



# Trust and Verify

The Bulletin of the Verification Technology Information Centre

No. 58 June/July 1995

ISSN 0966-9221

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## French testing

On 13 June, President Chirac of France announced that his country would carry out a series of eight nuclear tests in the period September 1995 to May 1996.

The President said:

I took this decision because I considered it necessary in the higher interest of our nation to authorise the end of this series of tests. This decision is of course irrevocable. ... I cannot see how it could provoke other nuclear powers — essentially Russia and the United States — to carry out new tests.

France claims that its decision to resume nuclear testing in the Pacific has been accepted by its allies. French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette said, however, that Australia and New Zealand: cannot admit or understand that what we are doing poses no danger to the environment.

## Reactions of other states

The response by many states around the world to the French decision has been marked by the very strong diplomatic language used. The following are some examples.

Australia — Paul Keating, Prime Minister:

Australia deplores France's decision to resume nuclear testing in the South Pacific, ... In the present circumstances the government has decided to freeze cooperation between Australia and France in the defence field at its existing level, while any new testing programme continues.

Australia — Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade:

Australia is adamantly opposed to nuclear testing by any state, it has repeatedly made its opposition known to the French including in the last few months, therefore France's decision is extremely disappointing and extremely regrettable.

India — According to a report credited to Reuters, Indian Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee said that the French decision to resume nuclear testing in the Pacific had strengthened India's resolve to stay out of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Netherlands — Hans Van Mierlo, Foreign Minister:

We deplore it, and we made that clear to the French government.

New Zealand — Don McKinnon, Foreign Minister:

I'm very sorry it has come to this situation. ... Put it down to Napoleonic De Gaulle arrogance or something, but this is total, blatant disregard not only of feelings in the South Pacific and Australia and New Zealand but around the world," he said.

New Zealand — David Lange, former Prime Minister:

Today it is absurd that a second rate power, a well-known ratter on international agreements, should enjoy such prestige, ... France does not demonstrate, from its history and current practices, that it is fit to be taken seriously as a force in international relations. And yet it is, because it is nuclear armed and unscrupulous.

South Africa — Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

This decision by the government of France is a step backward in an endeavour by the international community to ban nuclear testing.

United States — State Department official:

We do regret that decision.

It has also been reported that at the EU heads of state and government summit in Cannes in late June, Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky spoke out on behalf of five states — Austria, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands and Sweden — one-third of the EU to express criticism of the French decision.

## British response

The British Government's position was summed up by Tony Newton, Leader of the House of Commons two days after the French announcement:

Obviously, we may have to take a second or two to understand the concern caused by the French decision; but we see no reason why a limited programme of tests need affect prospects for a successful negotiation of the comprehensive test ban treaty.

It has been acknowledged that British Prime Minister Major has discussed nuclear testing with President Chirac, although this matter was not discussed at the June G-7 summit in Halifax, Nova Scotia, when other states raised objections.

The opposition parties in Britain condemned the resumption of testing and at least one Conservative member of parliament has referred to the French plans as a 'disgraceful decision'.

On the subject of its own testing programme, the British Government has stated:

We are actively working for a test ban treaty, and have said that we will not seek to test while the United States moratorium remains in force.

Freeman 25 May:

We have kept our policy under close review and, for example, on 6 April this year announced in the Conference on Disarmament that we have now



accepted that there should be no exemption in the draft treaty for tests in exceptional circumstances.

There has also been a statement that:

The Government believe that it should be possible to conclude negotiations on [a CTBT] by the end of 1996 and will continue to work actively for that end.

## US testing issues

Hard on the heels of the French announcement came reports that the US was considering the resumption of testing. These reports were sparked by comments made by US Secretary of Defense, William Perry over the weekend of 17–18 June which were interpreted by some to indicate that the US was considering a testing threshold in the order of hundreds of tons or even that the US may wish to resume testing before the completion of a CTB.

