



# Trust and Verify

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## Rio Earth Summit

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) was held in Rio de Janeiro from the 3rd to the 14th June this year. VERTIC's climate change researcher, John Lanchbery, attended as a non-governmental organization (NGO) representative.

Reporting on the Summit has been varied. *Trust & Verify* makes no apologies for devoting much of this issue to this important event, starting on page 2.

## CWC text agreed?

Progress towards a Chemical Weapons Convention continues. In May, a new draft of the treaty was produced that looks likely to be agreed by the Conference on Disarmament (CD) after it reconvenes on 20 July.

If this text is agreed, it then has to be passed to the United Nations General Assembly where it will hopefully be recommended for signature, with a signing conference early in 1993.

The CWC will create an international Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) as an oversight and verification body. The OPCW will be established by the CWC Preparatory Commission, which itself will be established once 50 states have signed the treaty.

The CWC will enter force a minimum of two years after it has been opened for signature and after 65 states have deposited their ratifications. The earliest date for these two conditions to be met will be the first months of 1995.

## National Authorities

National implementation of the CWC is the responsibility of 'National Authorities' established under Article VII by each state 'to fulfil its obligations under this Convention'. These obligations include collation and dissemination of information relating to the state, be act in support of inspections carried out in that state, and be the point of contact between the state and the OPCW.

There is quite a spectrum of views about how a National Authority should be implemented. These vary from a purely administrative, number-crunching operation to a wider-ranging organization designed to enhance transparency and confidence by ensuring that the state is seen to be in full compliance and not assisting other states to acquire chemical weapons.

Following the watering down of the challenge inspection provisions last year and the narrow basis of the OPCW, VERTIC hopes that parties to the CWC show their commitment to it by making their National Authorities as broad as possible.

## Nuclear Testing

The United States carried out two nuclear tests in June, both underground at the Nevada Test Site, with yields below 20 kilotons. The first of these, codenamed 'Victoria', was held on the 19th in an 800 ft shaft. The

second, 'Galena', the fourth US test this year, was held on the 23rd in a 950 ft shaft.

## CFE Update

An extraordinary Conference of CFE parties was held on 5th June in Oslo. This meeting approved new arrangements for implementing the CFE provisions following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The number of parties to the CFE treaty is now 29.

The Oslo meeting was also informed of an agreement reached at Tashkent on 15 May between the eight states of the Soviet Union that are in the treaty's area of application. A summary of the Tashkent agreement appears on page 2.

## NATO prepares for CFE Verification

It was decided back in 1990, as it became clear that the CFE Treaty would be agreed, that NATO needed a mechanism to co-ordinate verification of the Treaty between member nations, since the treaty was to have operated on a bloc-to-bloc basis. As a result the Verification Co-ordination Committee (VCC) was created – responsible directly to NATO's highest body, the North Atlantic Council – and a verification support staff was put in place. These operate from the office of the Secretary General as part of the Verification, Information Systems and Council Operations Directorate (VIS&CO).

The CFE Treaty will be ratified over the summer months, and then come into force immediately. The task is to ensure the most cost effective verification regime possible. NATO's aim was to negotiate a 100% effective verification regime, but with the knowledge that it wouldn't be possible to implement. 'It's a question of transparency and buying warning time' a NATO official has said. 'If you can buy 80% certainty for half the cost of 85% certainty then that's what you go for.' NATO nations now have to make such choices, and implement the treaty.

The VCC provides a forum for discussion and for information exchange. This includes sharing the results of the almost 400 trial inspections between states.

The verification support staff have three main tasks, all operational in nature.

- A database has been created holding all the baseline data of all former Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO) and NATO nations, needed to allow the validation period inspections to take place. In future, this will possibly be accessible on-line from member nations, and to all signatories to the CFE Treaty;
- Co-ordination of national inspection plans to allow for the maximum spread of inspections; and
- Verification training. NATO runs courses in its Oberammergau school for inspectors and escorts. Some 250 people have now passed through the school,



and an additional course in destruction monitoring has been held in Belgium.

Three seminars have been held, two of which were for NATO member nations. The most recent was held June 11-12 at NATO HQ, and was for all CFE signatory states. It was a good opportunity to discover what the former WTO nations need by way of training and assistance. Bilateral meetings have resulted in, *inter alia*, a tour by the US On Site Inspection Agency of republics of the Former Soviet Union (FSU) to assist with establishment of verification units. Contacts have also been made with, *inter alia*, the UK, Germany and Canada.

