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Deriving, Communicating and Applying Safeguards Conclusions

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Safeguards are arrangements for verifying that states are in compliance with international agreements or undertakings relating to the peaceful use of nuclear materials. The IAEA has operated a system of comprehensive safeguards agreements with non-nuclear-weapon states parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) for over forty years. This system has evolved over time in recognition that a progressively broader approach to verification is required to substantiate the IAEA's conclusions.

Current policy debates on the further evolution of safeguards implementation primarily relate to the development of the IAEA's 'state level concept' for safeguards, and the resolution of compliance or performance issues in several countries. Safeguards experts acknowledge that the identification and clarification of principles for determining safeguards priorities and for deriving safeguards conclusions will be a crucial step in strengthening the non-proliferation regime.

This paper recommends the development of a procedure by which the IAEA Secretariat would issue standardised notices to the Board of Governors in situations where anomalies in safeguards implementation remain unresolved for a prescribed period of time. These 'Automatic Notices' are designed to assist the Secretariat with the structured communication of technical information about state compliance.

The procedure would enhance the transparency of the operation of the IAEA, the credibility of the verification assurance, and the timeliness of identification of potential non-compliance. It also provides states, whether acting through the Agency's Board of Governors or otherwise, with opportunities to craft effective solutions to potential proliferation crises. Furthermore, the existence and number of these 'Automatic Notices' would provide one transparent and objective basis for differentiating between states in future allocation of safeguards resources. This paper will address the manner in which Automatic Notices could be phased in and their relationship with the annual Safeguards Implementation Report.

Country or International Organization

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