
Abstract

As an international agency that has been engaged in the verification of compliance with obligations respecting nuclear facilities and materials for more than 20 years, it is natural that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) should be considered as a possible model for verification organizations in other arms control and disarmament areas. This study was initiated to examine the lessons that might be learned from the IAEA's experience and that might be applied to another arms control area - that of a comprehensive chemical weapons convention.

The study examines the political, organizational, legal, financial and technical aspects of the Agency's experience. The non-technical aspects focus on the significant features of both the Agency's internal structure and operations and the broader environment in which it must function. The study looks at the approach to the control problem taken by the Agency—its definition of the problem and of its own objectives—and the coverage it provides with respect to possible routes for acquisition of nuclear weapons. It considers the factors affecting the Agency's political and technical effectiveness. Recognizing that the Agency's roots lie in the promotion of the benefits of peaceful uses of atomic energy, the study examines the political base of the Agency's activities, in the power of suppliers of nuclear goods and services and in the existence of a broad norm or presumption against the spread of nuclear weapons. It also examines some issues arising from the use of an international organization for the performance of verification tasks.

The specific features of the Agency's structure and operations considered by the study include its relations with states (including aspects of its personnel policies, the designation of inspectors, and information management). They also include a brief examination of the political structures of the Agency and of the safeguards system.

The study concludes with a tentative set of lessons that could be derived from the Agency's experience and suggestions for areas of further study.