

II. The Factors Underlying the Criteria for Evaluating Potential Agreements or Measures

The criteria that a country uses to evaluate an NACD agreement depends on its interests, as defined by its decision makers. Such interests may be fundamental or more ephemeral, that is, more time-sensitive. One problem for policy makers is identifying, defining, and prioritizing these interests. A second problem is amassing evidence and applying criteria based on these interests to specific cases.

In this chapter, interests or factors have been grouped into three broad subject areas: 1) national, regional, and international security policy; 2) verification/monitoring capabilities and limitations; and 3) agreement language, provisions, limitations, and durational considerations.

Within each of the subject areas, there are a number of issues to be considered. These issues have been placed in the form of a check-list of statements and questions for arms control analysts and policy makers who must assess an agreement or measure, whether already in effect or under consideration. All of the following sections are inter-related. Because of that inter-relatedness, some of the questions and comments inevitably overlap.

National, Regional, and International Security Policies

Although an argument could be made that national and international security are distinct entities, in the post-Cold War period, with emphasis increasingly placed on regional and global agreements and measures, this distinction tends to blur. Nevertheless, there may be occasions when, in assessing or negotiating an agreement, it becomes clear that the security benefits and costs for the international community may be different from, and even weigh more heavily, than a country's national security benefits and costs. In such cases, the benefits should be considered separately. In some instances, the benefits to the international community may be persuasive enough to "tilt the balance" in favor of an agreement.¹

It is always necessary to identify the real and potential conflicts among the national, regional, and international security issues, and to decide which factors are more important for each agreement. One over-arching factor may be the degree to which country believes that it is better off with the agreement rather than without it because of the agreement's potential to enhance national, regional, and international security.

¹ It might be argued that certain members of the P-5 took into consideration the concerns of the international community in agreeing to modifications in the CTBT drafts which were not supported by their defense and military personnel.