EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is now universally recognized that arms control treaties should be effectively verified. The most objective, flexible and cost-effective means to verify the majority of multilateral treaties would be through a new agency under the United Nations. As a cooperative international effort to develop both the technology and the political framework for arms control verification, a United Nations verification agency (UNVA) would speed up and help secure the disarmament process by (i) verifying a number of existing and future treaties, (ii) investigating alleged breaches of treaties and (iii) certifying, upon request, that voluntary arms control and confidence-building measures have been carried out. This paper presents the case for such a proposal, outlines a possible institutional configuration, considers the possibilities for growth and discusses the challenges facing the establishment of such an agency.