperation and the negotiations failed.

RYAN, Able Archer-83 and KAL-007

That period was also largely dominated by the Soviet intelligence efforts named RYAN, the NATO Able Archer-83 incident and the shooting down of flight KAL-007. Operation RYAN was the Soviet response to the unpredictable and hostile West. It was an intelligence agency that interpreted information on a possible first nuclear strike by the Alliance. As Manchanda (2009) puts it: 'This fear of a nuclear first-strike [by the West] was so ingrained that it became the operational basis for the collection and analysis of intelligence data' (p.117). Such an intelligence war-game had far-reaching consequences, as beliefs or suspicions were increasingly considered to be facts (Manchanda, 2009). An example is the NATO Able Archer-83 incident, in which NATO aimed to simulate the use and the effects of a nuclear weapon. Though this was a routine simulation that was only a bit more comprehensive than the ones

conducted in earlier years, Manchanda (2009) wrote that the Soviets captured the signals of the simulation through their RYAN-system and interpreted this as an immediate threat. This incident has been described as one of the most dangerous moments of the Cold War (Manchanda, 2009), because it was believed that it caused the Soviets to consider striking first. These incidents neatly illustrate how misperceptions and a lack of communication can lead to the escalation of crises unfolding in Kingdon's (2014) problem stream.

Also the shooting down of the flight KAL-007 in that period did not enhance the Soviet-American relationship. In a speech after the incident, on 5 September 1983, Reagan stated: 'I am asking the Congress to pass a joint resolution of condemnation of the Soviet crime. We have informed the Soviets that we suspended negotiations on several bilateral arrangements we had under consideration' (Reagan Foundation, 2011). In such a climate, the negotiations on short and medium range missiles simply could not proceed. When NATO eventually executed the deployment of the Perishing II in November 1983, the Soviets officially walked out of the INF negotiations (Bohlen et al., 2012; Woolf, 2017). It caused the Soviet-American relationship to be 'as fragile as it had been since the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962' (Watson, p.22). The deadlock in 1983 also meant that the USA's 'peace through strength' strategy had not accomplished any results. The idea behind this strategy was that if the adversary would refuse to cooperate, it would only further worsen its own security. In essence, a cooperative move of the Soviets would then have actually meant the acceptance of America's military power (Risse-Kappen, 1991). In a speech at the Recommissioning Ceremony for the USS in New Jersey, Reagan confirmed that America was ready to use force in order to achieve peace across the globe, while also spreading the American values of liberty and freedom (Reagan Foundation, 2014). The deadlock proved that the Soviets were not receptive to such approach.

Widespread demonstrations against nuclear arms
Even though Kingdon (2014) classifies the swings of national mood in the politics stream, I believe the persistent public demonstrations in the US and Europe remarkably illustrate the state of crisis that the Soviet Union, the US and Europe found themselves in. These protests had the biggest effect on the public sphere in the West, as most involved countries knew a society-dominated domestic structure in which the public could be mobilized quickly.

In the first half of the 1980s, the civil society across the world had palpable concerns over the use of nuclear weapons. It led to several large civil protests in America and Europe across these years, in which participants ventilated their concerns about the planned deployment of INF-missiles, but also about the very existence of nuclear weapons (Watson, 2011). Even though the protests did not lead to any fruitful negotiations up to 1985 yet, it showed the unified voice of the civil society against the deployment of such weapons. In the newspapers of that period, these anti-nuclear stances clearly came to the surface. On 23 October 1983, thousands of demonstrators protested against the deployment of Perishing II missiles across America, while in New York, 'nuclear protesters formed a 22-block human chain between the Soviet and United States missions to the United Nations' (The New York Times, 1983). Such sentiments of solidarity also dominated in Europe, as around three million people marched through the streets in The Netherlands, Spain, Italy, France and Great-Britain (Woolf, 2017; New York Times, 1981). In Germany, large peace movements linked nuclear proliferation to the poverty elsewhere in the world. They voiced that the resources used for military build-up could better be invested to stop the unlawful exploitation of people (The Guardian, 1983). These peace movements also warned that nuclear weapons oppressed large communities of innocent people, as the deployment of the weapons put them under a continuous threat (The Guardian, 1983).

The massive protests in Europe also put the European relationship with the US under pressure. The journalist Michiel Caarten (1981) touched upon this deteriorating relationship. He wrote: 'Relations between the United States and its European allies will only deteriorate further if Americans continue to misinterpret the criticism being voiced in Europe. It is not simply anti-Americanism but rather a confused cacophony of concern, with overtones of pacifism, intended to be heard by both superpowers' (Caarten, 1981). As a consequence, the Soviet Union did its best to exploit those irregularities. They tried to sway the public opinion in Europe, by highlighting the civil opposition in Europe against nuclear deployment (Bohlen et al., 2012). The Soviets were very actively monitoring how their behavior was reflected upon by the Western public. Bradley Graham (1981) confirmed that the anti-nuclear movements and the Soviet media strategies strengthened one another. He wrote: 'The anti-missile movement and an extensive Soviet media campaign have helped to place the Reagan Administration and its NATO allies in a public role of intransigence against a peacemaking

Brezhnev' (Graham, 1981). The Soviets believed that the domestic resistance against nuclear weapons was strong enough to hamper the deployment of the missiles in Europe (Risse-Kappen, 1991). Even though the process of deploying the Pershing II indeed took more time than expected, they still got installed in 1983. This caused the Soviets to end the first round of INF negotiations. As we know, it eventually took four years before this nuclear crisis in the problem stream could be resolved.

In the next section, in which I will address the policy stream, I will outline the importance of epistemic communities within the primeval policy soup of John Kingdon (2014), after having outlined the policy proposals that gradually resulted in the treaty. Especially when it comes to Gorbachev's ideas and the multi-level negotiations between 1985 and 1987, these epistemic communities have played a crucial role.

The INF and the policy stream

According to Kingdon (2014), policies float around the 'policy primeval soup' in which some proposals are considered seriously, whereas others never reach the surface. 'The environment of this soup is composed of policy communities' (Brunner, 2008, p.502). These communities, who construct or influence certain proposals, can manifest themselves in different forms. They can be researchers, administration staff, academics or interest groups analysts. As these communities do not contain a predefined set of actors, the communities can be fragmented or very closely knit together (Kingdon, 2014). With the help of the problem and the politics stream, in which actors seek to create momentum for certain policies, the policy community works towards a short list of proposals.

Even though Kingdon (2014) did not explicitly do so, I link his policy communities to Haas' (1992) concept of epistemic communities. The ideas these communities generate play a powerful role in decision-making. Kingdon (2014) writes: 'Ideas float around in such communities. Specialists have their conceptions, their vague notions of future directions, and their more specific proposals. They try out their ideas on others by going to lunch, circulating papers, publishing articles, holding hearings, presenting testimony, and drafting and pushing legislative proposals. The process often does take years, as the quotation above illustrates, and may be endless' (Kingdon, 2014, p.116). As ideas are sometimes vague concepts, it is very hard to measure when and to what extent these epistemic communities' ideas had any influence on the decision-maker. Nevertheless, the difficulty of tracing the impact of (trans) national communities should not stop researchers from doing so.

In this regard, Risse-Kappen (1994) provided me with an important bridge between Kingdon's Multiple Stream Framework and the establishment of the INF treaty. He believes that structural and functional explanations fall short when trying to explain the sudden changes that led to the end of the Cold War. He states: 'These theories need to be complemented by approaches that emphasize the interaction of international and domestic influences on state behavior and take the role of ideas-knowledge, values and strategic concepts-seriously' (Risse-Kappen, 1994, p.186). In this section on the policy stream, I will first outline which policy proposals gradually led to the establishment of the INF treaty. Subsequently, I identified two distinct epistemic communities that have operated in different spheres. Where Gorbachev's thinking was influenced by transnational epistemic

communities, which I will address with the help of the literature by Risse-Kappen (1994), the epistemic community of diplomats also turned out to be an important factor in the treaty negotiations. In the table below, I outlined the main path of this chapter (also see the detailed process-tracing illustration on page 49 and the appendix on page 91).

	Analytical path followed in the policy stream (Overarching mechanism: Epistemic communities)
1	The policy proposals leading to the treaty (Soviets consider SS-20 irrelevant, zero-zero option, Gorbachev's concessions, etc.)
2	The influence of the epistemic communities is outlined in two subsections: a) The epistemic community of diplomats that facilitated and steered the multilevel negotiations b) The transnational communities that influenced Gorbachev

FIGURE 4C. ANALYTICAL PATH FOLLOWED IN THE POLICY STREAM.

The policy proposals leading to the treaty

The agreement that the US and the Soviets wanted to resume the INF talks in early 1985 is, just as in the politics stream, an important starting point. In the beginning, with Chernenko on the Soviet side, the two parties largely continued their pre-1985 strategies. The policy-makers in Russia wanted to couple the INF-issue to other topics (such as to negotiations on the Strategic Defense Initiative (nuclear weapons in outer space) as well as on a Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty), whereas the US wanted negotiations that solely focused on intermediate-range nuclear forces (Bohlen et al., 2012). In the policy stream, the appointment of Gorbachev was equally decisive as in the other two streams, because this opened up space for new ideas in the Politburo. While pursuing *Perestroika* and *Glasnost*, Gorbachev allowed more room for public discussion, which had direct consequences for the arms negotiations. A cornerstone here was the internal Soviet evaluation of the SS-20 nuclear build-up in the summer of 1985. Risse-Kappen (1991) writes: 'The SS-20 decision was reviewed and it was finally decided that its military importance was not worth its political price' (p.183). In an interview in 1987, even though the foreign ministry declared that deputy foreign minister Alexander Bessmertynkh was speaking in his personal capacity, Bessmertynkh stated that the deployment of the SS-20 was indeed a political mistake. According to him, the build-up was not the right decision because the SS-20 only helped to

revitalize the role of the United States in the security of Europe. Where the Soviets aimed to decouple European security from American security, the exact opposite was achieved (Mitchell, 1987), as the Americans soon responded with the deployment of Pershing II missiles in Europe.

The INF treaty would never have been established without the far-reaching unilateral initiatives that the reform-minded Gorbachev proposed from 1985 until 1987. According to Druckman et al. (1991), these initiatives have, in combination with the good interpersonal relationship between Gorbachev and Reagan, made the treaty possible. Especially Gorbachev believed that progress was only possible through mutual confidence-building and serious cuts in nuclear arms. In that regard, Gorbachev announced his first major proposal on the 15th of January 1986. That day, the Soviet president proposed an INF-'zero' option confined to Europe and he proposed the complete elimination of nuclear weapons word-wide by the year 2000 (Grachev, 2008; Mandelbaum & Talbott, 1986; Risse-Kappen, 1991). In a reaction, the West largely assumed, again, that Gorbachev proposed these policies to steer public opinion in his favor. Several of Gorbachev's former staff members confirmed: 'The proposal was intended to be 'revolutionary' enough to satisfy the ambitions of the new young Party leader while unrealistic enough to be rejected by the West, thus allowing the Soviet propaganda machine to put all the blame on the adversary for obstructing the achievement of practical results' (Grachev, 2008, p.68). However, despite such tactical and political motives, the declaration was also a way for Gorbachev to show his sincere intentions. He was indeed determined to cut in his arsenals, willing to make concessions to the West and hoping to improve the East-West relationship. The president thereto largely retreated from earlier Soviet positions on the matter (Grachev, 2008).

