

Scope

Three broad approaches to the scope of reporting were suggested, all of which have advantages and disadvantages:

1) Focus on the 13 Steps. Advantages: Defining the content of reporting would be straightforward. Attention would be focused on the actions of the NWS, reducing pressure on the NNWS. Disadvantages: The NNWS might feel that they have little need to report. Limiting the scope to the 13 Steps might prevent or discourage reporting on other topics of importance. And the fate of reporting would be tied to the fate of the 13 Steps, which might eventually be superseded by other priorities.

2) Report more generally on implementation of Article VI and paragraph 4 (c) of the 1995 Decision on Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament.

Advantages: This is the agreed mandate for reporting. It would be more flexible in content than a focus on just the 13 Steps. Disadvantages: Many of the States parties that have reported to date want to report more broadly, addressing topics such as negative security assurances and nuclear-weapon-free zones or the Treaty as a whole.

3) Report on the Treaty more broadly. This approach might involve systematic article-by-article or topic-by-topic reporting on the entire Treaty, or it might be restricted to a more limited set of specific topics drawn from across the Treaty, such as the subjects of the 1995 Principles and Objectives.

Advantages: This approach would address the entire Treaty, emphasizing the interrelatedness of its commitments and eliciting information on all aspects of its implementation. It would increase the range of uses for the reports, and it would clearly implicate all States parties in reporting. Disadvantages: The scope of reporting would exceed the range described in the agreed mandate. Several participants argued that this need not be a problem. Implementation of Article VI requires implementation of the entire Treaty (with the possible exception, it was suggested, of Article IV), so all developments with respect to Treaty implementation could and should be considered relevant to the reporting mandate. Another possible disadvantage is that some States parties may feel that comprehensive reporting would remove the focus from nuclear disarmament, letting the NWS "off the hook" to some extent.

It was noted that a broad reporting mandate might appeal to the NWS by adding topics on which they might have more positive news to report and by leading to the production of reports by other States parties that were useful for pursuing implementation of all aspects of the Treaty. This might encourage the NWS to buy into the process. It was also argued that broadening the mandate would not really have the effect of letting the NWS off the hook on nuclear disarmament. The existing process sets aside Special Time for the issue, but the NWS consider their statements to be purely voluntary, with the contents entirely determined by themselves. Acceptance of an obligation to produce formal reports, even ones containing information on both disarmament and non-proliferation, would still be a step forward. Also, why let the NWS (and other States parties) off the hook for their performance with respect to the Treaty's other articles?

Each of the three approaches outlined above was used by at least some States parties during the 2002