

**NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT****STATUS REPORT ON THE VERIFICATION INFORMATION SYSTEM****Introduction**

1. The Verification Information System (VIS) is the information system that has been developed by the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) to manage all verification-related information and to support its verification activities.
2. The concept for the development of the VIS was presented by the Director-General in a Note to the Executive Council (hereinafter “the Council”) at its Fortieth Session (EC-40/S/2, dated 27 January 2005). Further Notes from the Director-General to the Council at its Forty-Second (EC-42/S/3, dated 2 September 2005), Fifty-First (EC-51/S/2, dated 20 November 2007), Fifty-Fifth (EC-55/S/3, dated 30 January 2009), Fifty-Ninth (EC-59/S/3, dated 1 February 2010), Sixty-Third (EC-63/S/4, dated 20 January 2011), and Sixty-Seventh Sessions (EC-67/S/2, dated 25 January 2012) provided updates on the status of the development of the VIS.

Status of the Verification Information System

3. As the key business-enabling technology platform supporting verification activities, the VIS is continually being improved to streamline business processes and to increase analytical capabilities.
4. In 2012, the Secretariat continued to develop the VIS, with a particular focus on strengthening the integration between existing systems, enabling better sharing of information, and enhancing the mechanisms for ensuring the quality of data.
5. As a result of the work carried out in regard to improving the quality of the data (previously reported to the Council (EC-67/S/2)), the Secretariat finalised a data-quality management plan for the Verification Division and implemented a data-quality framework for the VIS in order to establish a proactive approach to the handling of data-quality issues.
6. In 2012, the Secretariat started work on enhancing the inspection-planning module and other related modules in order to improve the efficiency and the effectiveness of the analysis of data, including data related to inspection reports. Preliminary work on bringing about a better sharing of information was achieved through the completion of another project that delivered improvements to the inspection-planning and declaration-evaluation modules.



Electronic declarations

7. In 2012, the Secretariat observed that States Parties demonstrated a continued interest in the submission of declarations in electronic form. The project team tasked with overseeing the electronic declarations tool for National Authorities (EDNA) has continued to work on improving EDNA; this work is based on requests received from States Parties during user-group forums (see S/882/2010, dated 1 November 2010), regional workshops, and training sessions.
8. As previously reported by the Director-General to the Council (EC-70/DG.18, dated 25 September 2012), a new version of EDNA was made available to States Parties in September 2012. The new version (2.5) includes a number of enhancements to EDNA, especially in relation to its reporting and data-analysis capabilities. States Parties have identified these as important elements, and have welcomed new features that are aimed at increasing the overall user-friendliness of the tool. This new version is available on the OPCW extranet and was provided, in compact disc (CD) format, during the Seventeenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties, during which dedicated training sessions were also organised.
9. As previously reported by Director-General to the Council (EC-69/DG.11, dated 10 July 2012), the third user-group forum for EDNA was organised on the sidelines of the Sixty-Ninth Session of the Council. The event provided an opportunity for interactive discussions both among participating States Parties and between the Secretariat and States Parties. The event focussed on an initiative being undertaken to introduce a new mechanism for secure electronic transmission of declarations. Based on the discussions during the event and the results of the survey conducted prior to it, the Secretariat took note of the fact that States Parties expressed a strong interest in this initiative and that they continued to encourage the Secretariat to continue work in this area. The Secretariat has reported the outcomes of the forum in more detail in an earlier Note (S/1047/2012, dated 19 October 2012).

Further information

10. The Secretariat considers the VIS to be an established system. It is in routine use and the main development activities have been completed. As a key enterprise software application that supports all verification activities, the VIS will be subject to continual improvement, with maintenance and enhancement activities carried out as subprojects. In the future, the Secretariat will continue to report only on key developments, such as new releases of EDNA software, developments with regard to electronic declarations, and reports of the user-group forum, and will make information readily available through the external server.
11. Information on the VIS and on EDNA can be found on the external server of the OPCW, and will be updated as new information becomes available. Questions about the VIS or EDNA can also be sent to a dedicated e-mail address (vis@opcw.org); interested States Parties can also make enquiries by ringing the OPCW central telephone number (+31 (0)70 416 3000) and asking for the EDNA help desk.