communications and computers into a complete information processing system. Part of this information processing system must be operational at the time or soon after the Convention enters into force, because the current rolling text envisions that confirmation of declarations must be done within a relatively short time from the time of the declaration. Therefore, a reliable information processing system must be in place well before the entry into force of the Convention.

Once the Convention is established there will be a need for the Technical Secretariat to have access to information generated at the declared facilities and to deliver information to the facilities from the central data base of the Technical Secretariat. Information at the facilities may be generated by the inspectors, the facility operators or the sensors located at these facilities. Information to the facilities may be transmitted during the inspection or during the operation of an automated monitoring system. There might be circumstances requiring the transmission and processing of information within short periods of time such as minutes or hours. Examples are the request by inspectors during inspection for particular spectral characteristics, or the remote surveillance of an unusual activity in a storage facility. In cases involving the examination and analysis of schematic diagrams the time intervals involved may be measured in the order of weeks or months. Therefore, the information processing system must not only link the declared facilities with the Technical Secretariat but it must also have adequate communications and computational capabilities to serve the needs of the verification system.

At this time detailed characteristics of the information processing system cannot be established. These characteristics depend on the number, type and geographical distribution of the declared facilities, and on the verification procedures adopted for these facilities and for any other activities in the domain of the Convention. However, some general specifications may be identified. The system should have a hierachical structure with a computational capability distributed between the locations of the Technical Secretariat and declared facilities. The sensors, analytical instruments, communications equipment and computers should be tamper-indicating to ensure the security and reliability of the information. The confidentiality requirements should be taken into account. Depending on the timeliness requirements of the verification procedures the information processing system might utilize couriers, mail, data networks, telephone links or satellite channels.