In response to these comments, the New Zealand Foreign Minister Don McKinnon called in the US ambassador, Josiah Beeman, for a meeting to clarify the situation.

Following the meeting Ambassador Beeman made the following statement:

I think it's important to assure the people of New Zealand who are concerned in light of the French tests and the Chinese tests ... that the United States is not considering a resumption of nuclear testing. ... The United States is observing a moratorium on nuclear testing, and we will continue to observe that moratorium.

On the comments by Perry, Beeman said:

He is one of many of the President's advisers. He might put forward a point of view that may represent the Defense Department, or a portion of voices in the Defense Department, but the President will make the decision as to whether the United States resumes nuclear testing ... The White House has reaffirmed that the President will hold the line and we are not considering a resumption of nuclear testing.

## Hydronuclear experiments

The editor has received a note from a reader following the piece on hydronuclear experiments (HNEs) that appeared in the March edition (no. 55) of *Trust & Verify*.

The attempt in the article to produce a definition for an HNE relating to the quantity of conventional explosives used is flawed as early nuclear devices used many thousands of pounds of these.

## African NWFZ progress

The draft of the African nuclear-weapon-free zone treaty was approved by the summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity on 26–28 June.

It is hoped that the treaty will be presented for endorsement by the UN General Assembly later this year.

## Control of Anti-Personnel Mines

The debate about measures to be taken to control anti-personnel mines (APMs) continues. The issue has now been discussed at Ministerial level at the Foreign Affairs Council of the EU. While FAC meetings are held in confidence, it is known that the subject of APMs was raised at the Ministerial meeting of 10 April, at which a proposal for joint action was discussed.

## Notes on terminology

Some confusion exists following the adoption of a variety of terms by different states to describe the same things.

*Anti-personnel mines (APMs)/anti-personnel landmines (APLs)* appear to be used interchangeably, the former by the UK, the latter by the US and Canada, for example. Some distinction is sometimes made between anti-personnel elements of cluster bombs and other APMs as the former are air delivered, and so to some minds are not 'land mines', although their effects are similar.

*Inhumane Weapons Convention (IWC)/United Nations Weaponry Convention (UNWC)/Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW)* are all shorthand for the 'Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects'; the text of which was agreed in 1980, and opened for signature in 1981. The Convention includes controls on anti-personnel mines and a Review Conference of the Convention is to be held in September/October of this year.

*Conventional or long-lived* mines are those without self-neutralising or self-destructing mechanisms. To some in the field the use of such terminology is seen as a diversion as these mechanisms can never be 100% reliable. While there is no official figure for current failure rates available, claims that the rate can be as high as 10 per cent. abound. The British Government has stated that it wishes to see a standard set for failure rates in self-destruct mechanisms at no more than one in a thousand, although it is not clear how easily this would be achieved.

## Landmine Control Programme

On 29–30 June, 31 countries met in Budapest to consider proposals for a 'Landmine Control Programme'. Such a programme would be complimentary to any measures agreed at the Inhumane Weapons Convention Review Conference.

The programme has its genesis in proposals by the US for stronger export control measures to cover anti-personnel mines and UK proposals for a voluntary code of conduct.

Arguments in favour of such a programme include: that some control measures will be beyond the scope of the 1981 Convention; and that it is better to get progress on a voluntary measure than have nothing at all.

Arguments against such a programme include: that voluntary measures are often only taken up by those states least likely to breach them; and that a legally-binding measure allows scope for checking compliance.

The meeting was held behind closed doors.

## 12 point plan

The meeting considered a proposal for a 12 point plan put forward by the UK and the US.

The text of the proposal is as follows (all text in brackets is in the original):

1. Declare annually *all* APL production, inventory and destruction, including percentage of *long-lived* APL (As defined at the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW) Review Conference) for each category.
2. Cease production/further stockpiling/transfer of APL *prohibited* by CCW. (Projected to be defined at Review Conference as (a) non-detectable APL; (b)

remotely-delivered long-lived APL; and (c) APL triggered by mine-clearing devices.) Already existing stockpiles prohibited by CCW will be eliminated over time.

