

There have also been other recent suggestions with respect to the United Nations role in verification. In September 1987, the USSR suggested setting up "under the aegis of the U.N. Organization a mechanism for extensive international verification of compliance with agreements to lessen international tension, limit armaments and for monitoring the military situation in conflict areas."⁷ The governments of the Group of Six Nations also proposed in their Stockholm Declaration of January 21, 1988, the establishment of an "integrated multilateral verification system within the United Nations, as an integral part of a strengthened multilateral framework required to ensure peace and security during the process of disarmament as well as in a nuclear free world."

While recent proposals for the establishment of an IVO linked to the United Nations represent an increased awareness of the significance which multilateral verification can play in the international arms control and disarmament process, it is only through an evolutionary approach that any specific role for the United Nations can be developed. This process of evolution must begin with a systematic and careful examination of the constructive opportunities open to the United Nations.

3. Considerations Respecting the Role of the United Nations in Verification

In defining any United Nations role with respect to verification, a few basic considerations must be kept in mind.

Verification, by its very nature, is fundamentally a cooperative exercise involving the consent of all the parties to an agreement. When such consent is absent, monitoring activities no longer constitute arms control verification and could be viewed as an unwarranted interference in the sovereign affairs of states. This, in turn, could impede prospects for further arms control agreements and could damage the image of the United Nations itself. The United Nations must only become operationally involved in verification that is treaty-related and only with the express consent of all parties and at their request. There will not, therefore, necessarily be a direct United Nations role in all arms control agreements. It is up to the parties involved to decide whether or not to involve the United Nations or any other organization. However, the United Nations and its members could profit indirectly from information provided by the parties as well as their practical experience in devising verification provisions or in their