EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I - WMD VERIFICATION AND COMPLIANCE: THE STATE OF PLAY

The following study considers the current state of play of verification and compliance arrangements in respect of multilateral arms control and disarmament agreements relating to so-called weapons of mass destruction (WMD). It covers the principal WMD agreements and the means by which compliance with them is monitored and verified, along with the means by which compliance is ensured in case of a suspected violation. It will provide a snapshot of the current state of the art and science of verification and compliance not just for its own sake, but as background to consideration of future needs in the evolving international security environment.

It is assumed that WMD comprise nuclear, radiological, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery. The study does not deal with export/import controls on WMD or their components, international controls on ballistic or other types of missiles, or multilateral treaties dealing with the deployment of weapons in outer space.

Verification

Verification is the process of gathering and analyzing information to make a judgement about compliance or non-compliance with a treaty or agreement. It aims to build trust between the parties or participants, assuring them that their agreement is being implemented effectively and fairly. Verification achieves its objectives by three means: detection; deterrence; and confidence-building. Monitoring, which is sometimes equated with verification, is in this study meant to refer to the technical process of gathering information, whether by technology or by humans.

Compliance

When a party is abiding by its obligations under an agreement it is said to be in compliance. 'Compliance' is also used to describe the process used to deal with questions relating to compliance and non-compliance, which, for some, runs the whole spectrum from monitoring at one end through to attempts to enforce compliance at the other. A compliance process should enable parties to successfully address all types of compliance issues and be able to take action or recommend the taking of action to deal with them.

The relationship between verification and compliance

Verification and compliance processes cannot always be clearly separated. A verification mechanism may be used to verify ongoing compliance by parties. It should also be able to inform or trigger a compliance process, as well as providing information to confirm or refute an allegation of non-compliance.

Above all, verification and compliance processes should be mutually reinforcing. If conducted well, they should give states increasing levels of confidence about treaty implementation and about the commitment of other parties to the fulfillment of their obligations. As in the case of an effective