

STATEMENT OF JUSTIFICATION

COMMUNICATION

FROM

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

TRANSMITTING

A STATEMENT OF JUSTIFICATION



JANUARY 27, 2000.—Referred to the Committee on International Relations
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THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, December 22, 1999.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: In accordance with the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, adopted by the Senate of the United States on April 24, 1997, I hereby certify in connection with Condition (7)(C)(i), Effectiveness of Australia Group, that:

Australia Group members continue to maintain an equally effective or more comprehensive control over the export of toxic chemicals and their precursors, dual-use processing equipment, human, animal, and plant pathogens and toxins with potential biological weapons application, and dual-use biological equipment, as that afforded by the Australia Group as of April 25, 1997; and,

The Australia Group remains a viable mechanism for limiting the spread of chemical and biological weapons-related materials and technology, and the effectiveness of the Australia Group has not been undermined by changes in membership, lack of compliance with common export controls and nonproliferation measures, or the weakening of common controls and nonproliferation measures, in force as of April 25, 1997.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

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Since entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) in 1997, the 30-member Australia Group (AG) chemical and biological weapons (CBW) nonproliferation regime has held three annual plenary meetings. At all three meetings, AG participants reaffirmed that universal adherence to and compliance with the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) and the CWC will be the most effective way to rid the world of chemical and biological weapons.

AG participants also affirmed that implementing national export licensing controls on CBW-related items is an important way of meeting their national obligations under the CWC and the BWC to prevent the intentional or inadvertent supply by their nationals of materials or equipment to CBW programs. AG participants agreed that their national CBW export controls are fully consistent and compatible with the CWC and the BWC. At the 1997, 1998 and 1999 plenaries, no delegation noted any diminution in national implementation of export controls.

While no additions or deletions have been made to the overall AG control list, at the 1999 plenary a number of minor clarifications were made to existing entries, such as:

- exempting from AG licensing requirements certain medical products and diagnostic test kits that posed no proliferation risk;
- adopting a rounding rule for trace impurities in mixtures containing AG-controlled CWC Schedule One mixtures; and,
- agreeing to reformat the AG control list along the lines of the control lists for the other nonproliferation regimes.

These clarifications do not reduce the scope of the current controls.

At the 1999 plenary, AG participants again agreed to continue a program to promote greater awareness and understanding of the important role that national export licensing measures play in preventing CBW proliferation. This program will continue to include briefings for non-AG countries and regional seminars on export licensing practices with particular emphasis on transshipment countries.

Since entry into force of the CWC, there has been no change in AG membership.

Throughout 1999, the Administration has provided several well-received briefings on the AG to staff of the House International Relations Committee and Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

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