A further role will be co-ordination of inspections between former Warsaw Treaty Organisation members themselves, as these reduce the number of inspections that NATO nations can undertake.

The VCC will play a role in co-ordinating inspections under Open Skies and the use of aircraft and sensors. Some smaller nations cannot afford the equipment necessary, so a pooling of resources will enable them to play a full part.

In CFE1A, the experience of inspectors will be vital. Their expertise, passed on through the Oberammergau courses will help new inspectors learn to acquire that vital feel for whether claimed figures are right or not. This, together with the database, and the handing over of unit organisation data; maintenance lists and other data will make this regime the most intrusive ever agreed – and the most difficult to implement.

The CFE treaty will go a long way towards building stability in Europe, and the verification regime is a vital part of that treaty. The work of the VCC and verification support staff will help to improve that regime.

## Earth Summit

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) was held in Rio de Janeiro from the 3rd to the 14th June this year. Forty-five thousand people attended, including 135 Heads of Government. One hundred and seventy eight countries were represented at the Conference – it was the biggest intergovernmental conference ever held – and 1,500 NGOs were accredited.

However, despite of the presence of more than 10,000 media representatives, the event was poorly reported. The press were excluded from many meetings which, in part, accounts for their incomplete coverage of the Conference.

UNCED originally had five main aims: the agreement and signing of Conventions on Climate Change, Biodiversity

and Forests, the agreement of a vast document on how the World should achieve sustainable development in the twenty first century (Agenda 21) and the agreement of a 'Rio Declaration'. Draft texts of the climate and biodiversity conventions had been drawn up by Intergovernmental Negotiating Committees (INCs) and Agenda 21 was drafted by a similar series of lengthy Preparatory Committee meetings (Prepcoms). Drafting of the agreements was, of course, primarily undertaken by governments – although there was also a significant input from NGOs, particularly in the case of Agenda 21, where NGO participation was actively solicited by the UN. The Rio Declaration was largely agreed in advance.

By the time that UNCED started the Convention on Forests had been abandoned, primarily because of disagreement over the right of nations with forests to do with them as they wished. A 'Declaration on Forest Principles' was thus proposed instead.

## Summary of Agreements Reached at Rio

### The Framework Convention on Climate Change

The Convention is intended to minimise changes to the world's climate caused by greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions resulting from human activities. Not all states believe that global warming is likely to result from such emissions, in spite of repeated warnings from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) which comprises many of the world's leading climate scientists. Consequently the Convention contains less substantial commitments to reducing GHG emissions than most states hoped. However this may be reviewed (see below).

Specific commitments entered into by signatory nations:

- to limit emissions of, and enhance sinks for, GHGs not already covered by the Montreal Protocol to the Vienna Convention (i.e. not CFCs and their substitutes).
- to stabilise emissions with the *aim* of returning to 1990 emission levels by the end of the decade.
- to submit detailed national inventories of emissions, together with policies designed to limit them, to the Conference of the Parties for periodic review.
- to review the adequacy of current commitments. (This should enable the introduction of more stringent regulations on emissions at a future meeting of the Conference of the Parties which is empowered to change commitments on emission reductions.)

In addition to the Conference of the Parties and Secretariat, two subsidiary bodies are to be formed: the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technical Advice, similar to the IPCC and made up of experts in 'relevant'

The Tashkent Agreement					
	Tanks	Armoured Combat Vehicles	Artillery	Attack Helicopters	Combat Aircraft
Azerbaijan	220	220	285	50	100
Armenia	220	220	285	50	100
Belarus	1,800	2,600	1,615	80	260
Georgia	220	220	285	50	100
Kazakhstan	0	0	0	0	0
Moldova	210	210	250	50	50
Russia	6,400	11,480	6,415	890	3,450
Ukraine	4,080	5,050	4,040	330	1,090
Total ceilings include Active and Storage units; Kazakhstan may retain no Treat Limited Equipment in that part of its territory covered by the CFE Treaty; The Baltic States are not party to the CFE Treaty.					



scientific and technical disciplines; and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation, made up of climate change experts, to review implementation of the Convention. The ongoing costs of the Convention will be met by the Global Environment Fund.

There is no mention of verification of compliance in the Convention. The Subsidiary Body for Implementation would be a logical place to discuss a verification regime.

