

# The Future of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms

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## Preface

The idea of recording, assessing and controlling the acquisitions of conventional armaments has a long history in the international community, and draws upon a number of different rationales. It is relevant to traditional strategic concerns about balance and confidence, conflict avoidance and post-conflict stabilization. It is linked with efforts to bridle excessive and misplaced military spending, especially in the case of developing countries. In recent years the value of publicly available data for governmental accountability and democratic control has been stressed, and since 11 September 2001 the importance of checking transfers to non-legitimate recipients—criminals, terrorists, and failed or irresponsible states—has been powerfully underlined.

The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA) was created by a General Assembly Resolution in 1991 and has now completed 10 years of operation. The General Assembly session of September 2003 should seize the chance to assess its results, frankly address its limitations and decide on the best way ahead. In this Policy Paper Siemon Wezeman identifies both the limited areas of the UNROCA's success—notably, in establishing a global norm for transparency in arms transfers—and the factors which have stopped it both from making any real headway on its original goals and from adapting itself the better to do so. His realistic conclusion is that if the UN finds itself unable (for largely political reasons) to make a radical overhaul of the UNROCA at this time, international energies might better be directed to pursuing the goals of transparency and control in regional and other specialized settings which are, in fact, fully compatible with the UNROCA's existence and aims as first defined.

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Alyson J. K. Bailes  
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## Acronyms and abbreviations

ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations
AU	African Union
CAR	Central African Republic
CBM	Confidence-building measure
CD	Conference on Disarmament
CFE	Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (Treaty)
COCOM	Coordinating Committee on Multilateral Export Controls
CSCE	Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe
DDA	Department for Disarmament Affairs (UN)
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
km	kilometre
mm	millimetre
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OAS	Organization of American States
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
P5	Permanent Five (members of the UN Security Council)
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SALW	Small arms and light weapons
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNROCA	United Nations Register of Conventional Arms
WA	Wassenaar Arrangement
WMD	Weapons of mass destruction



# 1. Introduction

In December 1991, in Resolution 46/36 L, the United Nations General Assembly established the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA), a ‘universal and non-discriminatory Register of Conventional Arms’ to which nations were invited to report annually, on a voluntary basis, their imports and exports of certain types of conventional weapons during the previous calendar year.<sup>1</sup> The main purpose of the Register was stated as being ‘to prevent excessive and destabilizing accumulations of arms’. Resolution 46/36 L also mentioned as goals:<sup>2</sup> (a) implementing new confidence-building measures, (b) the reduction of arms transfers (which by the mid-1980s had reached their highest level since 1950),<sup>3</sup> (c) addressing the problem of the illicit and covert arms trade, including its effects on human rights, (d) reducing the burden placed by arms acquisitions on countries’ economies, and (e) the reduction of military expenditures.<sup>4</sup> In practical terms, nations were to start reporting in 1992 on weapons delivered in 1991, and the process was to be reviewed periodically by a group of government experts to consider the need for improvement.

Transparency in arms transfers had been an issue on the UN agenda since its inception. The predecessor of the UN, the League of Nations, had already collected and published data on arms transfers between 1925 and 1938. After World War II, transparency as a confidence-building measure (CBM) between countries did not at first feature prominently on the new UN’s agenda, but by the late 1970s a debate on transparency in armaments was slowly developing in the UN framework.<sup>5</sup> By the end of the cold war, about 1989–91, this debate had evolved and the end of the

<sup>1</sup>UN General Assembly Resolution 46/36 L, 6 Dec. 1991, as well as other UN resolutions and documents related to the UNROCA, a database with the data reported to the UN and other UN information on the UNROCA are available at URL <<http://disarmament.un.org/cab/register.html>>. The weapons on which data are requested are divided into 7 categories: battle tanks, armoured combat vehicles, large-calibre artillery systems, combat aircraft, attack helicopters, warships, and missiles and missile launchers. For a full description of these categories see Resolution 46/36 L, reproduced in appendix 2.

<sup>2</sup> These goals are also mentioned in UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/43/75, 7 Dec. 1988, and in other discussions leading to the establishment of the UNROCA.

