

NUCLEAR SUPPLIERS GROUP

PLENARY MEETING

EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND

APRIL 1-2, 1998

PRESS STATEMENT

The 1998 Plenary Meeting of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) was held in Edinburgh on 1 - 2 April. The meeting was chaired by Mr Roland Smith CMG, Director of the International Security Command at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

The aim of the NSG, which has 35 Member States¹, is to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons through export controls of nuclear-related material, equipment and technology. The Plenary agreed that the activities of the Group continued to fulfil this aim and make a positive contribution to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The admission of Latvia to the Group was welcomed. The European Commission attended as a permanent observer.

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 in the activities of the NSG to non-members. The Group decided to follow the success of the International Seminar on the Role of Export Controls in Nuclear Non-Proliferation in Vienna (7-8 October 1997) with a further seminar in New York in the Spring of 1999 before the NPT Preparatory Committee.

The Group agreed on the need to improve electronic information sharing within the Nuclear Suppliers Group. In this context, the Group also agreed to explore the scope for system compatibility with other export control regimes

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

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, the Russian Federation, South Africa, Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America.

The European Commission is a permanent observer.