

**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), Sixty-Seventh (EC-67/S/2, dated 25 January 2012), and Seventy-First (EC-71/S/1, dated 16 January 2013) Sessions 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 2013, 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 efficiency of data transmission and processing.
5. As a result of the work carried out in regard to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the analysis of data, including data related to inspection reports (previously reported to the Council (EC-71/S/1)), the Secretariat finalised the first phase of VIS improvements to the inspection-planning and declaration-evaluation modules. In doing so, the Secretariat focused on enhancements in the storage, processing, and data analysis of inspection-related information, with a view to continuing the work in remaining areas in the year 2014, focusing on strengthening integration with other VIS modules.



Electronic declarations

6. In 2013, 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 this software tool, on the basis of requests received from States Parties during user-group forums (S/882/2010, dated 1 November 2010 and S/1047/2012, dated 19 October 2012), regional workshops, and training sessions. These improvements have also been reported by the Director-General to the Council (EC-70/DG.18, dated 25 September 2012).
7. In January 2014, a new version of EDNA (3.0) has been made available to States Parties. The new version includes a dedicated module for the declaration of Schedule 1 facilities and activities. It is envisaged that this tool can contribute to a further reduction in hard-copy declarations and improve the timeliness of declarations. In addition, the new version, which is available on the OPCW external server, includes several corrections of issues identified by the States Parties in the previous version of EDNA (2.5). The pre-release version was presented to the States Parties during the Eighteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties, during which dedicated training sessions were also organised.
8. As previously reported by the Director-General to the Council (EC-74/DG.20, dated 8 October 2013), the Secretariat has continued to work towards the establishment of the secure electronic transmission system, through the Secure Information Exchange (SIX) project. The main objective of the project is to establish a secure electronic channel for the exchange of information, including that of a classified nature, between States Parties and the Secretariat. In its first phase, the project is focused primarily on transmission of declaration-related documents. The pilot programme of this project, involving States Parties from various regions, was successfully completed in 2013 and the system is planned to be available for the interested States Parties in time for the annual declaration of past activities for 2013. Further details regarding procedural and technical aspects of the utilisation of the system will be provided to the States Parties through the dedicated pages on the OPCW external server. The States Parties can also contact the Secretariat for further questions using the contact information below.
9. As previously announced by Director-General to the Council (EC-74/DG.20), in November 2013 the Secretariat organised the fourth EDNA user-group forum as part of the Fifteenth Annual Meeting of the National Authorities. The participants received an update on the new version of EDNA and discussed the SIX project in detail. The representatives of the National Authorities had the opportunity to share their experiences regarding electronic declarations and the secure electronic transmission of information. A detailed report of the fourth user-group forum has been made available to States Parties (S/1146/2014, dated 7 January 2014).

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 secure information exchange, and reports of the user-group forum.

11. Information on the VIS, EDNA, and SIX can be found on the OPCW external server, 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); questions concerning SIX can be sent to the e-mail address six@opcw.org. Interested States Parties can also make enquiries by calling the OPCW central telephone number (+31 (0)70 416 3000) and asking for the EDNA or SIX help desk.

--- 0 ---