<sup>3</sup>According to data from the SIPRI Arms Transfers project, URL <<http://projects.sipri.se/armstrade>>. The regulation and reduction of conventional armaments are a long-standing goal of the UN, established in 1946 in UN Resolution 41(1), 14 Dec. 1946.

<sup>4</sup> Goals (d) and (e) may appear to be similar, but are not; arms acquisitions place a direct financial burden on the economy, but they are also an indirect economic burden. For example, the operation of modern weapons often requires highly trained mechanics, which may lead to a shortage of trained mechanics in more productive economic sectors.

<sup>5</sup>Since the late 1960s, comprehensive data on global transfers of weapons have been collected and published by a number of independent research institutes such as SIPRI, and US government agencies such as the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA). ACDA became a part of the US State Department on 1 Apr. 1999; see URL <<http://www.state.gov/www/global/arms>>. Global overviews of inventories were published by, most notably, Jane’s Information Group, URL <<http://www.janes.com/defence>>, and the Institute of International Strategic Studies (IISS), URL <<http://www.iiss.org>>.

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East–West rivalry had converted Europe from a seat of confrontation militating against transparency to something of a model area for openness and arms reduction. (Indeed, the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, CFE Treaty, signed in 1990, was to become a significant technical model as well as general inspiration for the UNROCA.) There was a natural impulse to explore the potential for similar processes of reconciliation and the building of cooperative security in other regions of the world, while at the conceptual level European experience seemed to underline the importance of arms controls and of transparency measures (not just in the military sphere) for promoting such transitions. In late 1988 the General Assembly included the issue of international arms transfers and transparency in its plenary meeting discussions, and adopted a resolution specifically requesting the UN Secretary-General to study ways and means to promote transparency in international arms transfers.<sup>6</sup>

This set of questions had still not, however, assumed sufficient priority in the eyes of most Western governments to guarantee real progress at the global level, and it might never have done so but for the shock of extra-European events which rudely interrupted the post-cold war honeymoon. The war between Iraq and Iran during 1980–88 had already been a contributing factor to concern about the accumulation of major armaments. Now Iraq chose to use its massive military capability—acquired in large measure from Western suppliers and the former Soviet Union and through transactions that were perfectly legal at the time—for an unprovoked invasion of Kuwait, in August 1990, which was to involve all Western permanent members of the UN Security Council in a costly and risky counter-intervention. The salience of the arms transfers issue rocketed overnight and world leaders cast around for actions which could be taken fast to militate against such surprises in future. By the time the Permanent Five (P5) members of the UN Security Council met at Paris in July 1991, rapid movement to establishing a global Register in the UN framework had come to look like a political imperative.<sup>7</sup>

These aspects of the genesis of Resolution 46/36 L are important for understanding both the UNROCA's content and its imperfections.<sup>8</sup> The focus on major con-

<sup>6</sup> UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/43/75 (note 2). These discussions were part of the agenda item 'general and complete disarmament' which is normally included on the agenda of all General Assembly meetings.

<sup>7</sup> See the remarks by British Prime Minister John Major and other participants at the Paris meeting, archived at URL <[http://projects.sipri.se/expcon/un\\_d1.htm](http://projects.sipri.se/expcon/un_d1.htm)>.

<sup>8</sup> For a history of the development of the UNROCA see Laurance, E. J., Wezeman, S. T. and Wulf, H., *Arms Watch: SIPRI Report on the First Year of the UN Register of Conventional Arms*, SIPRI Research Report no. 6 (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1993); and Goldblat, J., *Arms Control: The New Guide to Negotiations and Agreements* (Sage: London, 2002), pp. 246–48. Chapters on the UNROCA have been included in all SIPRI Yearbooks since 1993; most of these chapters are available at URL <[http://projects.sipri.se/armstrade/at\\_previous\\_yb\\_chapters.html](http://projects.sipri.se/armstrade/at_previous_yb_chapters.html)>. All UN documents related to the establishment of the UNROCA, including verbatim transcripts of discussions between 1991 and 1994 in the General Assembly, the First Committee and the Conference on Disarmament, are included in Miller, C. D. (compiler), *The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms: Origins and Evolution 1988–1994* (Monterey Institute of International Studies: Monterey, Calif., [1995]). See also the Department of Peace Studies, Bradford University, the British Bradford



ventional equipment, for example, reflects the role it had played in Iraq's two wars, as well as the influence of the CFE. The decision to base the register on voluntary reporting was not foreordained—the options of a political commitment and even a legally binding regime had also been assessed—but was adopted as offering the fastest way to make a start on what it was assumed would be a continuing and steadily strengthening process in the UN framework. There was a general view that anything unclear or missing in the UNROCA's mandate and way of operating could be sorted out later.

