

VII The IAEA safeguards system

The IAEA is authorized under Articles III.A.5 and XII of its Statute to establish a system of safeguards to ensure that "assistance provided by it or at its request or under its supervision or control is not used in such a way as to further any military purpose". Since its creation in 1957, the Agency, in co-operation with its member states, has worked steadily to improve the effectiveness of its safeguards operations established under those articles of its Statute. Canada supports this activity fully because Canada's bilateral agreements call for IAEA safeguards to be applied to Canadian-origin nuclear items transferred pursuant to these agreements.

While the Agency's Statute provides that it will apply safeguards to ensure as far as it can that no military objective will be fulfilled, the purpose of the application has been extended. The IAEA has stated that it interprets this undertaking as including the development, manufacture or testing of nuclear explosive devices of any kind.

The objective of IAEA safeguards is the timely detection of diversion of significant quantities of nuclear material from peaceful nuclear activities to the manufacture of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or for purposes unknown, and deterrence of such diversion by the risk of early detection.

The basic approach of the IAEA to achieving this objective consists of the following main elements:

- a) The examination by the IAEA of information that is provided by the state. Such information includes accounting reports, special reports and advance notification of international transfers.
- b) The collection of information by the IAEA through inspections of various kinds. Information obtained through inspections is compared with that provided by the state to determine the latter's completeness, accuracy and validity.
- c) The monitoring of the flow of nuclear material in nuclear facilities through the use of various kinds of instruments and other techniques at certain strategic points. These are generally referred to as "surveillance and containment" measures. Equipment used for