Shortly before the commencement of the summit in Reykjavik (see politics stream), Gorbachev formally gave up his demand to include the British and French nuclear forces in the INF-negotiations, a proposal that already informally came on the table in October, 1985 (Risse-Kappen, 1991; Druckman et al., 1991). Obviously this increased the odds of a positive outcome in Iceland's capital, as they could now focus on concrete bilateral policy proposals. In a conversation with his political assistants of the Politburo in the wake of Reykjavik, Gorbachev stressed once again that his proposals might create a positive momentum for disarmament that his counterpart Reagan had no option but to consider. Gorbachev stated:

'It seems like everybody is turning towards us now- in the United Nations as well as in Stockholm. Truly, there is no way for them to get away from our initiatives, they cannot just talk them away' (Gorbachev, 1986). In a document in which Gorbachev outlined his Reykjavik plans to his Reykjavik Preparation Group, Gorbachev firmly stated three ambitious goals. First, he wanted to prepare a draft statement leading towards his ultimate goal of liquidating all nuclear weapons from the earth. Second, he wanted the complete removal of INF's from Europe. Third, he wanted to prepare an agreement on a ban on nuclear testing which would eventually forbid the placement of nuclear weapons in outer space (Gorbachev, 1986). Needless to say that this proposal was not fully implemented in Reykjavik, but Reykjavik proved fertile ground for concrete persuasion by both sides. At some point during the summit, 'Reagan and Gorbachev agreed to eliminate all U.S. and Soviet INF missiles from Europe and to reduce SS-20 arsenals deployed in Asia' (Risse-Kappen, 1991, p.165). At that moment, however, the Soviets insisted that this had to be coupled to an agreement on the Strategic Defense Initiative, an US missile defense system in outer space used to protect the country from an attack with strategic nuclear weapons. They feared that America's SDI could, apart from its military implications, also widen the East-West technology gap. This would thus undermine Gorbachev's ideas of economic reforms and stabilization (Larrabee & Lynch, 1986). Reagan stated about the SDI: 'In Reykjavik we had come to an agreement on literally total nuclear disarmament, except that at the very last minute they said it could only take place if we gave up SDI. And that's when I came home' (Reagan Library, 1987). The preliminary progress on reductions caused concern among policy-makers in Europe. They feared the total elimination of INF's would threaten European security, because it would give the Soviets a strategic (conventional) advantage over Europe (Davis, 1988; Risse-Kappen, 1991; Schlesinger, 1986).

In the beginning of 1987, when Gorbachev acknowledged that the SDI-issue is the major obstacle towards an INF agreement, he decided to drop the direct linkage between SDI and the INF, together with the notion that he now wanted to include short-range missiles as well (Druckman et al., 1991; Risse-Kappen, 1991). Gorbachev's intensive concessions invited Gillespie (1987) to cynically write that: 'A colleague, on hearing that Gorbachev had now offered the removal of all intermediate-range nuclear missiles, said he would probably dance naked for Reagan next, so many concessions has he made to secure

an arms deal'. Another factor that helped speeding up the negotiations, was the progress made on the issue of verification (Bohlen et al., 2012; Druckman et al., 1991; Risse-Kappen, 1991). Bohlen et al. (2012) write: 'The resulting verification provisions pushed the curve of what had ever been seriously contemplated for nuclear arms control up to then. Since both U.S. and Soviet INF systems were deployed in third countries, the treaty needed accompanying agreements to allow inspections on their territory. This took innovative diplomacy but was accomplished effectively by both sides' (p.3). All in all, the viability of the treaty largely depended on an effective verification mechanism. After the signing of the treaty in 1987, the Special Verification Commission was established to monitor the countries' compliance.

In April 1987, Gorbachev proposed a 'double zero' option. This included the elimination of SS-20, Pershing-II and cruise missiles, and short (500-1.000km) range nuclear weapons in Europe (Risse-Kappen, 1991). Due to the aforementioned feared strategic instability, this proposal was feared by the Europeans (Davis, 1988). However, Helmut Schmidt, the West-German Chancellor that brought the SS-20 deployment by the Soviets to attention, soon declared Europe had not much to worry about. Such fears were misplaced (Schmidt, 1987). The proposal was in essence not very different from Reagan's and NATO's zero option voiced in 1981 in which the elimination of SS-20 and Pershing-II would go hand in hand (only the range of included missiles was different). Therefore, the zero-zero was all but a Communist proposal (Schmidt, 1987). Reagan said about this: 'I would like to call your attention to the fact that in 1981, when I proposed the zero option of these intermediate weapons, they indignantly walked out of the negotiations and said they would not be back. Well, they came back. And as a matter of fact, they came back and announced a zero-zero as their own idea' (Reagan Library, 1987). This sequence of events corresponds to Kingdon's (2014) idea that policies are often a recombination of older initiatives rather than brand new proposals. Despite the fact that the proposal sparkled an intense debate among the members of the Alliance (Pick, 1987), NATO ultimately accepted the zero-zero, after having been reassured of the US's nuclear commitment to Europe. At the same time, the Reagan Administration wanted to go one step further. Mr. Schultz (Secretary of State) warned that the Soviet Union had to accept the global elimination of short and intermediate-range nuclear weapons, instead of only including short-range missiles (The Guardian, 1987). In the

months to come, the Americans and the Soviets agreed to go for the global elimination of the missiles with the range between 500 and 5.500 kilometers (Risse-Kappen, 1991). These distances became ratified in the INF agreement, that was signed on 8 December 1987 during the Washington summit.

The power of ideas within the epistemic communities
Kingdon (2014) writes that decision-makers often prefer certain proposals over others, as they want to promote their personal values. In this regard, it is important to define who or what influences the policymaker's way of thinking. For instance, where did Gorbachev's aforementioned 'dance for Reagan' come from? Practical incentives can be the explanation, such as his pursued *Perestroika*, but Gorbachev's worldviews and ideas are also prominent factors that explain his behavior. These ideas find its roots somewhere. At the international level, the epistemic communities are generating and distributing new ideas towards the responsible decision-makers (Campbell, 2002). I believe that the epistemic communities of the diplomats and the transnational communities have both influenced the decision-making towards the INF treaty. They have played a decisive role in determining which proposals ended up on the shortlist and which did not.

The epistemic community of diplomats
Even though Gorbachev and Reagan are the policy entrepreneurs that sacrificed their resources to bring about the INF treaty during their third summit in Washington, the diplomats have also played an intensive role throughout the process. The summits in Geneva and in Reykjavik have been the most appealing to the public realm (and were important to the treaty due to various reasons as I will explain in the politics stream), but the intensive diplomacy that was conducted over a period of seven years, also proved an indispensable asset. Although no reasonable progress was noted after the end of the Geneva summit in 1985, it was an important period for policy-makers on all diplomatic levels to get acquainted, to share views and to set (and get to know) each other's boundaries. In that regard, it is legitimate to state that the policy-proposals mentioned above, which gradually moved towards an agreement, are accompanied by diplomatic efforts. The permanent delegations of the two superpowers in Geneva dealt with the constant thread of the negotiations. These diplomats were used to one-another already, they operated within the same diplomatic spheres, they were both familiar with the topic and they could, without too much political or

public pressure, talk to one another and indicate their preferences. Over the course of the negotiations, career diplomats of both countries extensively worked on draft proposals, and intensively reported to their capitals (Pick, 1987). Druckman et al. (1991) and Mandelbaum & Talbott (1986) also refer to the diplomatic working groups that were constructed to find common ground, especially on details of the agreement. This 'lower' level of diplomatic efforts in Geneva softened up the atmosphere so that senior officials in Moscow and Washington could give the treaty its pivotal push over the critical juncture. They were important to build further trust and to reduce the mutual ambiguity. Apart from the presidential summits and these regular diplomatic engagements, 'Secretary of State George Shultz and Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze also held several meetings in Washington, Moscow, and Geneva that were instrumental in moving the negotiations forward' (Bohlen et al., 2012, p.20). Therefore, it is legitimate to state that these diplomatic efforts happened on three distinct levels. The career diplomats prepared the ground, the senior officials in the capitals further accelerated and elevated these diplomatic efforts conducted in Geneva (Bohlen et al., 2012) and the two presidents gave the proposal the final push.

The transnational communities

On the way towards the INF treaty, Gorbachev's concessions proved decisive. The Soviet president was pursuing economic reforms and an arms race would not match such targets. Despite this assumed logic, however, the actual relationship between the economic reforms and the elimination of all INF's is not that clear-cut. Risse-Kappen (1994) states, for instance, that Gorbachev also could have chosen to return to a détente-alike policy, which would have equally freed up space for the *Perestroika*. 'Instead, Gorbachev went far beyond what one can reasonably expect from a 'prudent' realist perspective' (Risse-Kappen, 1994, p.189). Therefore, it becomes important to explain why certain ideas were prominent over others and why policy A was preferred over B. Risse-Kappen (1994) believes that the transnational actors, their ideas and their direct influence on Gorbachev were decisive in this regard. Gorbachev's new policy ideas were influenced by four rather autonomously operating communities. These were 'the US arms control community, Western European scholars and center-left policymakers, as well as Soviet Institutchicks' (new thinkers) (Risse-Kappen, 1994, p.213). The four groups regularly exchanged views, shared their values and they circled around in Gorbachev's sphere of influence.

Checkel (1993) writes that 'a changing external environment and the advent of a reformist general secretary created a series of policy windows through which aspiring policy entrepreneurs jumped' (p.273). For instance, Checkel (1993) found that institutchicks at the Institute of the World Economy and International Relations convinced Gorbachev and his advisors that the economy itself should not be analyzed through the black and white, communist-capitalist dichotomies. The bad image about American capitalism had to be changed, and the idea of interdependence between one another had to prevail. Analyzing the world politics and the economy in such non-Marxist-Lenist paradigms was a clear precondition of the foreign policy revolution that unfolded under Gorbachev's reign (Goldstein and Keohane, 1993). Though it is hard to link such ideas to specific policies per se, they open up the intellectual space for discussions, which consequently change the path of decisions to be taken.

When it comes to the ideas on military security, that were quite new to the Soviet thinkers, natural scientists at the Academy of Sciences and intitutchicks at the United States of America and Canada institute (ISKAN) were important influencers (Checkel, 1993). These institutions regularly participated in discussions and exchanged ideas with policy makers, which indirectly influenced the Soviet thinking. According to Risse-Kappen (1994), their influence on Gorbachev manifested itself through several channels. First, Gorbachev himself acknowledged that his ideas were similar to those of these Western thinkers. Second, it was noted that Gorbachev did not have clear convictions about foreign policy before he became president, meaning that he was open to such ideas, and third, ISKAN's director Arbatov, who was believed to be one of the most prominent new thinkers, was one of Gorbachev's closest advisors during the *Perestroika*. The president was susceptive to persuasion, which is an important instrument to bring about policy change (Culpepper, 2008).

