

NUCLEAR SUPPLIERS GROUP
PLENARY MEETING

FLORENCE, ITALY

MAY 5-6, 1999

PRESS STATEMENT

The 1999 Plenary Meeting of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) was held in Florence, Italy, on 5-6 May. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Mario Sica, Co-ordinator for Security and Disarmament, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Italy. Sen. Valentino Martelli, Undersecretary of State, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Italy, made introductory remarks on behalf of the Italian Government.

The aim of the NSG, which has 35 Member States¹ and the European Commission as permanent observer, is to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons through export controls of nuclear and nuclear-related material, equipment and technology. The Plenary agreed that the activities of the Group continued to fulfil this aim and that the Group's contribution is all the more valuable today in the face of renewed threats of nuclear proliferation.

In accordance with the "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament" adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, the Group agreed to continue its efforts to promote greater transparency and openness towards non-members in NSG activities. In view of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, the Group decided to follow the success of the 2nd International Seminar on the Role of Export Controls in Nuclear Non-Proliferation, held in New York on 8-9 April 1999, with further initiatives, including the possible establishment of an NSG web site.

The NSG agreed to improve electronic information-sharing among its members, in particular by pursuing the upgrade of its computerised system.

Two Working Groups were established, one to clarify the appropriate control of components and the other to study possible improvements to the effectiveness of the NSG and Dual-Use Regime.

The NSG agreed on the importance, in working to prevent nuclear proliferation, of keeping pace with technology change. Issues, such as intangible technology transfer, were increasingly becoming areas of concern, and needed further addressing. The Group agreed on a process of intensified consultation on these issues and on ways to tackle them.

The NSG mandated the Chair to pursue contacts with Turkey, Belarus, Cyprus, Kazakhstan and Slovenia with a view to taking intersessional decisions on membership.

Florence, 6 May 1999

¹ Members of the Nuclear Suppliers Group are:

Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Latvia, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, South Africa, Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America.