



## Australia's Submission to the United Nations Secretary-General's Report on the Establishment of a Group of Scientific and Technical Experts on Nuclear Disarmament Verification

*RE: UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 79/240 | May 2025*

1. Australia welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the Secretary-General's Report on possible options for the establishment of a Group of Scientific and Technical Experts (GSTE) on Nuclear Disarmament Verification (NDV) within the United Nations.
2. The Australian Government has an enduring commitment to a world without nuclear weapons and considers developing credible nuclear disarmament verification tools and processes to be essential to achieving that goal. Verification measures foster trust between nuclear-weapons states (NWS) and non-nuclear weapons states (NNWS), and among NWS, and promote compliance with disarmament and arms control treaties by detecting and deterring cheating and enabling appropriate countermeasures. By providing assurances that others are complying with their obligations, verification measures build confidence for NWS to move towards disarmament.
3. Consistent with our view that verification is critical in the process of disarmament, Australia has made substantive contributions to work in this field, including as a founding partner and co-chair of the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV). IPNDV is an initiative of over 25 countries, including both NWS and NNWS, to identify challenges associated with verification and develop and exercise practical procedures and technologies to address them. Australia has actively led various programs of work since it was established in 2014, including an exploration of the scope of on-site inspections in nuclear disarmament treaties, and proudly hosted its plenary in 2022. Australia was also pleased to have an expert serve on the Group of Governmental Experts established pursuant to resolution 74/50 to further consider NDV issues.
4. On the **merits** of a GSTE, Australia supports the concept of a GSTE as an effective way to take forward practical work on NDV in an inclusive multilateral setting and acknowledges the leadership of Brazil and Norway in this regard. We also acknowledge the critical role that was played by a Group of Scientific Experts in working through technical issues relevant to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty ahead of its negotiation.
5. On the **objectives** of a GSTE, Australia believes that the entire international community, to the extent possible and on a voluntary basis, should be able to participate in creating tools and processes for NDV. Australia notes the importance of engagement and participation of NNWS in a GSTE.
6. On the **mandate** of a GSTE, Australia believes an important role for a GSTE is in incorporating and preserving existing knowledge on NDV, such as the work done through the IPNDV, the UK-Norway Initiative, and the Quad Nuclear Verification Partnership.
7. On the **modalities** of a GSTE, Australia sees value in an inclusive process. We note the cost of a GSTE will need to be carefully considered.