3. Take steps to extend these prohibitions to domestic non-government producers.
4. Agree to not increase its stockpile of *long-lived* APL.
5. Reduce, over time, its stockpile of *long-lived* APL to 15 % of its entire APL stockpile.
6. Permit transfers of self-destruction/self-deactivating APL only to CCW states in good standing.
7. Cease transfer of *long-lived* APL entirely.
8. Regulate transfer of APL *components* and *technology* accordingly.
9. Exchange information with other member states to promote the objectives of the programme.
10. Consult with other member states if implementation ambiguities arise.
11. Seek to assist non-member states to become members and to reduce reliance on *all* APL; and pledge themselves to support the efforts of the international community for demining and humanitarian assistance.
12. Convene in five years to consider further measures, including the feasibility of eliminating *long lived* APL.

## Other moves on APMs

### European Parliament

A resolution calling for the complete prohibition of transfers of APMs was passed by the European Parliament on 28 June.

### Organization of African Unity (OAU)

The OAU, in ministerial session, called upon member states to adopt a common position on the prohibition of transfers of APMs.

### Germany

On 29 June, the German parliament approved resolutions to extend that country's moratorium on the export of land mines indefinitely. The moratorium expires in 1997.

The resolutions also urge the German government to press for prohibitions on the sale of land mines at the Inhumane Weapons Convention Review Conference and to press for verification mechanisms, primarily fact-finding missions, for alleged misuses of mines.

### Romania

A one-year moratorium on export of APMs was announced on 1 July.

## The Climate Convention: first moves on a protocol

At a mid June meeting of the Bureau, it was decided that the first meeting of the *ad hoc* group, charged at Berlin with the negotiation of a protocol to the Convention, will be from 21 to 25 August in Geneva. The subsidiary bodies to the Convention will meet in the following week, also in Geneva. The *ad hoc* group is planned to meet once again this year, for seven days from 30 October, and both the subsidiary bodies and the group will meet again in February 1996.

Followers of progress on the Climate Convention may be slightly confused by the Geneva venue, bearing in mind that the Berlin Conference of the Parties decided to locate the Secretariat in Bonn. It transpires that there is as yet no accommodation for the Secretariat in Bonn and it will take some time to construct some. Thus all meetings in the immediate future will be in Geneva.

## Climate Change ratifications

The following is a list of ratifications and accessions (marked †) to the Framework Convention on Climate Change since the list reproduced in *Trust & Verify* no. 48, June/July 1994, up to and including 9 June:

Malaysia	13 July 1994
Estonia	27 July 1994
Poland	28 July 1994
Georgia†	29 July 1994
Philippines	2 August 1994
Greece	4 August 1994
Grenada	11 August 1994
Uruguay	18 August 1994
Indonesia	23 August 1994
Slovakia	25 August 1994
Costa Rica	26 August 1994
Nigeria	29 August 1994
Guyana	29 August 1994
Kenya	30 August 1994
Bolivia	3 October 1994
Albania†	3 October 1994
Senegal	17 October 1994
Cameroon	19 October 1994
San Marino	28 October 1994
Belize	31 October 1994
Comoros	31 October 1994
Viet Nam	16 November 1994
Myanmar	29 November 1994
Cote d'Ivoire	29 November 1994
Samoa	29 November 1994
Korea, Dem. People's Republic of	5 December 1994
Egypt	5 December 1994
Lebanon	15 December 1994
Chile	22 December 1994
Bahrain	28 December 1994
Kuwait†	28 December 1994
Mali	28 December 1994
Russian Federation	28 December 1994
Saudi Arabia†	28 December 1994
Solomon Islands	28 December 1994
Thailand	28 December 1994
Venezuela	28 December 1994
Lao People's Democratic Republic	4 January 1995
Jamaica	6 January 1995
Zaire	9 January 1995
Kiribati	7 February 1995
Lesotho	7 February 1995
Oman	8 February 1995
Togo	8 March 1995
Central African Republic	10 March 1995
Colombia	22 March 1995
Latvia	23 March 1995
Lithuania	24 March 1995
Cape Verde	29 March 1995
Eritrea†	24 April 1995
Bulgaria	12 May 1995
Namibia	16 May 1995
Azerbaijan	16 May 1995
Kazakhstan	17 May 1995
Panama	23 May 1995
Turkmenistan†	5 June 1995
Moldova	9 June 1995

