

SALT II also relies for verification on national technical means to be used in accordance with generally recognized principles of international law (Article XV (1)). As in SALT I and the ABM Treaty each party undertakes not to interfere with the other's national technical means (Article XV (2)) and not to use deliberate concealment measures to impede verification by national technical means (Article XV (3)). More precise definitions of concealment are provided in the form of Agreed Statements and Common Understandings. The use of design requirements such as "functionally related observable differences" to distinguish between weapons systems also facilitates verification. As was the case for the ABM Treaty and SALT I, these provisions relating to verification underscores the legitimacy of the use of military reconnaissance satellites which are a major element of national technical means of arms control and disarmament verification.

It is worth noting that recent events have underlined the limitations of national technical means when used alone for verification of strategic arms limits and have emphasized the need for additional effective methods of handling compliance questions.

SALT I expired in 1977 though both sides agreed to abide by its terms after that time. SALT II expires 31 December 1985. Though never ratified, both parties agreed to abide by the terms of SALT II on a reciprocal basis.

xiv) The Threshold Test Ban Treaty (1974)³⁷ and the Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaty (1976)³⁸

These two treaties are bilateral ones between the USA and the USSR. The Threshold Test Ban Treaty prohibits underground nuclear weapons tests exceeding 150 kt (Article I) and limits tests to designated test sites (Para. 1 of Protocol).

Verification, as under the ABM Treaty and SALT Treaties, is to be conducted by each side's national technical means used in a way consistent with international law (Article II). Each party again agrees not to interfere with the national technical means of the other. These national technical means include satellites as well as ground-based seismographic instruments.