The process-tracing encounter in the policy stream is visualized in figure 4D below. In the next section, on the politics stream, I will outline the chain of political events which eventually prepared the ground for the INF-agreement. These political encounters coupled the problem and the policy stream. Summitry played a pivotal role in this process.
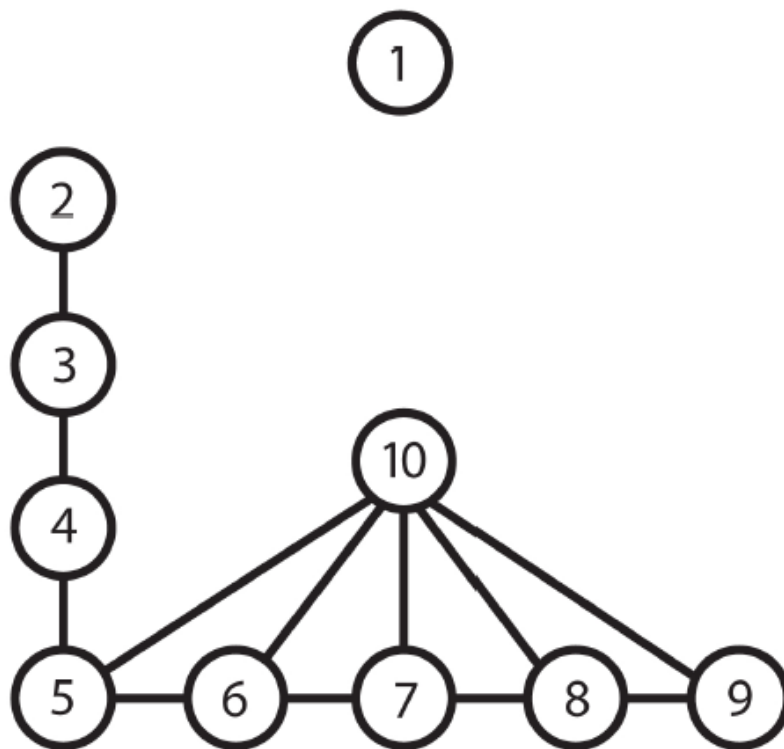
FIGURE 4D. THE POLICY STREAM. 1: Overarching mechanism: The epistemic communities and the importance of their ideas, **2:** In light of Gorbachev's Perestoika, the SS-20 build-up is evaluated and the Politburo concludes that it was militarily irrelevant, **3:** Gorbachev proposes the 'Europe zero option' and a world free of nukes by 2000. This first proposal was not taken seriously, **4:** Gorbachev's first concrete proposal: The president gives up his demand to include British and French nuclear weapons in the INF-negotiations. This opens up space for concrete negotiations, **5:** In Reykjavik, Reagan and Gorbachev agreed to eliminate all U.S. and Soviet INF missiles from Europe, but the Soviets coupled this to the SDI, **6:** Gorbachev drops the linkage between INF and SDI and agrees to include short range missiles, **7:** Progress is made on verification-mechanisms. The US proposes verification measures including on-site inspections, **8:** Gorbachev proposes the 'double zero' option with short-range missiles, **9:** Gorbachev accepts the proposal which includes nuclear ranges from 500-5,500 km, **10:** Extensive multilevel diplomacy was essential to achieve an agreement.

The INF and the politics stream

As Kingdon (2014) explained, political factors couple the circumstances within the problem stream to the primeval soup of policies that already exist in the policy stream. As such, the politics stream is responsible for the creation of positive momentum that can result in the establishment of new treaties. When it comes to the INF-negotiations that unfolded after 1985, the three Soviet-American summits that were organized played an important role. The summitry enabled the countries' domestic and international preferences and dynamics to be channeled through bilateral dialogue. According to Druckman et al. (1991), when conducted timely and under the right circumstances, 'summit meetings serve several positive functions, such as: defining a bargaining space, developing trust between leaders, conveying a seriousness of intent to reach agreement and serving as a deadline for producing a treaty' (p.59). In this whole process, from the preparations to the meeting itself, policy makers are confronted with matters that otherwise might not have been addressed. Summits are inherently action-forcing events as they help to speed up policy making processes on both political sides (Druckman et al., 1991). In the section to come, I will outline the political factors that, channeled through the summits, made the treaty possible. In the table below, I will outline the main path of this chapter (also see the detailed process-tracing illustration on page 58 and the appendix on page 93).

	Analytical path followed in the politics stream
1	The Soviet and the American president decide to resume arms talks in the beginning of 1985.
2	Gorbachev's motivations for an INF treaty: He pursued *Perestroika* and *Glasnost* after the economic crisis and considered a stable economy more important than military strength.
3	Reagan's motivations for an INF treaty: Reagan was looking for historical recognition and wanted to be seen as a peacemaker. He hated 'the bomb'. Reagan also needed a political victory after the Iran-Contra affair.
4	The national mood in both countries changed during and around the summits. Both countries looked at the other's president in a more favorable way.
5	The summitry in Geneva and Reykjavik allowed Reagan and Gorbachev to get acquainted and it formed the basis of their good relationship. They agreed nuclear war should never be fought. In Reykjavik, the two presidents built on this relationship and the first concrete proposals were put forward.

FIGURE 4E. ANALYTICAL PATH FOLLOWED IN THE POLITICS STREAM.

Gorbachev's motivations

In September 1984, Ronald Reagan met with the Soviet foreign minister Andrei Gromyko. In those talks, the two adversaries underlined the importance to continue the dialogue about nuclear arms and to enhance mutual understanding, despite the unsuccessful negotiations that got deadlocked a year earlier (Reagan Foundation, 2014). Shortly after this meeting, in the beginning of 1985, the two adversaries officially decided to resume the INF-talks. Progress on arms reductions was in the interest of both parties, not in the last part because of the economic difficulties the world faced. In the years to come, it became clear that especially the economic situation and its forthcoming reforms in the Soviet Union had its effect on the disarmament negotiations.

After the death of the Soviet President Chernenko, who, due to his short reign (1984-1985), was not able to turn the economic tide, Mikhail Gorbachev came to power on 10 March 1985. Just like almost any other newly appointed president, Gorbachev started with appointing like-minded officials in the Politburo. Despite the fact that Gorbachev had exhibited a rather progressive mindset, his first actions as a president were not necessarily deviating from the more traditional Soviet line. This caused that 'the first major attempt to outline the new foreign policy concept, Gorbachev's report to the Twenty-seventh Communist Party Congress in early 1986, represents a strange mix of 'old' and 'new' thinking (Risse-Kappen, 1994, p.193). Gorbachev soon implemented several measures to strengthen the social discipline, the military and to forge economic investments (Hanson, 2014). For example, Gorbachev set up an anti-alcohol campaign to reduce binge-drinking with vodka. He believed that moderate drinking would make people live and work longer, which would inherently have a positive effect on the economy (Hanson, 2014). According to Kingdon's (2014) MSF model, changes in administration and leadership forms an important pillar of the politics stream. Obviously, different administrations prioritize different values and ideas, resulting in other policy proposals.

Soon after Gorbachev implemented those 'conservative' reforms, Gorbachev started to ventilate a true spirit of reform, which came to be known as the Perestroika. He wanted to accompany his reforms with open public discussions from the start (Hanson, 2014). During his efforts, Gorbachev continuously underlined the importance to further facilitate and foster economic links with the outside world. He was aware of the unstoppable trend of

globalization and interconnectedness, in which the Soviet Union had no option but to participate. In that respect, Gorbachev did not refrain from challenging economic middle-level and senior officials that hampered the reforms by protecting their own nests (Hanson, 2014). In that regard, Gorbachev built on the economic stagnations and concerns that were already ventilated during the reign of Brezhnev and his two successors (see problem stream). Together with the new generation of policy-makers that entered the Politburo, Gorbachev wanted to ensure that the Soviet ideology would better fit the demands of contemporary society.

The Perestroika had its effect on the Soviet Union's foreign policy (Duffy et al., 1998), as well as on the military. Gorbachev believed firmly that the success of socialism was to be measured by its economic performance, and not necessarily by its military power (Hanson, 2014). That is why, though he faced internal resistance in the beginning, Gorbachev prioritized economic well-being over military dominance (Hanson, 2014). He seemingly acknowledged that the heavy Cold War rhetoric, together with the financial costs of building and maintaining the nuclear arsenals, worked against his domestic goals to reform the economy. The Gorbachev leadership conceived security more as a political encounter, rather than it being strictly military. Consequently, the political nature of the relationship with other countries (and especially with the US) was considered more important than the absolute size of the nuclear arsenals (Duffy et al., 1998). In this process, the president was inspired by the idea of reasonable sufficiency, which included a non-offensive defense strategy and the elimination of misbalances in arsenals, and the concept of 'common security' (Risse-Kappen, 1994). Even though this idea of 'common security' was initially only dominant in Europe and among peace organizations, its premises also reached the 'new thinkers' including Gorbachev in the Soviet institutions (see policy stream). This idea held that 'a security partnership through multilateral institutions could transform the East-West conflict and the nuclear deterrence system and that far-reaching peace and cooperative arrangements were possible among opponents' (Risse-Kappen, 1994, p.192). With promoting such ideas, Gorbachev had a great impact on the INF-negotiations to come (Duffy et al., 1998; Davis, 1988; Druckman et al., 1991).The signed INF treaty is clearly based on this abovementioned collective security ideal. At the same time, Gorbachev also knew that the

INF-deal was a way to enhance its international stature and to ensure that he could free up resources for his economic reforms (Davis, 1988).

Reagan's motivations

When it comes to the American president Ronald Reagan, the reasons why he pursued a treaty were less overt. Druckman et al. (1991) state that 'historical recognition may well have played a role in Reagan's desire for an INF agreement' (p.62), but his move was considered peculiar because Reagan was, and still is, often perceived as a Cold War hardliner. However, despite this public image, some historians have also pointed at Reagan's softer side. In a documentary about the Geneva summit in 1985, David Reynolds (2013) states that Reagan was a complex personality, which commuted between a warrior and a peacemaker. In his first term, Reagan fitted the former, as he repeatedly stated that the Soviet Union was a totalitarian state that was driven by a militant and intrinsically expansionist ideology. He therefore believed that the Soviets had to be restrained by direct confrontation (Pipes, 1995). On 3 April 1983, this resulted in Reagan's famous speech in which he declared communism and the Soviet Union to be 'the focus of evil in the modern world' and an 'evil empire'(Reagan Foundation, 2009). In his second term, however, Reagan the peacemaker stood up, as he wanted to make the world a safer place (Reynolds, 2013). Putting it that way, also the US welcomed a 'change' in leadership that loosened up the political climate.

