



*Joint Working Group Meeting of the IPNDV in Brussels  
(27-29 June 2022)*

**Closing remarks by Mallory Stewart, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance  
U.S. Department of State**

Good afternoon. It is an honor to be here today and helping to close out another successful meeting of the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV) - an initiative that is at the core of the future of arms control and disarmament. As you all have been discussing, the security landscape is increasingly fraught, and challenges seem to be growing by the day.

In May, President Biden said, "Today – perhaps more than any other time since the Cold War – we must work to reduce the risk of an arms race or nuclear escalation." The problems are not far from the headlines, given Russia's nuclear saber-rattling amid its unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, and China's unfettered build-up of its nuclear arsenal.

These growing threats are why the work you all have been doing is so important. You are working to provide solutions to the biggest challenges on the path to a future world without nuclear weapons.

For the past eight years, the IPNDV has been a leader in the development of conceptual and practical understandings necessary to advance nuclear disarmament. And for that, we are all grateful.

IPNDV's work goes to the heart of what enables and supports effective and enduring nuclear disarmament: verification. The series of exercises and technical demonstrations that you conducted over the past two years to assess the various processes, procedures, techniques, and technologies developed in the Partnership's earlier years have allowed for rigorous examinations of that work. I congratulate you for producing a valuable toolkit that can strengthen future arms control regimes by helping to ensure effective verification mechanisms.

Without question, new, innovative verification tools will play an essential role in any future nuclear disarmament agreements. As we in the United States, together with our allies and partners, continue to navigate the challenges associated with future nuclear disarmament, we recognize the importance of inventive thinking on nuclear disarmament verification.

The State Department's Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance, which I am proud to lead, is working hard within the U.S. interagency and with partners and allies to analyze and address the full range of complex issues at play. Our Bureau provides funding to preserve critical verification assets and to promote the development of new verification technologies, through what we call the "V Fund." We build partnerships with allies and like-minded organizations who are also seeking to answer these

UNCLASSIFIED

questions, through forums like this one. And we understand these questions through our role in aiding and ensuring implementation of ongoing arms control and risk reduction measures.

I am confident we are building an effective and workable approach to future challenges. To that end, IPNDV's efforts to advance nuclear disarmament verification processes, technologies, and protocols are critical. I urge you to continue your cooperation and stay open to not only new ideas for the future, but for the present.

It is hardly an understatement to say that the current geopolitical landscape is tough. But we must continue to both seek new opportunities for arms control, as well as faithfully implement the measures we already have in place. Importantly, the United States reaffirms its commitment to the NPT's goal of nuclear disarmament. Initiatives like the IPNDV are clear demonstrations of that commitment. Of course, none of us can do this alone. We need collaborative bodies like this filled with national leaders from governments of states with and without nuclear weapons to truly manage the threats and challenges in this space.

So, thank you for the work that you have done over the course of the past couple days. I know the United States looks forward to our next meeting and thanks to the Australians for offering to host.

We all know that the quiet, technical work of IPNDV doesn't grab headlines. We don't need it to. While it can be hard to perceive in the moment, everything being done in IPNDV can and will help aid in our fight to reduce current nuclear dangers and facilitate future arms control and disarmament front page news. Even the concepts that don't pan out can help provide lessons learned for that will, in turn, help create new approaches. So again, thanks for all you have done and for all you will do to advance the development of nuclear disarmament verification.

Approved: AVC

Drafted: Mike Edinger AVC/MNA

Clearances: AVC/MNA: Kathy Crittenberger (ok)  
D: Markus Thomi (ok)  
P: Anushree Banerjee (ok)  
S/P: Daniel Milich (info by request)  
L/NPA: Jonathan Davis and Terra Gearhart-Serna (ok)  
T: Jonathan Winward (info)  
GPA: Jay Raman (ok)  
EUR/PD:

UNCLASSIFIED