

## INTRODUCTION

### The Importance of Verification

An arms control agreement is essentially an agreement between states to undertake restrictive measures with regard to their military forces, which are expected to result in decreased likelihood of war. Since the benefit to each assenting state arises from the compliance of the other signatories there is a natural desire for some form of external assurance that these signatories are fulfilling their obligations. In simple terms verification is the means by which such assurance is gained.

All recent major bilateral arms control agreements between the USA and USSR -- Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM), Strategic Arms Limitations Agreements (SALT I and II), Threshold Test Ban (TTBT) and Peaceful Nuclear Explosions (PNET) -- have included verification provisions. This attests to the importance accorded to verification by both countries.

The importance of verification has also been widely recognized in multilateral fora. The Final Document of the UN Special Session on Disarmament (UNSSOD I, 1978) states that:

Disarmament and arms limitation agreements should provide for adequate measures of verification satisfactory to all parties concerned in order to create the necessary confidence and ensure that they are being observed by all parties.<sup>1</sup>

In this regard, a resolution entitled "Verification in all its aspects" was recently adopted in the UN General Assembly without a vote. Recalling the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament, the resolution affirms the belief that:

Verification techniques should be developed as an objective means of determining compliance with agreements, and appropriately taken into account in the course of disarmament negotiations.<sup>2</sup>

In any protracted arms control negotiation different verification proposals are likely to be made by different participants, and successful negotiation may well depend on an acceptable compromise

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1. United General Assembly. Special Session of the General Assembly on Disarmament. Final Document. 1 July 1978, para. 31. (See abstract A2.1(I78)).
  2. United Nations. General Assembly. Resolution 40/152(0), 16 December 1985. (See abstract A19.2(I85)).