

In the case of other weapons, such as chemical armaments, the United States "consistently" favored "the strictest possible verification of arms control measures." It would present papers at disarmament conferences "which detailed the technological capabilities of the methods available and evaluated their strengths and weaknesses." As one academic noted,

"The degree of verification required by the United States was based upon its perception of the threat posed to national security by the arms in question and the likelihood of undetected violations. For example, the United States accepted the limited (and in U.S. opinion largely symbolic) verification provisions contained in the Biological Weapons Convention and the Environmental Weapons Convention, because it did not think it was likely that weapons of this nature would be developed for modern arsenals. Verification in these conventions consisted of procedures for cooperation and consultation between parties and recourse to the Security Council in case of unresolved complaints. The United States rejected similar proposals for verification of a chemical weapons accord, noting that the threat posed by these weapons, already in the arsenals of some states, demanded stricter, more assuring verification measures, including on-site inspection."<sup>44</sup>

A renewed effort in arms control began in the early 1970s and was met with some success. The Convention on the Prohibition of Biological Warfare and of the Production of Biological Weapons was opened for signature in April 1972.

That same year, the United States and the Soviet Union finally reached agreement on the first Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty and the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. Reflecting the brief period of detente, SALT I, along with revisions concluded in 1974, essentially ratified the existing numerical balance, sanctioned nuclear parity yet left the door open for further modernization. Both sides were pressing ahead with MIRVs. Space-based and other surveillance technologies which had become part of the nuclear arsenals, were employed to assure National Technical Means (NTM) of verification. More important from an arms control perspective was the ABM Treaty which eventually limited both sides to one strategic missile defence system thereby assuring mutual vulnerability and, it was hoped, prevent an uncontrolled offensive weapons building race.

Having stabilized the strategic nuclear balance, the West now turned to the long-standing conventional imbalance in Europe, an imbalance which partly accounted for North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) continued reliance upon nuclear deterrence and its first use strategy. The talks on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) in Europe began at the end of 1973. Difficult and protracted, the talks were bogged down in the definitions of balance and equal security. Further problems were encountered in the decision of which weapons to reduce, how reductions were to be phased, and the verification of these reductions. The negotiations met with little success.

After SALT I, the international political atmosphere became adverse to arms control. In the

---

<sup>44</sup> Ellis Morris, *The Superpowers and Verification in the United Nations Committee on Disarmament*, (paper written for Government of Canada, DSS File No. 21T.080-4-003, Serial OST84-00123, October 1984), pp. 43-4.