For Reagan, The Able Archer incident in 1983 served as a catalyst to change his approach. 'For years he [Reagan] had been saying that the Soviets would stop at nothing, even war, to advance their ends. Now he discovered that they apparently believed exactly the same about him' (Reynolds, 2009, p.125). In addition, it was also believed that Reagan hated 'the bomb' and that he thought the idea of mutually assured destruction was truly insane (Reynolds, 2009; Reynolds, 2013). Despite these intrinsic motivations to a more peaceful approach, it is very likely that the Iran-contra affair mentioned in the problem stream also had its effect on Reagan's approach to the arms negotiations. The affair made the level of the president's approval by the public drop with 15 up to 21 percent (Brody & Shapiro, 1986). Reynolds (2013) states that Reagan needed a summit and the forthcoming agreement to ease public opinion again. In a television interview, Reagan unsurprisingly denied that these two events were interconnected (Reagan Library, 1987).

National mood

Another important pillar in the politics stream is the national mood (Kingdon, 2014). In that respect, the various mass protests in early 1980s continued to send a clear message to the policy-makers. However, when the Soviets and the Americans announced that they wanted to engage in dialogue again in the beginning of 1985, the largest waves of anti-nuclear protests had passed. To the contrary, several countries actually doubted whether an arms agreement would be something positive. The European governments feared increased military pressure from the Soviets, where the conservative Americans believed in 'peace through strength'. It created a situation in which the public had not many expectations. The location of the first summit to talk about nuclear arms was also an asset, as public demonstrations were forbidden in Geneva (Boland, 1985).

Shortly after the summit in Geneva, however, the skeptic feelings in the US about the summits and the arms negotiations started to change. Sigelman (1990) researched the effect of Reagan's unexpected cooperative moves towards the Soviet Union on public opinion and he found that the larger majority of the US citizens kept confidence in their president, despite his swift changes. According to Sigelman (1990), this was due to the rally-round-the-flag phenomenon, which means 'the relative absence of elite criticism during the initial stages of foreign crises' (Groeling & Baum, 2008, p.1065). Such mechanisms were observed in more foreign crises, such as during George W. Bush's 'War on Terror' in Afghanistan (Chapman & Reiter, 2004). Broder (1985) also reported about these sentiments among voters right after the summit in Geneva took place. They praised Reagan's handling of the meeting and found hope in what had happened there.

The positive spirit between Gorbachev and Reagan during the summits, which will be described in the next subsection, also gained momentum due to the positive public opinion in both countries. The Soviet and the American population both welcomed the summit in Geneva with optimism (The New York Times, 1985). The Soviet public opinion changed in favor of Reagan, as they gained a favorable impression of the American president during the summit. He was portrayed as a man that pursued peace. This positive coverage of the meeting contrasted with the otherwise rather negative portrayal of the US in the state controlled domestic media of the Soviet Union (The New York Times, 1985). In the US, a

similar pattern seemed to unfold, as several polls showed that Gorbachev's popularity rating in America was only four percent lower than Reagan's score (Reagan Library, 1987).

Summits in Geneva and Reykjavik channeled political forces
Watson (2011), Sigelman (1990), Davis (1988), Duffy et al. (1998) and Druckman et al. (1991) are unified in their conclusions that the good interpersonal relationship between the American president Ronald Reagan and his Soviet counterpart Mikhail Gorbachev was a decisive factor in the establishment of the INF treaty. They believe that without the interpersonal comfort between the two, a treaty would not have been possible. This was not expected, as 'the number one communist and the number one imperialist were expected to out-argue one another' (Reynolds, 2009).

It is generally assumed that the foundation of this relationship was laid during the 1985 summit in Geneva, in which both leaders 'agreed that, since it cannot be won, nuclear war must never be fought' (Watson, 2011, p.22). The summit provided the presidents with the opportunity to look one another in the eye and to realize themselves that they were both human. The journalists Gwertzman and Weinraub (1985) illustrated the chemistry that unfolded between Reagan and Gorbachev with an anecdote. They reported: 'At dinner, Mr. Gorbachev, toasting Mr. Reagan, described a cartoon he had seen in a Western newspaper. It showed Mr. Reagan on one side of an abyss, Mr. Gorbachev on the other. In the caption, Reagan was saying: 'we need a better relationship. You take the first step'. As Mr. Gorbachev spoke, Mr. Reagan broke into laughter and applauded'. At another moment, when Reagan heard the Soviet expert Georgi Arbatov called him a grade-B movie actor, Reagan told Gobachev to tell his expert that 'they were not all B-Movies' (Gwertzman and Weinraub, 1985). Reynolds (2009) raises that such valuable intercultural and interpersonal encounters were actually only possible due to a very practical tool. He writes: 'For there to be real interaction, a summit must also involve effective communication in the purely technical sense. It is therefore worth noting that the meeting in Geneva of 1985 was the first superpower summit at which there was simultaneous translation' (Reynolds, 2009, p. 126).

Regardless of all the political progress mentioned above, the summit in Geneva did not produce tangible results on nuclear arms control. This was predominantly due to the persistent stances on the Strategic Defense Initiative. The Soviets wanted Reagan to drop this initiative, but Reagan told Gorbachev soon that America had no intentions of doing so.

'Even far from it, we want to make strategic defense a strong protector of the peace'
(Reagan Library, 2017). Stopping the American SDI initiative was the chief summit goal of
Gorbachev, but Reagan's officials told their president not to trade away the SDI (The
Washington Post, 1985). These persistent stances impeded practical steps. Nonetheless,
despite the political stalemate, Gorbachev and Reagan decided to release one joint
statement about the progress made during the summit, to underline their cooperative spirit
(Weinraub, 1985).

The enthusiasm about the Geneva summit was not necessarily translated to the next
occasion, in Reykjavik in October 1986. Before the meeting took place, the Soviets maximally
tried to appeal to international public opinion while opting for the complete elimination of
nuclear weapons by the end of the century (Mandelbaum & Talbott, 1986). The Soviets were
aware that the Americans would never seriously consider such proposal, but Gorbachev
wanted to steer the public opinion in his direction before the summit took off. During the
summit, several concrete proposals came to the table (see the policy stream), to open the
bargaining dynamics that characterize the politics stream. Nevertheless, some experts at the
time were unified in their conclusions to call the second summit a failure. Mandelbaum &
Talbott, 1986 wrote that the summit 'derailed the summit process and dramatized the
fragility of the US-Soviet relationship' (p.216). Schlesinger (1986), who was likeminded,
stated that Reykjavik underlined the diplomatic adage that summits are only helpful to ratify
what has already been agreed to. Negotiating during a summit was considered a waste of
time. Much of this skepticism was also based on the fact that the Americans hardly prepared
for the meeting. It caused that the Americans walked into a meeting that was way different
than they had expected (Mandelbaum & Talbott, 1986). As Gorbachev came prepared, he
was able to steer the agenda. Gorbachev prioritized non-proliferation during the summit,
and the Americans followed. The summit in Reykjavik showed the time was ripe for
Gorbachev to show his intentions to de-nuclearize.

Already during but also in the aftermath of the Reykjavik summit, the two sides
'moved closer to accommodation on a number of issues than their top officials had
considered possible beforehand' (Mandelbaum & Talbott, 1986, p.216). The summit and the
forthcoming policy proposals showed, despite its initial failure and the intense criticism it
faced, that the leaders were willing to bargain, converge and come to a deal. When still in

Reykjavik, however, Gorbachev continued to tie his proposals to Reagan's SDI-initiative. A deliberate move, as 'Gorbachev now put the onus of failure on Reagan and made the president's commitment to missile defenses appear to be the stumbling block to any final agreement' (Larrabee & Lynch, 1986, p.25). Gorbachev also knew that Europe was skeptical about the SDI, and that Reagan now came to choose between the SDI or no agreement on strategic arms during his administration (Larrabee & Lynch, 1986). As stated earlier, Gorbachev was very sensitive of Western public opinion and he wanted to appeal to it where he could (Bohlen et al., 2012). It was after the Reykjavik summit that Gorbachev made various unilateral concessions (see the policy stream) that eventually, after extensive multi-level diplomatic efforts, made an agreement possible. A comprehensive illustration of the politics stream can be found below (figure 4F).
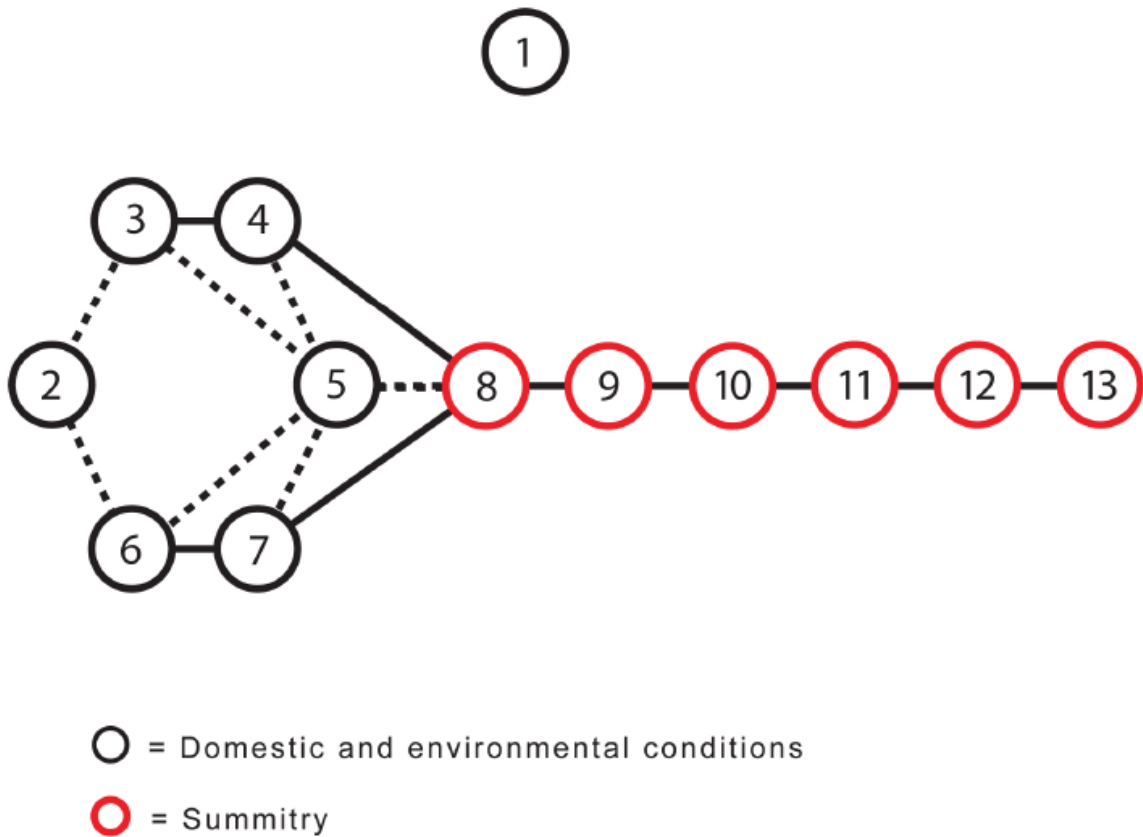
FIGURE 4F. THE POLITICS STREAM. 1: Overarching mechanism: Summitry, **2:** Reagan and Gromyko met to talk about Soviet-US relations. In the aftermath they agree to resume arms talks, **3:** Gorbachev becomes president of the Soviet Union in 1985, **4:** Gorbachev wants to reform economy and brings in new ideas, including Perestroika, Glasnost and common security. Nuclear expenditures worked against his domestic goals, **5:** Globalization and interconnectedness change the environmental dynamics, **6:** Reagan's quest for historical recognition as a peacemaker, **7:** Reagan needs a political victory to influence the public mood after the Iran-Contra affair, **8:** The Geneva summit was the first of four bilateral summits to follow: it provides the opportunity to look one another in the eye, **9:** Geneva summit helped Gorbachev and Reagan to build a good interpersonal relationship, **10:** Geneva helped to create a positive public opinion in the Soviet Union about Reagan and in the US about Gorbachev, **11:** In Reykjavik, though no breakthrough yet, the first concrete proposals came on the table. It showed the men's willingness to negotiate, **12:** During Reykjavik and in its aftermath, Gorbachev made many concessions to make an agreement possible, **13:** The bilateral negotiations continued on various diplomatic levels, leading to the 'signing' summit in Washington in December 1987.

