

Foreword

Early in the 1990s the Argentine Republic launched an aggressive anti-proliferation policy, at both national and international level. By way of summary, it is worth noting that during the past few years, the country ratified the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the NPT (Non-Proliferation Treaty) and the Chemical Weapons Convention, and joined the MTCR (Missile Technology Control Regime), the Australia Group, the Nuclear Suppliers Group and more recently, the Wassenaar Group.

The Argentine position can be summarized by stating that from having been a country accused of contributing to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, we have become a reliable country, which has given us access to the expertise and importation of technology which was previously forbidden to us.

The political commitments which our country made at international level led to a rethink of the role played by Intelligence, faced with the phenomenon of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the illegal sale of conventional weapons.

Currently, the Secretariat for which I am responsible, through the “Science, Technology and Proliferation” section of the Foreign Intelligence Directorate, is charged with monitoring all aspects of proliferation. This office provides support for the members of the “National Commission for Sensitive Exports and Military Equipment”.

It should be noted that SIDE is not part of this Commission and under current Argentine legislation its task is to “warn” the Executive Power and the above-mentioned Commission about any person, entity, event and/or process which might actually or potentially violate the current legislative framework on anti-proliferation.

In this context, the Secretariat for which I am responsible takes the view that the systematic accumulation of data and its assessment according to Intelligence criteria is the best strategy for preventing proliferation.

Hence the importance of this seminar, jointly organized with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), a body which considers this problem to be of major importance and which organized a similar meeting last year in Rio de Janeiro, in conjunction with the Brazilian Intelligence

Service, an occasion on which our Secretariat presented a paper on the “Role of the Intelligence Services in the Enforcement of National Anti-Proliferation Legislation”.

The Buenos Aires seminar proved fruitful for us all; all the participants came away from the meeting with a deeper understanding of the different aspects of the phenomenon of proliferation. They were also able to exchange views with colleagues working to counter this element of international instability which is undermining international security.

It is only by working together and exchanging information that it will be possible to combat the activities which threaten peace, such as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons. I am inviting you to join this fight. Our security and that of the entire international community is at stake.

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