



I would like to start by outlining what the MTCR is and where it fits in the overall structure of International Export Control Regimes.

As you are all aware, the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and their means of delivery remains an ever-present threat to international peace and security. Multilateral tools and regimes which can help to raise awareness of proliferation and, indeed, prevent it, have long held an important role in international security. As the world becomes more and more interconnected, the MTCR constitutes a key instrument of international efforts to prevent proliferation of WMD and of the missiles that carry them.

The MTCR is a dynamic regime which, through the cooperation of experts from 35 participating states, adapts to changing circumstances and challenges. Since its formation in 1987, it has evolved to meet the changing nature of global proliferation threats. In 1992, the MTCR's original focus on missiles for nuclear weapons delivery was extended to an additional focus on the proliferation of missiles for the delivery of all types of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), i.e., nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. And in 2002, partner countries agreed to expand their mandate to include preventing terrorists from acquiring missile technology.

The regime is unique in the sense that it focuses on delivery means rather than the weapons themselves, as many other export control regimes do. I should also emphasise that the intention of the MTCR is not to impede either technological development or trade, but to limit the risk of these activities contributing to the proliferation of WMDs.

The two pillars of the MTCR are its Guidelines and the Technical Annex. The former provides policy guidelines, and the latter sets out a list of controlled goods, software, and technology.

The Technical Annex divides controlled goods into two categories. 'Category 1' items, which are unmanned delivery systems capable of delivering a payload of at least 500 kg to a distance of at least 300 km; these are subject to an unconditional strong presumption of denial regardless of the purpose of the export. 'Category 2' items include other less-sensitive and dual-use components, and such items are subject to licensing requirements that take into consideration the non-proliferation factors specified in the Guidelines.

In terms of our programme of work, the MTCR's main meeting is the annual policy-level Plenary meeting, which is held to discuss and take decisions on all relevant issues for the regime. All decisions are made by consensus. Three groups – which if you like form the core of the MTCR - hold meetings that are ordinarily scheduled in conjunction with the annual Plenary; these are the Information Exchange Meeting (IEM), the Licensing and Enforcement Experts Meeting (LEEM), and the Technical Experts Meeting (TEM).

Over the course of its 31-year history, the regime has extended its membership from 7 to 35 states. Our guidelines have been included in a number of UN Security Council Resolutions, and more and more states have agreed to adhere to the guidelines as international best practice for the control of relevant technology.

I would now like to discuss current activities of our joint Irish-Icelandic Co-Chairmanship of the MTCR.

A very successful plenary meeting was held in Dublin last October.

The main purpose of the meeting was to review and evaluate the MTCR's activities over the last 12 months and to intensify the efforts of Partners to prevent the proliferation of unmanned delivery systems capable of delivering WMD. Partners devoted increased attention to Intangible Technology Transfer (ITT), Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), Catch All Controls, Regional Proliferation and strategic outreach to non-MTCR countries.

Partners conducted extensive discussions on and expressed concern about global missile proliferation activities, in particular ongoing missile programmes in the Middle East, Northeast Asia, and South Asia, which might fuel missile proliferation activities elsewhere.

Partners also encouraged relevant regional bodies and institutions to pay attention to the role of export controls in preventing the proliferation of missiles capable of carrying WMD.

In addition, partners reiterated their firm commitment to exercise extreme vigilance when controlling transfers that could contribute to the DPRK's ballistic missile programme, in response to the drastic escalation of ballistic missile launches and significant missile technology development by the DPRK since February 2016. Colleagues will be aware of significant developments that have taken place in recent weeks on the Korean peninsula.

The Ireland-Iceland Chairship have also made outreach to non-Partners a priority; the Co-Chairs were very pleased, in fact, to visit Islamabad just last month for a very constructive engagement with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Co-Chairs also visited the Asia Export Control Seminar which was held in Tokyo last February, addressed the Seminar and took part in a panel discussion. The Co-Chairs also met with representatives of Malaysia on the margins of the Seminar. We were very pleased to see representatives from eight non-Partner countries, including Pakistan, at the successful Technical Outreach Meeting in Reykjavik in March.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

For three decades, the MTCR has proved itself an effective and important mechanism in non-proliferation; we are very proud of the work we have done so far. But we must not be complacent. As always, the regime faces significant challenges, and it is crucial that we continue to weather them.

Intangible technology transfer (ITT) has often been highlighted as posing a significant threat to international non-proliferation and security. The MTCR continues to discuss our approach and challenge the old-fashioned mind-set of traditional export controls that deal exclusively in tangible goods. We must modernise and we must adapt if we are to succeed.

There is also a growing need to expand our engagement with industry and academia in the development of effective export controls. Corporate officers, producers, scientists, professors and anyone else involved in the development or sale of technology could be vulnerable to proliferators. The innovation of proliferators has grown apace and we must not only keep up but anticipate and innovate.

We are committed to continuing our outreach efforts and to encouraging non-partners to declare their adherence to our guidelines. It is our view that these represent international best practice and that the adherence of as many states as possible to those guidelines will limit the risk of proliferation and represent an important step in maintaining international security.

Thank you!