## Non-Military Confidence-Building Measures on OSCE agenda

The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) will discuss 'non military confidence building measures' at two of its forthcoming meetings — the Forum for Security and Co-operation being held in Vienna 12–15 July 1995 and the Seminar on 'The OSCE experience in the field of confidence building' being held in Cairo 25–27 September 1995.

For over a year now VERTIC has been emphasising the importance of developing civilian confidence-building measures as a second pillar of the confidence-building mechanism in order to deal with the new realities of the post cold war period. Addressing the Budapest Review Meeting of the OSCE on 10 November 1994 the VERTIC delegate called on the OSCE 'to develop a series of civilian confidence-building measures that can be useful to diffuse tensions between communities within states, as well as between states'. In April 1995, during the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) seminar on civil society in Warsaw, Dennis Sammut, Co-ordinator of VERTIC's Conflict and Confidence Building Programme presented a paper entitled 'Civilian Confidence-Building Measures: a second pillar of the confidence-building mechanism' outlining some preliminary thoughts on this issue. VERTIC is continuing work on this important subject, making ample use of our case study projects in Georgia, Romania and Egypt and further publications are planned for later on this year.

### **VERTIC's Georgia Projects in full swing**

VERTIC's work in Georgia is now in full swing. Following the opening of the Tbilisi Office for the Transcaucasus last March and the Conference 'Youth for a Democratic Georgia' in May the action moved to Europe in June with the visit of nine young political leaders from different political parties and ethnic groups to various European countries and institutions. The visit was organised within the framework of the Georgia Youth Project, a collaboration between VERTIC and more than forty youth organisations in Georgia funded by the TACIS Democracy programme of the European Union. The group visited Brussels, Strasbourg, Dublin and London and held meetings with the European Parliament, the Council of Europe, the

Council of European National Youth Committees, as well as a wide spectrum of non governmental organisations, research institutes and conflict resolution centres. Individual meetings were organised for members of the delegation with their counterparts in Western European countries.

On Tuesday 20 June, the group participated in a round table discussion held at the London School Economics with the theme 'What prospects for Georgia?' The discussion was chaired by Dr. Margot Light of the LSE. Over forty persons participated in the discussion including diplomats, journalists, representatives of NGOs and academics. A farewell reception was later held in the Senior Common Room at the LSE.

### **Senior Georgian Politician in London as guest of VERTIC**

Zurab Zwania, General Secretary of the Union of Georgia Citizens and leader of the majority (pro Shevardnadze) faction in the Georgian Parliament visited London for forty-eight hours at the end of June as guest of VERTIC. The visit was part of the preparation for the Conference on peace in the Transcaucasus that VERTIC is hosting in Batumi in July.

During his visit to London, Mr Zwania had meetings with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Labour Party front bench spokesperson on Europe and the General Secretary of the Socialist International. He also visited the Royal Institute for International Affairs.

Mr Zwania expressed his appreciation for VERTIC's work in Georgia and promised his support for VERTIC's initiative to facilitate a dialogue between the different parties in conflict in Georgia.

This initiative is part of the VERTIC's Conflict and Confidence Building Programme.

*Trust & Verify* is edited and produced by Richard Guthrie with additional reporting by VERTIC staff and consultants.

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### **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 co-ordinates 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.

### **Other publications**

In addition to *Trust & Verify*, VERTIC publishes the *Verification* (formerly *Verification Report*) series of yearbooks and a variety of research reports each year. Details of VERTIC publications are available on request.

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