In any case, the UNROCA was not expected to stand alone as a solution to the range of problems highlighted in the 1991 Persian Gulf War. A concurrent boost was given to the building of control and transparency regimes for non-conventional weapons (development of the 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention, reinvigoration of the 1968 nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and of export control regimes for materials relevant to weapons of mass destruction, WMD), while the P5 also worked to develop general guidelines for conventional arms exports—with results ultimately contributing, among other things, to the European Union (EU)'s 1998 Code of Conduct for Arms Exports.<sup>9</sup> It became clear that a successor would be needed for the Coordinating Committee on Multilateral Export Controls (COCOM) regime of cold war times limiting Western high-technology exports to strategic adversaries, and the eventual result was the Wassenaar Arrangement (WA) on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies.<sup>10</sup> Concern over arms transfers also informed regional stabilization efforts such as the Madrid process aiming for peace in the Middle East (although not including Iran or Iraq) where one of the three negotiating 'baskets' was devoted to Arms Control and Regional Security.

Looking back over the 10 years that have passed since (and which included three meetings of the group of government experts charged with developing the UNROCA), what stands out is that the UN Register has performed worse than the great majority of these other initiatives both in terms of reaching its targets, and of capacity for self-reform and adaptation. After its initial success in securing near-universal acceptance of the principle of transparency in armaments, it failed to secure comprehensive participation and consistent observance; to harvest genuinely useful data; to analyse it; or to achieve practical follow-up in terms of identifying and correcting potentially destabilizing build-ups of arms. It may be argued that some of the UNROCA's deficit in performance reflects the inherent difficulties of disciplining conventional arms transactions at global level: including the lack of a clear moral and legal base for restraint such as exists in the case of weapons of mass destruction, and the differential significance and impact of such controls for

Arms Register Studies (BARS) project, co-researchers Chalmers, M. and Greene, O., URL <<http://www.bradford.ac.uk/acad/peace/pubs/bars.htm>>.

<sup>9</sup> The P5's Guidelines for Conventional Arms Transfers of 18 Oct. 1991 are available at URL <[http://projects.sipri.se/expcon/unp5\\_london91.htm](http://projects.sipri.se/expcon/unp5_london91.htm)>. See chapter 3 for a discussion of the EU Code of Conduct for Arms Exports.

<sup>10</sup> The Wassenaar Arrangement is an informal arrangement that began operating in Sep. 1996; participating states are listed at URL <<http://www.wassenaar.org/welcomepage.html>>.

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different regions (as a result of industrial status and security environment, presence or absence of other regulatory regimes, and so on). Even so, the gap between expectation and results in the case of this particular instrument is striking and demands further examination.

The UN General Assembly meeting in late 2003 will discuss and, it is to be hoped, act effectively on the results of the fourth review of the UNROCA by the group of government experts, which is scheduled to be completed by August 2003.<sup>11</sup> With arms and technology transfers coming back into the international limelight as a consequence of the 'new threats' agenda (and of yet another Iraq crisis), the time is ripe for an extensive and rigorous assessment. The following chapters look in turn at the problematic features of the UNROCA and the way they have affected the results and handling of the register over the past decade; and at the options for a fresh attempt to meet the goals set in 1991 either through major renewal of the UNROCA itself or by other means.

<sup>11</sup> The 3 expert groups met in 1994, 1997 and 2000, respectively. In addition, a Panel of Governmental Technical Experts met and reported in 1992. The reports from all 4 groups are available at URL <<http://disarmament.un.org/cab/register.html#item3>>.

