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REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS  
ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS TENTH SPECIAL SESSION

Verification in all its aspects

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

[Original: English]

[2 October 1986]

1. The United States Government welcomes the **opportunity** afforded by General Assembly resolution **40/152** (0) to offer its views on verification principles, procedures and **techniques** to promote the inclusion of effective verification in arms limitation and disarmament agreements, and on the role of the United Nations in the field of verification.
2. Nations can seek attainment of national security in different ways. Among them are military programmes designed to meet the threats perceived. Nations also use diplomatic means to reduce, or at least limit, the threats that shape the requirements for such programmes. Agreements on mutual limitations or reductions of armaments, so structured as to add to security and international stability, are **one** of those means. In entering into such agreements, the parties voluntarily accept what, in effect, are restrictions on their freedom of action in the vital ~~area~~ of national security. It is self-evident that each of them can safely abide by those restrictions only if the other parties are also faithfully fulfilling **their** corresponding obligations. Non-compliance by one of the parties cannot but **have** adverse implications for the security of **the** others. No nation can afford to rely for its security on **trust, especially** when some - including **one** of the most powerful - countries maintain closed societies and cloak their military-related activities in a thick veil of secrecy. Also any activity that is deliberately in violation of an arms control agreement is likely to involve a special effort to conceal it. It is essential, therefore, that arms limitation or disarmament agreements provide for arrangements enabling each of the parties to have confidence that every other party is abiding by **its** commitments. It is such arrangements that the United States understands under the general term "verification".
3. Verification of arms control agreements serves a number of more specific purposes:
  - (a) Verification serves to build confidence of the individual parties, as well as of the international community at large, in the viability of an arms limitation or disarmament agreement. By providing evidence that the obligations assumed are in fact being fulfilled it can help create a political environment necessary for further progress in arms control;
  - (b) Verification measures that provide for investigation of ambiguous **situations** may, in clarifying the facts, reduce tensions and doubts regarding the viability of an agreement;
  - (c) By increasing the risk of detection and complicating any scheme of evasion, verification helps deter violations of an agreement;
  - (d) When violations are detected through verification, other parties have the **opportunity** to assess the effects on their security and to take appropriate and timely action in response.

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4. While verification **arrangements** are likely to vary in **t** specifics from **case** to case, **it** is the view of the United States that, to b **active**, they must all rest **on the** following fundamental **principles**:

(**a**) The nature and extent of the arrangements should be **governed** by the requirements for determining compliance with the provisions of the **agreement in question**;

(**b**) They should **be designed** in such a way **as** to provide assurance not only that the **agreed** limitations or reductions are actually carried **out but also that** the resulting residual levels of forces or armaments are **not** exceeded, restructured or redeployed **in** a manner inconsistent with the **agreement**;

(**c**) They should have the capability of **detecting covert or other activities** contrary to the agreement;

(**d**) The elaboration of **an** effective verification system is the joint responsibility of all parties to the negotiations of an **agreement**;

(**e**) The specifics of the verification **system**, including the implementing provisions, should **be spelled out** in **and** constitute an **integral** part of the agreement,

(**f**) Each party to the **agreement** bears **the** responsibility to **seek to** ensure that the verification provisions are implemented by all **parties**.

5. Some have argued **that** verification **is an encroachment on** national sovereignty. **On** the contrary, verification **measures**, like arms **control or** disarmament measures themselves, are not imposed **on** States, **they are negotiated and** accepted **by** States in the exercise of their **sovereign** rights. Thus, in the final analysis, willingness of a State **to** accept effective verification reflects its **assessment** of the value of the substance and durability of the arms control or disarmament measures envisaged.

6. In resolution **40/94 L**, adopted on 12 December 1985 by **an** overwhelming **majority** and **without any opposing** votes, the General **Assembly** stressed **that any violation of** agreements on arms limitation and disarmament not only adversely affects **the** security of States parties but can also create security risks for other States **relying** on the constraints and commitments stipulated in **those agreements, and** that any weakening of **confidence** in such **agreements** diminishes **their** contribution to global or regional stability and to further disarmament and **arms** limitation efforts. It also stated that compliance with arms **limitation** and **disarmament** agreements by States parties is, therefore, a matter of interest and **concern** to the international **community**. As compliance **Can** be determined only **by verification, it** follows that, while specific verification arrangements are to **be** developed and **agreed to by** the **States** directly concerned, the very principle that **arms limitation** and **disarmament** agreements should be effectively verifiable also serves the interests of the international community **at large**. The United States is gratified **that** this fact was generally **recognized by** the adoption without a vote of General **Assembly** resolution 40/152 (0). The United States also hopes **that the**

support for **that resolution by States** currently **engaged** in arms limitation and disarmament **negotiations** was **an** indication of **readiness** by all of them to apply that principle in practice and **thus** promote **progress** towards agreement.

7. The United States would like to take this opportunity to **express** its gratitude to the Government of Canada for **initiating** General Assembly resolution **40/152** (0). Continued attention in **the** United Nations to the essential importance of the subject of verification would **be** a **significant** contribution to efforts at **enhancing** international stability through effective and viable arms limitation and disarmament agreements.

8. The United **States believe, that**, in considering issues **relating** to verification, Member States will **be greatly** assisted by **the** comprehensive study on **arms** control and disarmament verification submitted to the Secretary-General by the Government of Canada. In addition to **providing** a thoughtful analysis of the fundamental purpose and **importance of** verification, the study offers an extensive overview of possible verification procedures and **techniques, including those** incorporated in existing arms control agreements, as well as those under discussion in **ongoing** negotiations or proposed **but not** necessarily generally endorsed elsewhere. While additional ideas for verification procedures and techniques **can** be expected to emerge over time, **the** United States finds the **catalogue** contained **in the study quite** comprehensive and would not wish to duplicate it here. It does believe it necessary, however, to point **out** that, as is evident from **the extent of the catalogue**, the primary obstacle to reaching **agreement** on effective verification is **not** lack of the necessary procedures and techniques. The difficulty lies in the fact that some States, **while** paying lip service to the principle of verification, have been **unwilling** to accept **arrangements** that would give that principle truly practical **meaning**.

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