Given the potential economic benefits to be derived from cheating on the Convention, there is a strong case for including verification provisions in the agreement. This would have the immediate benefit of enabling nations to make more substantial commitments to emission reductions without the fear that their economic competitiveness would be undermined. (VERTIC published a booklet on how the Convention could be verified which was distributed to delegates at the Earth Summit. Copies are available from the VERTIC office, price £10.)

The next meeting of the INC is tentatively scheduled for 19 to 23 October 1992 in Geneva. It is unclear what it is to do now that the Convention has been signed. The first meeting of the Conference of the Parties will probably be in late 1993 or in 1994.

By the final day of UNCED 154 states had signed this convention, of which 71 were Heads of Government or State. All major developed states signed and of the developing states the most important not to sign was Malaysia. The Convention needs to be ratified by 50 states to enter into force.

In conclusion, it is important to note that this is a *Framework* Convention. It is designed to be changed in the light of subsequent scientific information on climate change and it can be modified to contain verification provisions. It is, as the wording on all UN publicity puts it, 'a good start'.

#### **The Convention on Biological Diversity**

This Convention seeks to maintain the biological diversity of the Earth's flora and fauna. Or, more specifically, to prevent the extinction of any species of plant or animal life as a result of human activities. It also seeks to ensure the 'fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilisation of natural resources' (i.e. developed countries should recompense developing countries for use of their resources).

The agreement sets out how signatory countries should set about sustainably conserving biological resources, how species should be identified and monitored and how to implement incentive measures, research and training, impact assessment schemes, technology transfer and many other very sound measures. Unfortunately, however, it contains few firm commitments — having been revised at the final INC (Nairobi, 11-19 May 1992). The draft Article 4 (General Obligations) was removed altogether and almost all paragraphs which could be interpreted as containing important obligations are preceded by the words 'as far as possible and as appropriate' or 'in accordance with its (the States) particular conditions and capabilities'.

The Conference of the Parties can amend the Convention or Protocols by a two-thirds majority vote. More obligations may therefore be added.

There are no provisions for verification of compliance in the Convention and it would probably have been inappropriate to include strict provisions in the first instance. However, national inventories of species and conservation areas will need to be checked if implementation is to be effective. In the longer term verification is likely to be essential to the success of the agreement.

By the final day of UNCED the Convention had been signed by 150 states, of which more than 50 were by heads of government. The only major industrialised state not to sign was the USA. To enter into force the convention now needs to be ratified by 30 states.

Overall, the Convention is a 'good start'. Its comprehensive scope is fairly impressive but it currently lacks firm commitments. The general view at the Conference was that it was better to have a rather weak treaty now and improve upon it, rather than to wait years for negotiations to even begin on another.

#### **Agenda 21**

Agenda 21 was agreed at the final meeting of the UNCED (14 June 1992). Some nations (notably the USA, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait) attempted to add provisos to the agreement during the meeting and these were initially accepted by President Collor. Many nations (led by Argentina) then objected that the meeting had not seen the provisos and the meeting was briefly adjourned. The text was later adopted with the provisos appended, unread. The exact nature of these should be clear by the time it is submitted to the UN General Assembly, in the autumn, but they almost certainly relate mainly to fossil fuel use.

The main aim of Agenda 21 is to achieve sustainable development throughout the world during the next century, while also preserving the natural environment and protecting certain basic human rights. The Agenda is a long, and in many ways quite radical, document. On balance, it reflects the concerns of both the developing and developed worlds fairly well.

Funding of Agenda 21 will be via the Global Environment Fund which is to be revised so that it is less dominated by the World Bank and its function expanded. By the end of UNCED the question of finance was, in principle, agreed but most essential detail, including the level of funding, was missing. The future of Agenda 21 is thus in some doubt.

Overall, Agenda 21 is a valuable agreement and the world will undoubtedly be a better place if it is implemented. Basic methods of implementing the Agenda were agreed, as were some means of reviewing implementation. Verification was not included, but then, as Agenda 21 is not a legally binding document, terms for verification of compliance in their usual sense are not strictly applicable. Financing will have to be worked out if the Agenda is to be implemented as intended.

#### **Declaration of Forest Principles**

The Declaration of Forest Principles is a 'non-legally binding authoritative statement' designed to replace the Forests Convention which failed to be agreed during the negotiating process. There was a widespread belief at the Conference that the failure was solely as a result of US intervention. This was not entirely true. The Malaysians, in particular, and several other countries with large forested regions consistently refused to agree to anything which limited their unsustainable logging, which made any agreement to preserve forests rather difficult.