Concluding the analysis

In this analysis, I have shown how the establishment of the INF treaty and the Multiple Streams Framework interact. By using interpretivist process-tracing, it became clear how the separate streams slowly softened up and converged, which led to the creation of a policy window. This conversion of the streams is a rather sensitive process in itself, as the three streams follow distinct paths and can only be coupled when the circumstances and the timing allow it. In my analysis, the three streams and its causal mechanisms proved complementary to one another. Taking out one of these three pillars would have led to a completely different outcome.

In the problem stream, the antecedent conditions shaped the relationship and the dynamics between the US and the Soviet Union, while the SS-20 deployment in 1977 further exacerbated the nuclear crisis between the two superpowers. Even though the countries participated in negotiations on the INF's from 1981 until 1983, they were not able to strike a deal in that period. At the time, the policy and the political preferences of the two countries differed too much. This changed when Gorbachev came to power in 1985. The new Soviet president was extensively influenced by the transnational communities around him, which believed in the importance of economic reform in the Soviet Union and a smaller role for the military. Simultaneously, the US president Reagan had adopted his role as a peacemaker, and he was longing for a nuclear arms deal that would be written in the history books. These favorable conditions were then utilized with the help of the politics stream. While both the US and the Soviet Union faced its own domestic political problems, both leaders found each other at the summits in Geneva and Reykjavik. From the political reconciliation in Geneva onwards, the two countries engaged in multilevel diplomacy which eventually prepared the ground for the INF treaty.

This sequence of events clearly shows the indispensability of all three streams and causal mechanisms. Without the crises in the problem stream, the policy and politics stream would obviously have followed a different path. Without the policy stream and the influence of the epistemic communities, the political engagement would have ended in a stalemate, as we have seen in 1983. And without the summits in politics stream, the newly adopted ideas by the two presidents would not have converged.

In the chapter to come, I will reflect on the application of the MSF-model in international politics and I will state what we can learn from INF-negotiations in light of the current nuclear crisis.

V. Reflections on the MSF-model in international politics

In the former section, I have addressed through process-tracing how Kingdon's problem, policy and politics streams converged, which eventually created the window of opportunity to sign the treaty in 1987. In this section, I will reflect on the applicability of the MSF in international politics, while also pointing at the lessons that could be learned from the study in light of the current hostilities. These reflections will be categorized in two subsections. Firstly, I will focus on how the MSF-applies to my case, how the MSF complements the existing literature on the INF, the challenges I encountered when applying the theory to an international context and how the theory itself could be improved. Secondly, I will argue why, though we now find us in a different geopolitical situation, an INF-alike treaty would be welcome nowadays and address what we can learn from the INF-process in that regard.

The reflections on the MSF

A frequently heard critique on the MSF is that the framework is hard to apply in international contexts. Brenner (2007) found that: 'The impact of multi-level games on national politics, in particular within the European Union, is underrepresented in Kingdon's model' (p.506). When elevating the theory to an international level, the reversed problem occurs, as domestic politics have a vast impact on the policies agreed on in an international setting. That is why I controlled for the domestic motivations that led to the summits, the domestic crises that prepared the environmental conditions and the ideas that influenced both administrations. It makes me conclude that the MSF is particularly useful to explain international contexts, preconditions and coincidences that bring about the establishment of international treaties. The comprehensive nature of the MSF, together with process-tracing, helps to account for spurious relationships, something which I believe earlier academic accounts on the INF have overlooked. They focused on negotiating-dynamics, interpersonal relationships or public discourse, while disregarding other possible explanations or the relations between them. In my study, I intended to focus on the contextual factors that led to the agreement, while also keeping an eye on the fact that circumstances are unique and that internal and external factors, big or small, can break the deal.

An important aspect of Kingdon's (2014) theory is the constructivist dichotomy between structure and agency in decision-making. The MSF is a constant interplay between

agency and structure, and I believe this makes the model realistic and comprehensive. Both concepts evolve organically and affect one another in case-specific ways, in which they simultaneously constrain and accelerate one another. Institutional structures are the constraining force in policy-making, as they largely set the boundaries for the negotiations to follow. In the case of the INF, the option to fully eliminate the INF's was already pushed to the table in 1981, but corresponding to Kingdon's (2014) premises, it takes time for an idea to float to the top and to ensure that the right people take an interest in the project. That also created the opportunity for the epistemic community to come in, as policy-makers are the most susceptive to ideas on subjects that are already in the decision-makers mind (Kingdon, 2014). Complementary, the agency of policy-entrepreneurs and their ability to soften up the structural circumstances are very decisive in the rather 'sudden' instances of policy change that Kingdon covers. The agency of the two 'titanic individuals' (Kingdon, 2014, p.224), Reagan and Gorbachev, was decisive in the establishment of the treaty (Watson, 2011; Sigelman, 1990; Davis, 1988; Duffy et al., 1998 and Druckman et al., 1991). This manifested itself in the interpersonal relationship between the two presidents, Gorbachev's undefined foreign policy attitudes which left space open for the 'instituchicks' to influence him, Reagan's historical awareness and his ambition to become a peacemaker and the presidents' far-reaching reactions to domestic crises.

The fluidity of the model
The most important implication of the MSF is its inherently loose nature combined with the separately defined streams. Even though Kingdon (2014) states that 'these streams flow along largely on their own, each according to dynamics not much related to the others, and that the critical event to understand is how these largely independent streams come together' (p.228), I believe it is often empirically hard to make concrete distinctions between the streams. The elements are interrelated and interacting in a socially constructed environment. My case has shown that the streams are not necessarily statically operating channels that direct themselves towards the end goal, and many events possess characteristics that could be attributed to more than just one stream. Consequently, the distinction and the subdivision of each event within the streams is a an encounter that leaves room for the interpretation of the researcher. As Zahariadis (1998) and Ackrill et al. (2013) wrote before, the MSF's applauded focus on agency and context is also its limitation. The theory especially becomes complex when its four main pillars: problems, policies,

politics and policy windows, start to interact in fluid and context-dependent ways. However, Rawat & Morris (2016) and Cariney & Jones (2016) still underline that the flexibility of Kingdon's theory and its conceptual elements portray the sometimes unpredictable nature of policy-making in a realistic way.

An INF-example in which these fluid interactions come to the forefront is the national mood. According to Kingdon (2014), the national mood fits the politics stream, as this senses 'the climate in the country, changes in public opinion and broad social movements' (p.146). Policy makers will then use these sentiments to construct political standpoints and constrain the prominence of one policy while promoting another. However, especially in international policy-making and the INF, the national mood also deserves a prominent place in the problem stream. This is because the public demonstrations followed upon a focusing event, namely the deployment of the SS-20 by the Soviets. That way, the public moods sets the scene for the political and policy-related interactions, as without any societal uproar, such processes would probably not have been activated. Moreover, assigning some place for the national mood in the problem stream would also help Kingdon to deal with the critique that the concept of national mood lacks empirical precision. Because of this, it is hard to directly link the public mood to public policy change (Zahariadis, 1998). Kingdon (2014) himself is also aware of these complications, as he writes: 'We have been speaking of national mood as a rather vague presence that people in and around government sense, something that is palpable to them but hardly concrete or specific' (p.148). Attaching the national mood to both the problem stream and the politics stream would overcome these complications. In the problem stream there is more room to describe the socially constructed circumstances that create the 'policy environment', without having to tie it directly to the exact policy outcome. With the policy environment I mean the antecedent conditions, the focusing events and the crises that shaped the circumstances within which the negotiations and the bargaining took place.

Another instance in which the fluidity of Kingdon's (2014) framework comes to the forefront is when addressing the intimate relationship between the politics and the policy stream. Even though 'politics' has its separate stream, the influence of politics is omnipresent and stretching far beyond that initial scope. That is due to what Deborah Stone (2011) calls the 'polis'. She writes that a problem definition in itself is a strategic

representation of a situation, rather than an objective representation of reality. Governments, groups and individuals portray events in such a way that it favors their deserved course of action. The proposed solution to a problem, that is often already floating around in the policy primeval soup, is therefore not free from ideological concerns and framing. This had practical implications for my research. It caused that the events unfolding in one stream could, due to the interrelatedness between the framing of problems and solutions, easily manifest itself in other streams as well. This was the case for the economic crises in the Soviet Union and the Iran-Contra affair in the US, the political summitry in Reykjavik in which also some concrete policy proposals came to the table, Gorbachev's policy concessions that were influenced by the activities in the politics stream, and so on. I believe the interrelated nature of the streams becomes especially salient when applying the MSF framework in an international context, because then both international as well as domestic preferences of two countries need to be matched.

The intimate relationship between the media and public opinion
One aspect of the MSF that I do not agree with, is Kingdon's underestimation of the importance of the media and public opinion in policy making. Though Kingdon (2014) states that the influence of the media on agenda-setting is considerable, he also writes that the attention-span of the media is small and that many issues covered in the media are often already acknowledged by policy makers. These assumptions by Kingdon provoke a discussion on whether the public is an active or passive consumer of media messages. Examples of such conflicting scholars are Bourdieu (1996) and Croteau & Hoynes (2013). Bourdieu (1996) believes that media are a reflection of society and consumers respond to messages in a way that fits predefined structures. He writes: 'It is vital to understand that he [a person] is only a sort of structural epiphenomenon, and that, like an electron, he is the expression of a field' (p.54). Croteau & Hoynes (2013), however, believe that, in most circumstances and affected by cultural backgrounds, humans actively interpret the 'externally' created media content and challenge the preferred reading when necessary. Even in the case of the INF-negotiations, scholars do not agree on the role of public opinion and the media. Knopf (1993) found that: 'Based on the impact of European domestic protests, I believe that domestic actors are not just objects to be manipulated by the strategies of statesmen but active players in their own right who can shape the agenda for interstate bargaining (Knopf, 1993, pp. 627-628). To the contrary, Sigelman (1990) speaks about the passiveness of the

public while stating that 'a highly conciliatory move by the US-president known for long-standing opposition to just such an action tends to override much of the opposition that would otherwise emerge' (p.46). Informed by both approaches, I believe the structuralist approaches also apply in this regard. The media shapes and gets shaped and the public opinion, so the complicated truth lays in the middle. The media are accelerators of societal questions that pup up, but, especially in western societies, they also have the freedom to promote their own agendas. Thus, this dynamic interaction between the media, public opinion and decision-makers does not fit predefined theories.

