

the holy see and the npt

The agreement between the Holy See and the International Atomic Energy Agency for the application of safeguards in connection with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was signed in Vienna on 26 June 1972.

The preamble to the agreement states that the Holy See "enjoys exclusive sovereignty and jurisdiction over the Vatican City State, of which the Roman Pontiff is the sovereign". The Vatican City State, which covers a very small area, is itself "ever and in all cases a neutral and inviolable territory", and since 18 June 1960 the whole of the Vatican City has been included in the Register of Cultural Property under Special Protection in the Event of Armed Conflict, which is deposited with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and it has the rights and obligations which follow from its relations with third States.

The Vatican City State is thus strictly adhering to the spirit of neutrality which characterizes the policy and action of the Holy See in the international community. Nevertheless, as pointed out by Monseigneur Oriano Quilici, Resident Representative of the Holy See to the Agency, "this by no means implies that the Vatican City State cannot accept the controls and safeguards provided for under Article III of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in respect of all contracting parties".

Mgr. Quilici, speaking at the signing ceremony; on his left, Dr. Eklund. Photo: IAEA.

