



Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG)

At a Glance

The Nuclear Suppliers Group is a group of potential nuclear supplier countries that [follow](#) guidelines for nuclear-related exports in efforts to promote nuclear non-proliferation while complying with Article IV of the NPT requirements to foster cooperation in peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Since participation is voluntary, there are 48 “[participating governments](#).”

History

The [1975 “peaceful” detonation of a nuclear device by India](#) illustrated that nuclear technology could still feasibly be diverted for non-peaceful purposes. This imposed pressure on states possessing advanced nuclear technology to implement stronger export and import regulations. In response, [the Zangger Committee](#) members helped to establish the NSG to provide further regulation of nuclear materials and equipment. The NSG came up with two sets of guidelines to which participating governments are strongly encouraged to adhere, the first part being published in 1978 in response to India’s explosion and the second published in 1992 in response to the discovery of Iraq’s illicit use of dual-use imports.

Overview

Although not legally binding itself, the NSG guidelines are in accordance with international, legally binding tools of non-proliferation such as the NPT and are implemented by each participating government in accordance with their own national laws. Individual decisions on export license granting are done at the national level. The NSG also follows the [no undercut policy](#), meaning if one participant denies an export to a particular destination, that information is shared with other participants so they can also deny the request if it is made to another participant.

Part I of the guidelines, published as IAEA document [INFCIRC/254, Part 1](#), lists materials and technologies made for nuclear use, including fissile materials, nuclear reactors and equipment, and reprocessing and enrichment equipment. Annex A lists trigger list items, while Annex B has clarifications of trigger list items.

Part II, published as IAEA document [INFCIRC/254, Part 2](#), lists dual-use goods, including machine tools and lasers.

Each of the 48 participating governments voluntarily agreed to facilitate open communication among one another regarding their exports to non-nuclear weapon states. Additionally, it is expected that the participating governments forgo nuclear trade with governments that do not subject themselves to confidence-building international measures and inspections.

How the NSG Impacts Nuclear Security

The NSG provides further clarity for nuclear weapon states and the guidelines promote effective implementation of peaceful nuclear cooperation that is consistent with pre-existing non-proliferation norms. The open channels of communication among participants strengthens the international solidarity in transfers of sensitive materials. The clarifications provided by the NSG encourage assurance of compliance with non-proliferation standards.

How the NSG Today

India and Pakistan have both [formally submitted bids](#) to become participating governments but have been denied each time due to not being NPT members. India has [claimed](#) it seeks formal participation to have access to raw nuclear materials to develop its civil nuclear power capacity.

The NSG holds an annual plenary meeting and maintains the document “The Nuclear Suppliers Group: Its Origins, Role, and Activities”, regularly published and updated as IAEA document [INFCIRC/539](#), to facilitate outreach and transparency.