Earlier disagreements on the Forests Convention are reflected in the Declaration. Consequently, although the Declaration contains many sound principles on conservation, sustaining indigenous peoples etc. it does not identify how these principles can be maintained. It is also weakened by the statement in it that 'states have ... the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own national environmental policies'.



### The Rio Declaration

The Rio Declaration is a list of 'Principles' agreed by the Conference. It is not legally binding but it is a very impressive list. The Principles are basically summaries of the topics covered by Agenda 21.

The Declaration covers most aspects of sustainable development and environmental protection. It includes statements on basic human rights to health, the eradication of poverty and warfare, and the promotion of co-operation between nations. In short, it is an 'improved' version of the Stockholm Declaration.

### The Mood of the Conference

The characteristic mood of most delegation members and NGOs was one of hope. Most thought that the agreements reached were basically sound and could be improved, if they could be implemented in the first place. There was a widespread concern that implementation might be deferred indefinitely because of problems of finance, particularly in a prolonged period of economic recession.

Overall, the mood at the end of the Conference was one of optimism, although this feeling was not shared by some of the larger NGOs and some of the Press.

### Documentation

VERTIC has about sixty kilograms of documentation from the UNCED and Global Forum. This is available for reference only at the VERTIC office.

## In the News

### France closer to NPT accession

On 19 June, The French National Assembly approved a law enabling the Government to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. France will be the last of the nuclear-weapon states to accede to this treaty.

### Hades scrapped

France has now decided not to deploy the Hades short-range nuclear missile and to destroy those already produced, together with their associated nuclear warheads. This follows an announcement last year that the original procurement plan for 120 missiles had been cut to 30.

### UK supports indefinite NPT extension

The latest UK *Statement on the Defence Estimates*, the defence white paper, states 'Our aim at the 1995 NPT Extension Conference will be to negotiate an indefinite extension to the Treaty'.

### More naval nuclear cutbacks

On 15 June, the United Kingdom announced that the tactical nuclear weapons 'earmarked' for use by the Royal Navy would be dismantled. This follows an announcement in 1991 that they would not 'in normal circumstances' be deployed at sea.

### UNIDIR publication

The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research has produced a new publication, edited by Serge Sur, entitled *Verification of Disarmament or Limitation of Armaments: Instruments, Negotiations, Proposals*. Chapters within it cover such topics as nuclear testing, fissile materials cut-off, chemical, biological and conventional weapons and inspections in Iraq.

## VERTIC News

### Correction and apology

Patricia Lewis' baby daughter, Lindiwe, has asked us to correct the spelling of her name (the correct spelling is that above, not as it appeared in *Trust & Verify* No. 28). She has also asked us to point out that her father, Isaac Banda, and her mother agree that while the birth experience may be arduous, it is infinitely preferable to reading a set of Conference on Disarmament papers ... Our apologies to all concerned.

### New editor

Starting this month, Richard Guthrie has taken over the editorship of *Trust & Verify* from Declan McHugh who is now pursuing other interests. Richard has just finished editing the latest of VERTIC's yearbooks, *Verification Report 1992*, with Dr. J.B. Poole. VERTIC would like to thank Declan for his efforts and wish him every success for the future.

*Trust & Verify* is edited and produced by Richard Guthrie with additional reporting by Martin Butcher, John Lanchbery and Philip McNab © VERTIC 1992

### Trust & Verify

*Trust & Verify* is produced by VERTIC roughly 10 times a year. Anyone wishing to contribute information for inclusion in *Trust & Verify*, or to comment on its contents, should contact the VERTIC office.

### Voluntary Subscriptions

The production of *Trust & Verify* entails considerable cost to VERTIC so we would welcome a subscription of £12 (individual) or £20 (organization) for a year's issues. Thank you to those who have sent a subscription.

### What is VERTIC?

VERTIC is an independent organization aiming to research and provide information on the role of verification technology and methods in present and future arms control and environmental agreements. VERTIC coordinates six working groups comprising 21 UK consultants and 11 overseas advisors. VERTIC is the major source of information on verification for scientists, policy makers and the press. VERTIC is funded primarily by grants from foundations and trusts and its independence is monitored by an Oversight and Advisory Committee.

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