## 2. The UNROCA's first 10 years: a critical evaluation

Resolution 46/36 L (1991) was passed in the General Assembly with 150 votes in favour and none against (Cuba and Iraq abstained and 12 member states did not participate in the vote),<sup>12</sup> but there was some disagreement on the appropriate level of transparency, as shown in the final text of the resolution.<sup>13</sup> The results represented a compromise in several senses.

First, the UN Register was limited to major conventional weapons because these were believed to be the most useful weapons for aggression and therefore the most likely to cause a destabilizing arms build-up. In addition, major conventional weapons are the most visible individual items and therefore the most transparent weapons in open sources, so in general providing official data on them does not seriously compromise secrecy.

Second, the resolution invited countries to report only on weapons obtained via imports, not on those acquired through other means. Most notably, it did not invite countries to report on weapons obtained through national production. In addition, data on inventories were not requested.

Third, the reporting mechanism was purely voluntary and included no clauses for inspection or control. Since both arms exporters and arms importers are requested to provide data, it is possible to 'cross-check' the data provided. In theory, the reports from arms exporters should correspond with those from arms importers. In practice, however, cross-checking the reports is problematic, since countries use different definitions of the term 'transfer'. They also have different understandings of when a transfer can be said to occur and what weapons are to be reported to the UNROCA. An additional problem is that, while most arms exporters report, many importers do not, leaving one side of the transfer unreported and making cross-checking impossible.<sup>14</sup>

Fourth, the resolution requested only minimal data: the name of the supplier and recipient countries; and the numbers and general categories of weapon. The model numbers of the weapons and notes on their age and quality could be provided voluntarily as background information.

Fifth, the resolution left open the possibility of improvements to the UNROCA reporting mechanism, to be discussed and decided upon at an unspecified later

<sup>12</sup> The 12 states that did not participate were Antigua and Barbuda, China, Djibouti, El Salvador, Grenada, Laos, Myanmar (Burma), Rwanda, Sudan, Syria, Viet Nam and Zaire. El Salvador and Sudan later advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour. Resolution 46/36 L (note 1).

<sup>13</sup> See, for example, Wulf, H., 'The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms', *SIPRI Yearbook 1993: World Armaments and Disarmament* (Oxford University Press: Oxford), pp. 534–36. Resistance to even the general concept of transparency is evident in the record of non-participation of countries such as Saudi Arabia and North Korea.

<sup>14</sup> See also Laurance, Wezeman and Wulf (note 8), pp. 25–38.

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date.<sup>15</sup> It stipulated that a review of the process was to be held within two years, but it did not specify how the results of the review were to be used.

Where content is concerned, the result was a register containing data which were largely already available from other open sources, official and unofficial, and often in greater detail. While some data were new and provided some interesting insights, especially data on transfers from some East European countries and China, most of the information was and still is available in open sources and was being collected by organizations such as SIPRI. The main advantage of the UNROCA data is the fact that they are official government data, which are more difficult for governments to deny and therefore more useful in official discussions. This advantage has become less important, since many of the reporting governments have provided or are now providing official data elsewhere. The UNROCA also does not include acquisitions through means other than imports. Notably, acquisition from national production is not included, even though for some countries, especially those in areas where deep-rooted conflicts exist, domestic production is as important or even more important than imports. For example, India, which is embroiled in a serious conflict with Pakistan, reports every year to the UNROCA, but its total reported imports are small because India produces rather than imports most of the weapons included in the UNROCA categories.

Where structure is concerned, the compromise of agreeing to a UN Register that left unaddressed issues such as weapons of mass destruction and procurement from national production gave many countries the expectation that the UNROCA would be only a first step. Many countries, such as members of the League of Arab States<sup>16</sup> and some West European states, believed that their reservations about the existing UNROCA could and would be addressed properly within a few years as the agreed review process produced recommendations.

### **The UNROCA's struggle with its heritage**

Over its first 10 years of operation, the UNROCA has helped to provide information on arms transfers to certain countries that have hitherto been poorly covered by other sources, such as imports by Angola and exports by China. It has given strength to national and international discussions on the need for transparency in arms transfers, especially in countries where the debate was virtually non-

<sup>15</sup> Participation also became a compromise. The UN invited all states, including two non-UN members (Switzerland, which joined the UN in 2002, and the Holy See), to participate—with the exception of Taiwan. Inviting Taiwan to participate would have contradicted the 'one China' policy of the UN, even though the tension between China and Taiwan, one of the few cases in which there is a high risk of open armed conflict between 2 states, could be greatly relieved by openness about armaments.

