

FACT SHEET

THE UNITED KINGDOM – NORWAY INITIATIVE (UKNI):

RESEARCH INTO THE VERIFICATION OF NUCLEAR WARHEAD DISMANTLEMENT

- The UK and Norway are presenting work on their joint initiative to the 2010 NPT Review Conference on 13 May. The non-governmental research organisation VERTIC is providing its independent observations.
- The UKNI is a unique collaboration between a Nuclear Weapon State (UK) and a Non-Nuclear Weapon State (Norway). It is the first joint work of this nature in this field of research.
- Confidence building and transparency measures, including verification, will be critical to moving towards a world free from nuclear weapons. This poses significant technical, financial and policy challenges.
- The project was designed to develop new technologies, methods and procedures for the verification of future dismantlement.
- The UK Ministry of Defence (MOD) and Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) began this verification work with the Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority, the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, the Institute for Energy Technology and NORSAR in Norway and the independent research organisation VERTIC in early 2007.
- The related NPT Working Paper entitled 'The United Kingdom-Norway Initiative: Research into the Verification of Nuclear Warhead Dismantlement' was released during the 2010 NPT RevCon.
- During the verification exercise described in the Working Paper, Norway played the role of the Nuclear Weapon State (the host) and the UK played the role of the Non-Nuclear Weapon State (the inspector). This gave both parties insight into the challenges faced by the other and enhanced understanding of both perspectives.
- This research relates to Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which calls for all State Parties to take effective measures towards disarmament. The NPT requires nuclear disarmament to occur under strict and effective international control (i.e. verification of dismantlement under Article VI). The research is also compliant with Articles I and II of the NPT.
- VERTIC specialises in promoting effective and efficient verification as a means of ensuring confidence in the implementation of international agreements and intra-national agreements with international involvement.