However, along the lines of other researchers, I believe that the discourses in the media can have a great influence on public opinion (Pan & Kosicki, 2001). This is because media can be seen as the barometer of the societal debate. It is one of the reasons why I found the analysis of first hand newspaper articles so enlightening, because they provide us with a clear reflection of how society was constructed at the time. They reflect on the personal circumstances between the leaders, they conduct popularity polls, they report on the mass demonstrations, they write about the concerns of experts, they create and maintain symbols to focus attention, they frame issues according to their own heuristics, they simplify the complex reality and they air the focusing events to the broader public. All in all, I agree with Kingdon (2014) that the concept of public opinion and media attention are difficult concepts to tie to a policy outcome directly, or to the proposals that come to the table. Nevertheless, the dynamic interplay between the media, which are simply the primary sources of information for the public (McCombs, & Shaw, 1972), and public opinion is evident and needs close attention. The policy-makers do not operate in harnessed vacuums.

Optimizing the MSF-model for international application
Next to the recommendations stated above, I have another suggestion to improve the model in international contexts. In essence, I support Weir's (1992) critique on Kingdon's model that the theory is 'ahistorical', though I base myself on different arguments. Weir (1992) believes the MSF does not pay enough attention to the way previous policies affect current debates and how learning process will affect new policy outcomes. He basically wants to add incrementalist and historical institutionalist thinking to a model that seeks to describe everything but a step-by-step policy change. Kingdon (2014) focuses on policies that cannot be explained by incrementalism or historical institutionalism, and pays attention to the sensitivity of decision-making. He focuses on the importance of context, the environment

and chance. Despite the fact that Weir's approach would not work when trying to explain the establishment of the INF, I also believe the model is 'ahistorical'. When applying the model to international decision-making, I believe the theory would better explain the empirical reality when it would account for antecedent conditions and two-level games. The MSF does not yet provide space to cover the antecedent conditions that shaped the relationship between two countries. Consequently, in order to account for domestic as well as international factors, I believe that especially the politics and the problem streams need to be constructed in a 'Putnamian' two-model way, thus indicating how and when domestic concerns of two countries can converge in international negotiations. In particular, 'the two-level approach recognizes that central decision-makers strive to reconcile domestic and international imperatives simultaneously' (Putnam, 1988, p.460). I am convinced that such two-fold dynamics are indispensable in international decision-making and I have shown this in my figures on page 49 and 58.

The two-level nature of international negotiations also has its implications for Kingdon's policy entrepreneurs and their relationship to policy communities. These dynamics become more complicated. Kingdon (2014) theorized that the entrepreneurs soften up the policy communities. However, in my case study, in which I identified Gorbachev and Reagan as the main policy entrepreneurs, this happened the other way around. Especially Gorbachev was extensively influenced by the ideas of the policy communities. Then, the extent to which such policy communities and entrepreneurs are successful on an international level, depends on various contextual factors. One of them is the political institutional structure of the involved country. This corresponds to Risse-Kappen's (1994) finding that in a centralized structure as the Soviet Union, the prominence of ideas profoundly depends on the willingness of the leadership to listen. This works differently in a society-dominated structure like the US, due to the fragmented and decentralized nature of the institutions and the ideas they advocate.

In the next section, I will translate the lessons from the INF treaty to the nuclear crisis we are facing nowadays.

Translating the lessons of the INF to the current crisis

Especially when looking at the nuclear hostilities we are facing nowadays, we could learn from the causal mechanisms that resulted in the establishment of the INF treaty. In terms of nuclear build-up, I believe that the circumstances before the treaty was signed are comparable to the nuclear difficulties today. The United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu, has also mentioned in her speech to the Conference on Disarmament (Nakamitsu, 2018) that the current tensions are the highest since the Cold War. Despite these similarities, however, it is also inevitable to realize that the current political, societal and technological situation is inherently different and probably more complex than the one during the Cold War. In this subsection, I will argue why an INF-alike agreement would be welcome in the current nuclear context and what we can learn from the establishment of the INF-agreement in this regard.

A different context compared to the 80's make an INF-alike agreement welcome

There are several reasons why the current nuclear crisis is not necessarily comparable to the one we saw in the 1980's. First, the multipolar character of the tensions create an increasingly difficult situation. John Mearsheimer (1990) was right when he predicted that the world would lose its bipolar stability after the Cold War. This changing world-order also put the INF treaty under pressure. Compliance to the treaty means that China (and even the DPRK) can continue to develop more flexible, mobile and sophisticated missiles, while Russia and the US formally need to stick to their older models. Although the US has always stated to be in full compliance with the INF treaty, the Trump administration has significantly revitalized the prominent role of (other) nuclear arms in their defense policy. In the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review, the US announced the modernization of their arsenals. They warned that strategic competition gained prominence again. While the US has, according to their own information, reduced their nuclear arsenals with 85% since the Cold War, others moved the opposite direction and extended their stockpiles (The NPR states that Russia extended their non-strategic arsenal with 2.000 warheads, China is exploring new nuclear capabilities and the DPKR is illicitly testing them). Moreover, the international community is now facing an unprecedented mix of threats, including chemical weapons, biological weapons, the probability of weapons in outer space, cyber attacks and violent non-state actors. According to the US, these diverse threats require an adaptive and flexible nuclear response (NPR, 2018).

The new nuclear efforts of the US will entail the modernization of their nuclear arsenals and a tailored deterrence strategy, which implies the deployment of Low-Yield Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missiles (LYBM) and Nuclear-Armed Sea-Launched Cruise Missiles (SLCM). These installations are flexible and allow quick responses. The US overtly reported that especially these SLCM's are a direct response to Russia's INF violations. So notwithstanding the American statements that they remain committed to a world without nuclear weapons and to all their obligations including the INF (NPR, 2018), the tone and the practical measures presented in the NPR illustrate the hostile nuclear situation the international community finds itself in. The possessing powers continue to believe in deterrence instead of disarmament. Kristensen (2017) points at the unstoppable trend of states that possess nuclear weapon states to modernize, despite their promise that they only pursue defensive deterrence. He writes: 'In fact, it is fair to say that the primary objective of modernization is to improve the effectiveness of nuclear weapons to destroy targets. As such, the nuclear-armed states are locked in a perpetual technological race' (p.33).

Secondly, the symbolic value and the norms attached possessing nuclear weapons continue to present a challenge. Scott Sagan (1996) was one of the first to argue that 'military organizations and their weapons can be envisioned as serving functions similar to those of lags, airlines and Olympic teams: they are part of what modern states believe they have to possess to be legitimate, modern states' (p.74). Especially since the Cold War, we have seen that nuclear weapons are used to climb the ladder of international hierarchy. The deployment simply helps countries to be taken more serious in international negotiations. The weapons represent values of strength (Shaikh, 2002) and they help to secure a country's territorial sovereignty. Mao Tsetung once said about this: 'If we are not to be bullied in the present-day world, we cannot do without the bomb' (Foot, 1988, p.112). These arguments form an incentive for many countries to pursue the bomb. That is why I believe that the possessing countries possess the key to bring a new, anti-nuclear norm to the 'tipping point'. A difficult process, but history has shown it is not impossible. The INF treaty and the willingness of Gorbachev and Reagan to eliminate an entire category of nuclear weapons is the best possible example.

Lastly, the risks attached to nuclear weapon deployment are increasingly diverse and often even hard to grasp. Though the weapons have a symbolic value and are often presented as measures for deterrence, the threat of nuclear weapons is real. The risk that nuclear weapons fall in the hands of non-state actors and the possibility that one irresponsible leader will push the button have been addressed often, but much of the contemporary literature has also focused on the risk of a nuclear accident. Pelopidas (2016) writes that overconfidence in the controllability of nuclear weapons creates dangers, because the controllability and the predictability of the nuclear operating systems have clear limitations. He pointed at historical accounts in which sole luck was responsible for the fact that certain incidents did not end in nuclear disasters. The current modernization and expansion of arsenals only further increases the probability of such accidents. These could happen due to command and control failures (Podvig, 2017) and even due to cyber attacks on nuclear weapon facilities (Lewis & Unal, 2017).

All the above mentioned factors put pressure on the strategy of deterrence that the nuclear powers currently uphold. This only further increases the need for an agreement on nuclear disarmament. Fitzpatrick and Barnett (2017) also stress that nuclear deterrence is an inherently risky strategy because it is subject to imperfect systems and human failures. They conclude: 'Nuclear deterrence works-up until the time it will prove not to work. The risk is inherent and when luck runs out, the results will be catastrophic' (Fitzpatrick and Barnett, 2017, p.31).

The important INF lessons translated to the current context
Despite these aforementioned differences between the 1980s and today, I believe that several INF-lessons are still highly applicable. Similar to the problem stream of the INF, crises do prevail in the current situation. Examples are the (lack of) INF-compliance, the absence of on-site INF-verification mechanisms since 2008, the offensive 2018 NPR of the United States, the release of the Russian hypersonic nuclear weapon and even the assumed interference of Russia in the elections of the US. There is only one element that the current situation seems to lack, namely a truly appealing focusing event that would help to direct the public attention to the seriousness of the problem. The risks of the existence of nuclear weapons are largely ignored. The fact that nuclear weapons have not been used since Hiroshima and Nagasaki, seems to be falsely interpreted as evidence that the chances of the reoccurrence

of such events are minimal. The current policy makers continue to believe in deterrence, even though the contemporary geopolitical situation make nuclear activities a very risky encounter. It seems that only a nuclear accident can wake us up.

Especially in a time in which no real progress can be achieved in multilateral forums, such as the UN Conference on Disarmament (a stalemate for twenty-two years already), bilateral summitry can be helpful, because it would force dialogue between Russia and the United States. As we have seen in the politics stream, summit meetings serve several functions. They define bargaining space, the presidents can get acquainted (so that they can realize that they are both human) and summits force the presidents to speak about matters which otherwise remain unaddressed (Druckman et al., 1991). Furthermore, summits are action-forcing events that help to speed up the policy-making, and they help to build a more likeminded 'community'. According to Dietz et al. (2003), building such a community helps to more effectively overcome prominent problems in society. It is based on the obvious assumption that the better people know each other, the less likely it becomes that issues escalate.

In the wake of such events, diplomatic working groups could help to prepare the ground, just as during the successful INF-negotiations. They could slowly help to get the nuclear question through Finnemore and Sikkink's (1998) 'norm life cycle', by which the norm of nuclear deterrence and the bomb as a symbolic asset will be replaced by efforts promoting disarmament. An important role is to be played by the five overtly possessing states here (USA, China, Russia, UK and France), because especially those countries can ensure that nuclear weapons are no longer seen as a measure of status. In the preparation process and during the summits, low hanging fruit could be addressed first, just to come to better terms, while gradually moving towards the more sensitive issues. I believe an important lesson from the INF is that the summitry should not be only judged by its practical policy outcomes. They can also be very valuable to soften up the climate. Geneva and Reykjavik are perfect examples of this.

