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Motivational Impediments and Multilateral Inspections: The Case of UNSCOM

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Abstract. This article describes impediments to multilateral inspections that are sanctioned by a multilateral political entity to proscribe the development, production, storage, deployment, and employment of weapons of mass destruction.

You are an aspiring inspector on a multilateral team sanctioned by a multilateral political entity. The purpose of the team is to proscribe the development, production, deployment, and employment of weapons of mass destruction. The host country of the inspection may not be a willing participant. Based on the seven-year experience of the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM), you may run into a few problems.

Motivational impediments of team members. Some members of your team will be most interested in their financial remuneration. They will not want to endanger access to this remuneration. Given that energetic and proactive inspecting may well lead to complaints by the host country including demands that "offenders" be removed from your team, members with a significant financial motivation may be more likely to sin through omission instead of commission—doing too little as opposed to pushing the envelope of inspecting expertise. (This "doing too little" also seems to be the adaptive bias of many survivors of careers in organizations.) On the other hand, those who are forced to give up some or all of their remuneration to their sponsoring countries may be more susceptible to financial and other inducements to act in a manner consonant with the needs of the host country as opposed to the sanctioning multilateral entity.

Some members of your team may be intelligence assets—most likely collectors or agents of influence—controlled by the host country or by their sponsoring countries. They may even be assets of the multilateral entity that may at least partially have an agenda divergent from the public purpose of your inspection team. Such members may intentionally act at cross-purposes to your team.

Some members may have personality and professional agendas that induce behavior contrary to the purpose of your team. Personality agendas may include the needs to provoke confrontation, to find duplicity regardless of its significance or validity, to conform or not to conform with procedures, or to create or not to create enemy images. Professional agendas may include then needs to maintain prior positions or to seek more prestigious or desired ones. Other personal and professional issues include concerns about meeting one's preferred life style and challenging styles of stress management that can significantly affect inspection abilities and motivation. And, of course, there are the common problems of personality chemistries, envies, jealousies, cross-cultural communication inadequacies, and the like.

Motivational impediments of sponsoring countries and of the sanctioning multilateral entity. Motivations may change over the course of time. Political stances that seemed appropriate through a strategic-moral calculus may seem quite different in the light of events sometime after the initial commitment to mandate and support inspection. In other words, sponsors and sanctioners may decide to work contrary to the purpose of your inspection team—sometimes unbeknownst to that team. The
same may occur through a phenomenon that seems to be captured by the psychological construct of habituation.

Motivational impediments of the host country. The host country may be an unwilling participant because what you intend to proscribe it desires to prescribe. Even if this were not the case, the host country may view its senses of sovereignty, nationalism, ethnocentrism, xenophobia, tradition, and self-efficacy as being violated. The consequential probability of deception is high. The consequential effect of deception may only be limited by the host's deceptive and the team's counterdeceptive abilities.