POSITION OF HUNGARY ON UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 71/67
ON NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT VERIFICATION

Summary

Hungary fully supports the ultimate goal of complete, irreversible and verifiable nuclear disarmament for the pursuit of which Article VI of the NPT provides the fundamental framework. Hungary shares the view that adequate verification capabilities should be available by the time the political and security conditions are ripe for future multilateral nuclear disarmament agreements.

Nuclear and non-nuclear weapon states should work together on nuclear disarmament verification in conformity with their NPT obligations. While nuclear weapon states bear a special responsibility in this area, non-nuclear weapon states can also make an important contribution. Their involvement enhances transparency and increases confidence.

Hungary was a member of the GGE tasked to make recommendations on a future fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT), a crucial building block of and the next logical step towards multilateral nuclear disarmament. The GGE’s report covers verification issues extensively. Therefore, the work of the new high-level FMCT expert preparatory group and that of the GGE on nuclear disarmament verification should be complementary and mutually reinforcing.

In 2013-2015 Hungary served as Article XIV Co-Coordinator mandated to promote the entry into force of the CTBT. The comprehensive verification regime of the CTBT that includes a unique global International Monitoring System (IMS) can also be a valuable source of information concerning the verification of nuclear disarmament.

As a non-nuclear weapon state, Hungary has gained considerable experience relevant to nuclear disarmament verification through the Hungarian Safeguards Support Programme. This Programme focuses on training activities for the IAEA, testing newly developed safeguards technologies, especially containment and surveillance equipment and supporting international safeguards verification.

In considering the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament the GGE established by UNGA Resolution 71/67 should draw on the outcome of work carried out earlier in the UN system and more recently, in the framework of relevant initiatives, such as the UK-Norway Initiative (UKNI), the Quad Nuclear Verification Partnership (QNVNP) and the International Partnership on Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV). The experience of existing treaty verification mechanisms should also be carefully studied by the GGE.

The main objective of the GGE should be to review and integrate into the UN system all relevant information in order to foster common understanding of verification challenges associated with the entire lifecycle of nuclear weapons.
**General observations on multilateral nuclear disarmament and its verification**

Hungary fully supports the ultimate goal of a complete, irreversible and verifiable nuclear disarmament for the pursuit of which Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) provides the fundamental framework, as part and parcel of a balanced implementation of all provisions of the NPT, which remains the cornerstone of multilateral nuclear disarmament, the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Member States of the United Nations have divergent views on how to accomplish legally binding multilateral nuclear disarmament. However, there is general agreement that effective and reliable verification and monitoring mechanisms and instruments are crucial building blocks for the realization of a world free of nuclear weapons.

The Government of Hungary shares the view that adequate verification tools and capabilities, as essential requirements, should be readily available by the time the necessary political and security conditions are in place for the negotiation and conclusion of future multilateral nuclear disarmament agreements. Therefore, Hungary not only voted in favor but also co-sponsored UN General Assembly Resolution 71/67 on Nuclear Disarmament Verification, requesting the Secretary-General to establish a group of governmental experts (GGE) to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament.

Another strong reason for the Government of Hungary to support UN General Assembly Resolution 71/67 was the firm conviction that nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states should work together on multilateral nuclear disarmament verification, in conformity with their NPT obligations. While nuclear weapon states bear a special responsibility in this area, non-nuclear weapon states can also make an important contribution to this complex endeavor. Furthermore, their involvement enhances the transparency of the whole process and also increases confidence by providing assurance of compliance with future multilateral nuclear disarmament treaty obligations.

**Contribution of Hungary to nuclear disarmament with a view to its verification**

Hungary was a member of the group of governmental experts set up by UN General Assembly Resolution 67/53 to make recommendations on the possible aspects that could contribute to future negotiations on a non-discriminatory, internationally and effectively verifiable fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices which would be the next logical step towards multilateral nuclear disarmament. The final report of the group of governmental experts, adopted by consensus, covers verification issues extensively. Therefore, the work of the high-level FMCT expert preparatory group set up by UN General Assembly resolution 71/59 to make recommendations on substantial elements of a future treaty and that of the GGE tasked to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament established by UN General Assembly resolution 71/67 should be complementary and mutually reinforcing.
The Government of Hungary has also been a staunch supporter of a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests. Consequently, between 2013 and 2015 Hungary served as one of the two Article XIV Co-Coordinators mandated to promote the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Lessons learned from the activities of the CTBTO are also relevant in the context of UN General Assembly Resolution 71/67, because, although still not in force, the CTBT has a comprehensive verification regime including a unique global International Monitoring System (IMS) that can provide the international community with valuable information concerning the verification of nuclear disarmament.

As a non-nuclear weapon state, Hungary has gained considerable experience relevant to nuclear disarmament verification through the Hungarian Safeguards Support Programme. This Programme was initiated nearly two decades ago, with the objective of contributing to the strengthening of the effectiveness of the IAEA’s safeguards system playing a vital role in the implementation of relevant NPT obligations. Our Support Programme focuses on three major groups of activities: (i) hosting and providing expertise for different training activities for the IAEA, including comprehensive inspection exercise training and additional protocol complementary access exercise; (ii) providing facility environment for testing newly developed safeguards technologies, especially containment and surveillance equipment either serving the traditional safeguards approach or those to be used under the integrated safeguards systems; and (iii) supporting international safeguards verification by developing methods and equipment for nuclear material identification for national safeguards verification purposes. Hungary also actively takes part in solving new, challenging issues that emerge through the implementation of novel safeguards and verification technologies.

Group of governmental experts established by UNGA resolution 71/67

The GGE established by UN General Assembly resolution 71/67 does not have to start its activities from scratch, since it can draw on the outcome of work carried out earlier in this field. In the UN framework, the most important documents are the 16 Principles of Verification agreed by the UN Disarmament Commission in 1988, the studies produced by two groups and a panel of governmental experts, and finally the 2008 report of the UN Office of Disarmament Affairs on verification in all its aspects, including the role of the United Nations in the field of verification.

More recently, there have been a number of relevant bilateral and wider initiatives such as the UK-Norway Initiative (UKNI), the Quad Nuclear Verification Partnership (QNVP) started by Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom and the United States, and the International Partnership on Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV), launched by the United States. These projects focus on different aspects of nuclear disarmament verification, but all of them are aimed at assisting the development of an effective and reliable verification system for nuclear disarmament.

The experience the international community has gained from already existing treaty verification mechanisms (e.g. Chemical Weapons Convention) should also be carefully studied by the GGE.
The Government of Hungary is of the view that the main objective of the GGE should be to review and integrate into the UN system the political, security, technical, and legal aspects of lessons learned from the above-mentioned sources of information. This would enable all UN member states to better understand the complexity of the issues involved and facilitate their contribution to addressing monitoring and verification challenges associated with the entire lifecycle of nuclear weapons including their dismantlement and disposition.