Another thing the INF treaty taught us, is that such a policy change would need strong and determined leadership. As Fitzpatrick and Barnett (2017) put it: 'Breaking out of the conundrum will require steady, collaborative and visionary leadership of a kind that is sadly rare today as major states increasingly turn inward' (p.31). Indeed, both Trump and

Putin do not seem keen on bringing such proposals forward. As mentioned before, Putin is occupied with restoring the Russian influence in the world and he sees nuclear weapons as an important asset to do so, while Donald Trump is facing extensive domestic resistance since his appointment. These factors, together with the public accusations that Russia mingled in the American elections and that Trump had personal ties with Putin before he became president, do not make a quick rapprochement very likely. In this regard, a change in administration seems the only way out, which is also one of the major pillars of the politics stream.

The applicability of the transnational epistemic communities to overcome the current crisis is hard to determine, because the impact of such communities is often only measurable in retrospect. However, in this phase of the crisis, the epistemic community of diplomats could play an important role. Especially in multilateral forums like the United Nations and its Conference on Disarmament, the diplomats of the adversaries, despite all struggles, are forced to continue to engage in dialogue. As Kingdon (2014) would put it, these diplomatic encounters could help to slowly turn the tide and soften up the circumstances for change. Nonetheless, the diplomats currently (purposefully) do not succeed yet. The conversations are currently nothing more than ventilating mutual accusations, about for instance INF-violations, chemical weapon use in Syria and Salisbury and employing nuclear weapons in Europe. In addition, the US president Trump is believed to largely stipulate his own policy while trespassing his policy-advisors and diplomats, while Putin is simultaneously also not susceptive to ideas about disarmament.

All in all, summitry and epistemic communities could help to reduce the current ambiguity and mistrust that has resulted in the nuclear crisis. The nuclear deployment activities by Russia, the US and also by China and the DPRK are covered by a smokescreen. An important example is the US' 2018 Nuclear Posture Review, which leaves much room for interpretation and judgment. In the review, the notion of negative security assurances is mentioned. This basically means that a nuclear state will not threaten or use nuclear weapons against a non-possessing state that is in compliance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). However, the 2018 NPR built in a caveat in case a *non*-nuclear strategic threat advances. In the past, such limitations were only bound to biological or chemical attacks, but now it is much more unclear what such threats entail. So in theory, when a country would

now build up its conventional arsenals and threaten America with war, the Americans could consider a nuclear attack. These ambiguous standpoints cause that other countries do not know what to expect and will also consider strengthening their military capabilities. This results in an arms race which only further increases distrust and suspicions within the international community. Openness is clearly the way to go, but the momentum seems not there yet.

In the next section, the conclusion, I will answer the research question and I will also address the relevance of my findings, its broader implications for society, the limitations of the study and some suggestions for further research.

VI. Conclusion

In this thesis, I aimed to find out what the relevance of the establishment of the INF treaty is in relation to the current day nuclear hostilities. My study had two complementary purposes. Firstly, I wanted to show how precarious the establishment of treaties can be. A quite specific combination of efforts and circumstances brought about the INF treaty, and taking out one of the pillars could have resulted in a totally different outcome. Secondly, I also wanted to make clear that the factors that were decisive in the build-up to the treaty did not happen solely due to chance. The right circumstances can also be created. It is important to understand which circumstances and efforts could make the seeds fertile. It is like a game of football. The game consists of many coincidences, but this does not mean that training and tactics are useless. Moreover, the rules of the game provide the structure, but the agency and the ideas of the players determine its outcome. To find a comprehensive answer to my research question, I used the inductive single case study method based on interpretivist process-tracing. It adopted a bottom-up approach to find out what the implications of my findings would be for the theory development in my field of research. The interpretivist method was useful to explain how a certain actor, who operated within a certain context, made sense of the circumstances and the timeframe around him, while process-tracing helped me to account for the contextual, directly and indirectly related factors that had an effect on the establishment of the INF treaty. The interpretivist process-tracing methodology thus featured the inclusion of individual events and facts, it mediated between structure and agencies and allowed to connect abstract ideas with concrete factors to explain a phenomenon.

I have streamlined my research along the lines of John Kingdon's (2014) Multiple Streams Framework (MSF), a discursive institutionalist model to explain policy change. To prepare the ground for the application of this model, I first addressed what an institution is, why they are formed and why ideas are important in this formation process. Kingdon's main idea is that policy is made when the independently operating problem, policy and politics stream converge in a window of opportunity. Within this process, policy entrepreneurs try to soften up the policy environment and they seek to push the streams together in a manner that favors their political goals. Just because the geopolitical question of nuclear weapons is so complex, the MSF proved to be a useful framework for my inductive study, as it, together

with interpretivist process-tracing, allowed me to account for all forces, ideas and actors that shaped the outcome. An important strength of Kingdon's (2014) theory is the constructivist dichotomy and interaction between structure and agency in decision-making. Even though the theory acknowledges a degree of unpredictability in the coupling of the streams and is therefore often perceived to be too fluid, it would be a mistake to disregard its usefulness to explain historical and unpredicted policy events. Especially because the theory serves a two-fold goal: it can help us to evaluate the uniqueness of policy events, while it also helps to see whether (theoretical) parallels would exist between different occurrences.

In order to answer the question how the MSF helps to explain the establishment of the INF treaty, I have reconstructed the sequence of events that preceded the treaty and assigned them to the problem, the policy and the politics stream. In addition, due to the fact that the MSF itself has only been applied to domestic encounters and not yet to international negotiations, I have identified three overarching causal mechanisms within each stream that embraced the bilateral INF processes at hand. These were crises, epistemic communities and summitry. It became clear that the MSF is well suited to explain the establishment of the INF, as this theory adequately provided me with the tools to explain the phenomenon. However, due to the aforementioned situation that the theory had not been applied in international contexts yet, I proposed small amendments to the theory which could help to make the MSF more suitable for international encounters. That way, I wanted to respond to the call by several researchers that, even though the empirical impact of the MSF has been considerable, its untapped potential for theoretical and empirical advancement is also worth it to be explored.

Especially in international encounters, I have experienced that it can be hard to make concrete distinctions between the events that happen in the problem, the policy or the politics stream. Some events possess characteristics that could be attributed to more than one stream, because the streams interact in a socially constructed environment. I think this is inherent to the practice of applying the MSF to multilevel contexts, but because the MSF has an explanatory function, this does not necessarily harm its applicability. The two-level interactions simply imply that the impact of some occurrences transcend the scope of one specific stream. Furthermore, I have found that it is necessary to account for the antecedent conditions of the bilateral relationship and the two-level games (the accumulation of both

domestic and international concerns) that impact the problem and the politics stream. As I made visible in the operationalization of these streams, I am convinced that they need to be constructed in a 'Putnamian' way, thus indicating how and when domestic concerns of two countries can converge. I believe that any future researcher on the applicability of the MSF in an international context should account for these factors. Related to this, I also believe that it is important to further assess the importance of media and international public opinion on an issue, as those are the barometers of the societal debate and contain the reflections of society in a dynamic way. I think Kingdon's assumptions on media influence and public opinion should be reassessed when new areas for application are to be explored. A last implication of the international application of the MSF is the relationship between policy communities and the policy entrepreneurs. Contrary to Kingdon's model, my policy entrepreneurs (Reagan and Gorbachev) were actually influenced by the policy communities and not the other way around. I have found that the extent to which such policy communities are successful depends on various factors, and it would be interesting for scholars to further study this relationship to see how these concepts interact in other cases.

I formulated the second part of the research question to assess the value of the identified mechanisms that brought about the INF treaty (crises, epistemic communities and summitry) in the context of the current day nuclear hostilities. It is clear that the geopolitical situation nowadays is not necessarily comparable to the one in the 1980s. The balance of power shifted and we moved from a bipolar to a multipolar world. This also put the INF treaty under severe pressure. Apart from the US and Russia, other countries are now more intensively pursuing or possessing nuclear weapons, which makes the geopolitical situation complex and multifaceted. Nuclear weapons still bear a symbolic value that the pursing countries find important. Compliance to the INF treaty by Russia and the US would essentially mean that all other nuclear-weapons pursuing states can freely continue to develop INF missiles, while the US and Russia are bound to the treaty. In addition to this, many bilateral incidents and the honoring and ignoring of each other's status have also dramatically decreased the trust between the two superpowers. In the current situation, the conducted nuclear deterrence strategy also becomes increasingly risky. Deterrence is problematic due to a variety of reasons, such as the increased risk of technological command and control deficiencies, possible cyber-attacks on nuclear facilities, human overconfidence

towards the controllability of systems and the possibility that non-state actors will acquire nuclear weapons.

To overcome all these difficulties, I believe that the identified causal mechanisms of summitry and epistemic communities could help to reduce the ambiguity and mistrust between Russia and the United States. The summits, together with the influences of the epistemic communities of diplomats and the transnational communities, have proven to be decisive in the elimination of all intermediate-range nuclear weapons. I do believe that such mechanisms, when being conducted in a sincere way, would again be helpful to gradually ease the tensions and change the norms and status regarding nuclear arms. Nevertheless, at this point of writing, it is also clear that the momentum to do so is not there yet. An illustration here is the announcement made by the US that they will construct even more flexible and adaptive nuclear weapons to respond to the current crisis. It is clear that both the US and Russia possess the key to lower the tensions, but then they need to be less ambiguous about their programs and engage in an equal and just dialogue. However, it seems that the crisis first needs to escalate before serious rapprochement is considered an option.

While getting to the end of the thesis, it is important to readdress the limitations of my study and to do a last suggestion for further research. The method I picked, namely interpretivist process-tracing, has its clear disadvantages. The inherently low level of external validity of a single case study has to be recognized, as the method has a very narrow focus and is therefore not always suited for generalizations. Moreover, I need to point out that process-tracing leans heavily on the assumptions of the researcher. Needless to say that, just like all the actors that brought about the INF treaty, I also construct my own reality through what I see, calculate, think and know based on my own heuristics. I am aware that these perceptions got reflected in the thesis. Even though the nature of the thesis therefore remains a little speculative, I still believe such interpretations are very valuable. Not in the last place because I often based myself on primary documents. Such use of primary documents is a contribution in itself, because it allowed me to observe the situation from first glance, without always having to rely on secondary literature that was written years later and with retrospective knowledge. Next to the other suggestions I have put forward earlier in this conclusion, I have a last one to mention. As my thesis was partly an exploratory

study to examine how the MSF would apply to international negotiations, I hope that other scholars will further build on my findings and apply them to other instances of international decision-making. That way, this newly explored potential of the MSF could overcome its infancy and become a very comprehensive way to describe the complex empirical reality.

