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P55m

CHINESE COOPERATION ON CTBT VERIFICATION
BACKGROUND

(U) During the October 1996 consultations with the Chinese, the US suggested that bilateral arms control consultations could be used to clarify issues of concern with regard to CTBT verification. The Chinese agreed in principle to such consultations and experts meetings. The US would like to provide assistance to China in establishing some of the IMS stations in its country. A proposed bilateral agreement was presented to the Chinese on this subject during the last round of talks, and the US Embassy in Beijing subsequently approached the Chinese. No response was received. In addition, it might be useful to engage the Chinese on monitoring goals and capabilities on a more technical and scientific level.

(U) We have been working with the Chinese at technical working group meetings and at the CTBT PrepCom in Vienna. They have raised the subject of NTM there; however, we believe we should not allow the Chinese to reopen a discussion of the definition of NTM. Also during these meetings the Chinese have been particularly obstinate on the subject of operation of the CTBT's International Monitoring System (IMS) before Entry-Into-Force (EIF). They have consistently opposed funding operations and maintenance of stations installed before EIF, and they fought hard against performing any work on station upgrades before EIF.

(C) Specifically, in July 1997 the US demarched China for insisting that upgrading seven primary seismic stations to arrays be delayed until Entry-Into-Force (EIF), even though the CTBT PrepCom's expert group had concluded that work on these stations is a high priority. China was probably concerned about the costs of operating and maintaining the IMS before EIF. The Chinese, and many others, believe EIF is years off, especially because of the poor prospects for India's signing. They worry that the establishment of the IMS could increase pressure for "provisional" entry-into-force without India. China may also be concerned about the potential for early monitoring on or near its territory (six of the seven seismic stations are in or near China -- 2 in China, one in Mongolia, 3 in Russia, and one in Niger). Despite these concerns, however, P-5 experts reached an understanding in September 1997 regarding the funding and timing of the upgrades of seven primary seismic stations to arrays.

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TALKING POINTS

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- Since we last met, US and Chinese delegations have participated in Vienna to establish the CTBT's international verification regime. This includes building up the on-site inspection regime, the international data center, and the international monitoring system (or the IMS). We believe that it is important to establish the IMS so that it will be in place and ready to help verify compliance with the CTBT when it enters into force.
- We welcomed the understanding reached among the P-5 experts last fall on the timing and funding for upgrading seven seismic stations to arrays.
- At our last meeting, we agreed in principle to engage in bilateral arms control consultations and experts meetings, and we would like to start that process.
- I had left with you last time a copy of a proposed agreement for bilateral cooperation in establishing your new IMS stations. Our offer to work with you still stands, and we would like to send some representatives to discuss this. If you are interested, please inform our Embassy in Beijing. If you could give our Embassy a point of contact in an organization that will be responsible for these installations and/or responsible for monitoring tasks, we will follow up immediately.
- It would also be useful if our experts could begin meeting on a range of technical subjects related to monitoring. They could, for example, share information on monitoring experiences in general, on particular IMS technologies such as infrasound and the noble gas network, etc. We welcome your suggestions on other topics of interest.

CONTINGENCY TALKING POINT

If the Chinese raise concerns about operation of the IMS before EIF:

- Because the IMS is an extensive, highly technical system, we must begin the long process of establishing it now.
- Once stations are installed, they must be thoroughly tested. The only way to do that is to operate the IMS and feed data to the IDC on a regular basis. We must test all IMS technologies -- seismic, infrasound, hydroacoustic, and radionuclide, including noble gas sampling.

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