1. Recent years have seen a growing recognition of the central importance of verification to arms control and disarmament, as well as of the value of a full discussion of the subject in appropriate international forums. The United Kingdom welcomes this process.

2. A number of provisions form the core of a practical and effective approach to verification. Verification arrangements of any agreement must be sufficiently adequate to be effective, with adequacy being defined in terms of the requirements of the agreement in question.

3. The arrangements must be appropriate to the specific agreement. They must be constructed at the outset with the full scope of the reductions or limits to be achieved under the agreement in mind, together with the possibility that they could form a precedent for further agreements in the same field.

4. The stringency of the verification arrangements adopted must reflect both the importance of the eliminations or reductions achieved in the agreement, and the seriousness of any circumvention which evasion of its provisions by one of the parties would represent.

5. Verification arrangements must be continuing and not restricted to the reduction phase of any agreement. They must remain convincing over the full life of a treaty and be amended and strengthened if that is necessary to maintain the right degree of confidence in the agreement's provisions and the conviction among States parties that all of the undertakings agreed to in an agreement are being adhered to.
6. The verification provisions of any agreement must ensure quick and timely detection of any non-observance or attempt to get round the agreement. This will probably mean that additional measures of verification beyond national technical means, including on-site inspection, will be required.

7. The objective of any negotiations on the type of verification provisions which are to be included in a particular agreement must be to arrive at arrangements which are capable of providing sufficient evidence of non-compliance. They must be able to deliver information which is both clear and capable of convincing the majority of the States parties that non-compliance has taken place. Such provisions would then act as the major deterrent to circumvention of an agreement.

8. Such stringent criteria are necessary because experience of the operation of current arms limitation and disarmament agreements has shown that the international community cannot necessarily rely on assurance of full compliance with their provisions in all cases. If the confidence necessary between States in order to achieve further agreements is to be maintained and improved, then it is important to ensure that this type of situation does not arise in future.

9. To sum up, for verification provisions to be worth while and effective, States parties must be able to rely on the fact that a treaty's verification provisions ensure the highest probability that a breach will be quickly detected. And furthermore that any such detection will result in swift action by members of the international community who are parties to the agreement in question.