In my final words, I would like to appeal to the current decision-makers. They need to acknowledge that the nuclear threat is real. They should not let themselves be deceived by the 'nuclear-threat trap' that time seems to provide us, because a nuclear incident could happen before we realize it. I hope my research provided the current generation of decision-makers with some insights on how to instigate change. To that end, the INF treaty, that was negotiated and signed in a period when the Cold War seemed at its peak, is the perfect example of how such relaxation of tensions can be achieved. However, to do so, political will is absolutely necessary.

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VIII. Appendix

This appendix is included to show which sources I used to construct the three distinct streams. I followed the sequence of the narrative in the thesis (note: this is thus not in alphabetical order). The titles of the sources can be accessed through the reference list.

Sources of the Problem stream
See the operationalization of the problem stream below. This section is divided in two tables: the antecedent conditions and the nuclear crisis.

Table 8A: The Problem Stream: The antecedent conditions

Problem Stream: The antecedent conditions	Content and keywords	Sources
The Soviets in Afghanistan		
1) Primary Sources	None	None
2) Secondary sources	Nation-building and the Soviet Union, capitalist-communist divide	Kalinovsky, 2010
	US' Modernization efforts during the Cold War, ideology	Latham, 2011
	The expected progress of society, modernization, societal divisions	Marx, 1867
	US-Soviet competition on Modernization in Afghanistan, dam-building example	Cullather, 2002
	Reagan's Rollback Doctrine, peace through strength	LeoGrande, 1986
	Reagan's Rollback Doctrine explained	Pach, 2006
	History of the INF treaty, Russian non-compliance to treaty in 21st century, fear of conventional conflict in Europe	Woolf. 2017
Economic hardship in the Soviet Union		
1) Primary Sources	None	None
2) Secondary Sources	Fall of corporatism during the Brezhnev era	Brunce, 1983

	Rise and fall of Soviet economy	Hanson, 2014
The Iran Contra affair		
1) Primary sources	Chronology of the Iran-Contra affair, sequence of events with dates	Pichirallo & Preston, Washington Post (1986, Dec. 7).
	Reagan denies trade deal with Iran	The Reagan Library (speech 1986, Nov. 13; published on YouTube in 2016)
	Evidence for the trade is not found (yet)	Cronin, Irish Times (1987, Jan. 31).
	Reagan is personally held accountable for the affair	Johnston, New York Times (1987, Jul. 26).
2) Secondary Sources	Reagan is responsible, investigation of congressional committee	Koh, 1987
	Affair causes decline in public support for Reagan	Brody & Shapiro, 1989

FIGURE 8A. SOURCES USED TO CONSTRUCT THE ANTECEDENT CONDITIONS IN THE PROBLEM STREAM.

Table 8B: The Problem Stream: The nuclear crisis

Problem Stream: The nuclear crisis	Content and keywords	Sources
1) Primary Sources	Address to the nation after shooting down of KL-007, Reagan suspends US-Soviet bonds and negotiations	Reagan Foundation (speech 1983, Sept. 5; Published on YouTube in 2011)
	March to oppose missiles in America and Europe	The New York Times, 1983, Oct.23.
	Protests across Europe	The New York Times, 1981, Nov. 29.
	Protests focusing on the wider (oppressing) implications of nuclear weapons	The Guardian, 1983, Dec. 23
	Protests and its consequences for the US-Western European relationship	Caarten, New York Times, 1983, Nov. 25.
	Soviets are exploiting the protests to steer public opinion in their favor	Graham, The Washington Post, 1981, Nov. 19.
2) Secondary sources	Historical path towards INF, focusing on relevance SS-20 and NATO dual-track decision	Davis, 1988
	Negotiation tactics towards the INF, from 1981-1987, some key occurrences are listed	Risse-Kappen, 1991
	History of the INF treaty, Russian non-compliance to treaty in 21st century, SS-20 is perceived as a threat	Woolf, 2017
	Circumstances surrounding the INF, focusing on reasons, relationships and public reactions	Watson, 2011
	Mechanisms/circumstances leading to the INF, the SS-20 was a threat, first round of negotiations failed, public reactions	Bohlen et. al., 2012
	The reactions to the INF in Europe	Risse-Kappen, 1988
	Political tactics in arms races, indicates Brezhnev's tactic of	Downs et al., 1982.

	deadlock	
	The Able Archer-83 incident	Manchanda, 2009
	Addressing Reagan's peace through strength strategy	Reagan Foundation, 2014

FIGURE 8B. SOURCES USED TO CONSTRUCT THE SECTION ON THE NUCLEAR CRISIS IN THE PROBLEM STREAM.

Sources of the Policy Stream

See the operationalization of the policy stream below.

Table 8C: The Policy Stream

The policy stream	Content and keywords	Sources
Policy proposals leading to the treaty		
1) Primary Sources	The SS-20 deployment is evaluated and doubted by the Politburo	Mitchell, The Washington Post, 1987, Nov. 21.
	Gorbachev discusses his plans on Reykjavik	Gorbachev, 1986, Sept. 29.
	Gorbachev talks with the Reykjavik Preparation Group	Gorbachev. 1986, Oct. 4.
	An Interview with Reagan before signing the INF	Reagan Library, 1987, Dec. 3.
	Europe should not worry about the zero-option	Schmidt, column in New York Times, 1987, Apr. 29.
	Western-European discussions about accepting/neglecting the zero-option	Pick, The Guardian, 1987, Apr. 21.
	Reagan's conditions for accepting the zero-option	The Guardian, 1987, Apr. 21.
2) Secondary sources	Mechanisms/circumstances leading to the INF: Russia wanted to couple issues, verification matters, etc.	Bohlen et. al., 2012
	Negotiation tactics towards the INF from 1981-1987	Risse-Kappen, 1991
	Important milestones in the INF negotiations, including the Gorbachev-Reagan relationship, verification, etc.	Druckman et al., 1991
	Gorbachev and his tactics on foreign policy	Grachev, 2008
	The policy proposals during and after the Reykjavik summit	Mandelbaum & Talbott, 1986
	Gorbachev's path towards Reykjavik	Larrabee & Lynch, 1986
	Historical path towards the INF, focusing on relevance SS-20 and NATO dual-track decision	Davis, 1988

	The progress in Reykjavik and the concerns of Europe	Schlesinger, 1986

The power of ideas within the epistemic communities

1) Primary Sources	Western-European discussions about zero-option, the engagement of diplomats	Pick, The Guardian, 1987, Mar. 7.
2) Secondary Sources	Transnational coalitions and the importance of ideas in international and domestic structures	Risse-Kappen, 1994
	The interplay between ideas, politics and policy	Campbell, 2002
	Important milestones in INF negotiations, importance of diplomatic working groups	Druckman et al., 1991
	The policy proposals during and after the Reykjavik summit, importance of diplomatic working groups	Mandelbaum & Talbott, 1986
	Mechanisms/circumstances leading to the INF, multilevel diplomacy was crucial	Bohlen et. al., 2012
	The importance of ideas in Gorbachev's foreign policy revolution	Checkel, 1993
	The importance of ideas in foreign policy	Goldstein & Keohane, 1993

FIGURE 8C. SOURCES USED TO CONSTRUCT THE POLICY STREAM.

Sources of the Politics Stream

See the operationalization of the politics stream below.

Table 8D: The Politics Stream

Politics stream	Content and keywords	Sources
Gorbachev's motivations		
1) Primary Sources	Reagan addresses (before Gorbachev's appointment) that the INF-talks will be resumed	Reagan Foundation (speech 1984, Sept. 29; Published on YouTube in 2014)
2) Secondary sources	Transnational coalitions, the importance of ideas in international and domestic structures, Gorbachev's ideas and common security	Risse-Kappen, 1994
	Rise and fall of Soviet economy, economy was made more important than the military	Hanson, 2014
	The role of the military for Gorbachev	Duffy et al., 1998
	Historical path towards the INF, Gorbachev's influence	Davis, 1988
	Important milestones in INF negotiations, Gorbachev's influence	Druckman et al., 1991
Reagan's motivations		
1) Primary Sources	Reagan declares Soviet Union an evil empire	Reagan Foundation (speech 1983, Mar. 8; Published on YouTube in 2009)
	Reagan interview before signing INF, speaks about negotiations and its relation to the Iran Contra affair	Reagan Library, 1987, Dec. 3.
2) Secondary Sources	Important milestones in the INF negotiations, Reagan's historical awareness	Druckman et al., 1991
	Reagan as a warrior and a peacemaker	Reynolds, 2013 (BBC documentary)
	Reagan as a Cold War hard-liner	Pipes (1993)
	Summitry as an instrument of intercultural communication	Reynolds (2009)

	The Iran Contra affair causes a decline in public support	Brody & Shapiro, 1989

National Mood

1) Primary sources	Public demonstrations are forbidden during the Geneva Summit, this creates a relatively calm climate to talk	Boland, The Irish Times, 1985, Nov. 23.
	The voters were positive about Reagan's performance in Geneva	Broder, The Washington Post, 1985, Nov. 24
	Both the Soviet and the American public greeted the summit with optimism	The New York Times, 1985, Nov. 22.
	Reagan interview before signing INF, speaks about negotiations and popularity of Gorbachev in the US	Reagan Library, 1987, Dec. 3.
2) Secondary Sources	The public opinion about Reagan in relation to the INF	Sigelman, 1990
	The rally-round-the-flag phenomenon explained	Groeling & Baum, 2008
	The War in Afghanistan was another example of rally-round-the-flag	Chapman & Reiter, 2004

Summits in Geneva and Reykjavik channeled political forces

1) Primary sources	Illustration of the chemistry between Reagan and Gorbachev	Gwertzman & Weinraub, 1985
	Reagan does not want to drop the SDI-initative in the INF negotiations	Reagan Library (speech 1985, Nov. 23; Published on YouTube in 2017)
	The administration told Reagan he should not trade with the SDI	The Washington Post, 1985, Nov. 22.
	Soviets and US decide to release one joint press statement after the summit	Weinraub, The New York Times, 1985, Nov. 21
2) Secondary Sources	Historical path towards INF, Gorbachev-Reagan relationship	Davis, 1988
	The Gorbachev-Reagan relationship	Duffy et al., 1998

	Important milestones in INF negotiations, the Gorbachev-Reagan relationship	Druckman et al., 1991
	The public opinion about Reagan in relation to the INF, and Gorbachev-Reagan relationship	Sigelman, 1990
	Circumstances surrounding the INF, reasons for negotiations and Gorbachev-Reagan relationship	Watson, 2011
	Summitry as an instrument of intercultural communication, the good relationship was unexpected	Reynolds (2009)
	The policy proposals during and after the Reykjavik summit, ideas of complete elimination came up, Reykjavik derailed immediate progress but also accommodated the later deal	Mandelbaum & Talbott, 1986
	The progress in Reykjavik and the concerns of Europe, author considered the summit to be not very helpful	Schlesinger, 1986
	Gorbachev first kept with the SDI and put onus on Reagan	Larrabee & Lynch, 1986
	Mechanisms/circumstances leading to the INF, Gorbachev wanted to appeal to the Western public opinion where he could	Bohlen et. al., 2012

FIGURE 8D. SOURCES USED TO CONSTRUCT THE POLITICS STREAM.