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equipment, which goes to the very heart of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) security.

This argument could be misleading, however. It is, perhaps, not the legal nature of the obligation that is important in determining verification standards, but rather the judgement of the parties concerning the military and political importance to their national security of the obligations that are being undertaken.

There is a belief in many quarters that verification of personnel limitations is impossible. While acknowledging the difficulties, such a judgement may be premature. The potential significance of successful violations of personnel restrictions, especially as military forces generally decrease in numbers, would seem to warrant careful examination of issues surrounding personnel verification.

Unfortunately, there seems to have been little serious study of personnel verification reported in the open literature; a rather astonishing fact given the focus of the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) talks on military personnel for over 15 years, beginning in 1973. A few studies in the 1960s were undertaken, primarily in the context of a hypothetical arms control agreement that would be broader than personnel alone, encompassing military equipment as well.

It is, in part, because of this surprising paucity of recent critical evaluations of personnel verification that Dr. George Lindsey (Senior Research Fellow) and Mr. Alex Morrison (Executive Director) of the Canadian Institute for Strategic Studies were invited to undertake an initial examination of issues relating to this question, as part of Canada's Verification Research Program.

Their report constitutes a unique examination of personnel verification that has relevance beyond the on-going discussions respecting personnel limitations in Europe to include other regional contexts as well. As the international system evolves towards what President George Bush has termed a "new world order", agreeing to limit military personnel in one form or another may become increasingly topical. This research report should assist in discussions of the verification aspects of such personnel limitations.