

International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV)

Working Group 1: Monitoring and Verification Objectives Terms of Reference

Updated November 21, 2017

The ability to anticipate and understand specific nuclear disarmament monitoring and verification challenges states will likely need to address in the future directly affects how much confidence states may have in the results. A robust discussion about the steps in the nuclear disarmament process, the types of information or verification that might be needed, and the tasks to be performed will be an important element in building confidence and will contribute to future disarmament verification efforts.

The Working Group on Monitoring and Verification Objectives (WG1) will examine key phases of the nuclear weapons lifecycle and assess potential monitoring and verification objectives, methods and activities for each of these phases, including the deployment and storage of nuclear warheads through the disassembly and dismantlement process to the disposition of nuclear materials arising from dismantlement. By focusing initially on nuclear warhead dismantlement, states will be able to deepen their understanding of the problems and potential solutions. This focus will also allow policy and technical experts to discuss the respective roles of states with and without nuclear weapons and to characterize the level of confidence states believe they need to have in the results.

Key Questions and Assessments

Working Group 1, in close coordination with Working Groups 2 and 3, will examine and assess:

- Key terms and definitions, and the framework for analyzing monitoring and verification activities building on work already done.
- Monitoring and verification objectives for key aspects of the warhead dismantlement process, along with the types of information needed to meet them;
- Evaluation criteria for assessing monitoring and verification regimes and considering potential trade-offs; and
- The skills, areas of expertise and resources needed to support future work in each of these areas.

Expected Activities and Output

Working Group 1 expects to produce:

- A framework document with terms and definitions, principles, and good practices, and a broad flowchart showing possible monitoring and verification activities for key disarmament steps across the nuclear weapons lifecycle.

- A detailed assessment of potential monitoring and verification requirements for monitoring the dismantlement of nuclear warheads, including what information might be needed to satisfy those requirements, and an assessment of the kind of assurance that states would likely seek from verification;
- A capacity mapping document that outlines existing skills and areas of expertise applicable to key monitoring and verification activities, and identifies possible gaps; and a needs and planning document to fill gaps and identify priorities for future collaborative efforts.

During the course of its work, WG1, as it deems necessary, may expand on the tasks listed above.

Leadership

The Netherlands and Italy* will serve as co-chairs for WG1.

Timeline

The initial program of work will take place over the course of approximately 18 months. Completed work will be briefed to the IPNDV Plenary in late 2017.

*The United Kingdom replaced Italy as co-chair of WG1 in 2016.