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The Trilateral Initiative: The Legal Framework

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The Trilateral Initiative was a six-year effort undertaken by the IAEA, the United States and the Russian Federation between 1996 to 2002 to identify verification arrangements and technologies for IAEA verification of classified forms of Pu and HEU from nuclear warheads or components. As part of that Initiative, between 1999 and 2001, the parties succeeded in negotiating a model agreement for such verification (the Model Agreement). Although the Trilateral Initiative ended in 2002, the Model Agreement produced as a result of those negotiations could still serve as the basis for bilateral agreements between the IAEA and nuclear-weapon States wishing to demonstrate, in a verifiable manner, the release of weapon origin and other fissile material from defence programmes. This presentation will describe the legal framework for the Model Agreement and the major issues addressed during its negotiation.

Country or International Organization

United States of America

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