<sup>16</sup> The members of the League of Arab States are Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

existent.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, the verdict must be that the UNROCA has achieved few of its stated practical goals. It is difficult to identify arms build-ups using UNROCA data, let alone prevent such build-ups; the UN Register has neither provided the data needed for confidence building nor given much impetus for CBMs; it has not contributed to the reduction of arms transfers nor in any way helped to address the problem of the illicit arms trade and its effect on human rights; and it has not alleviated the military burden on countries' economies.

The reasons for this failure lie in the set of original limitations, outlined above, and in the UN's inability to complete and develop the UNROCA so as to overcome them in the way that many states had hoped. The various aspects of the problem are revisited in more detail below.

### **Failure to provide useful data**

The main goal of the UNROCA—to prevent destabilizing build-ups of weapons—is impossible to address properly with the data currently provided to it. The UN Register does not include adequate quantitative or qualitative data on the weapons or contextual information on the transfers. Although a growing number of states have voluntarily added useful information in the 'comments' section of their reports, this enrichment of the UNROCA has been uneven because of its voluntary nature and has not even kept pace with the improvements in transparency practice made in more limited contexts (e.g., regional groups and export control regimes) where contributing states are active.

Countries are asked to report to the UNROCA only on seven types of conventional weapons: battle tanks, armoured combat vehicles, large-calibre artillery systems, combat aircraft, attack helicopters, warships, and missiles and missile launchers. Resolution 46/36 L includes a specific definition for each category of weapons, but a broad range of weapons can be included within each category. The categories do not include smaller weapons (e.g., artillery under 100-mm calibre, smaller warships and missiles with ranges under 25 km) and countries tend to interpret them inconsistently. For example, transfers of all aircraft designed to carry any type of armament are to be reported, but many transfers of trainer aircraft are not reported even if the aircraft are designed to carry, capable of carrying or used to carry weapons. Other weapons and support equipment are not included in the UNROCA categories even though it is recognized that these can be just as

<sup>17</sup> These fringe benefits of the UNROCA are to some extent unintended. Although transparency is important for the proper workings of a democratic system, the UN resolution does not explicitly state that the data should be available to the general public. It is unclear why the data provided to the UNROCA became public in 1993. In that year the author carried out research on the UNROCA at the former Centre for Disarmament Affairs (CDA), now the Department for Disarmament Affairs (DDA), where the replies (i.e., the data submitted to the UNROCA) are filed and managed—one of the first occasions when someone who was neither a UN employee nor a member of a national delegation to the UN had access to the data. He was, however, not allowed to take photocopies of the replies, but only to take notes. Soon afterwards the decision was taken to make the Secretary-General's report, which includes data submitted to the UNROCA, available to the public.

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important or can be force multipliers.<sup>18</sup> Many countries, particularly African states such as the members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS),<sup>19</sup> maintain that, for them, the real problem of possible destabilization lies not with transfers of the major weapons included in the UNROCA, but in the flow of small arms and light weapons (SALW), which are not included in the UNROCA categories.<sup>20</sup> The importance of other force multipliers, including combat and non-combat systems, is widely recognized and is addressed in the UN Secretary-General's reports on the UNROCA and in the four review reports.<sup>21</sup>

Transfers from abroad are the only method of acquisition for which data are to be reported to the UNROCA.<sup>22</sup> While some countries, mostly West European, also report data on acquisitions from national production (as shown in appendix 1), most do not. For many countries the main method of arms acquisition is importation, but several key actors in regions of tension (China, India, Iran, Israel and South Korea) produce many or even most of the weapons they need.

Details on the transfers reported are minimal. First, the UNROCA invites states to report only the number of weapons transferred per category. It does not invite countries to specify the type of weapon and, while many countries voluntarily provide these details, many others do not. Since each of the seven categories encompasses a broad range of weapons, much can be hidden in reports of transfers: for example, one 'warship' might be anything from a 750-tonne landing ship to a 45 000-tonne aircraft carrier, and one 'artillery system' might be anything from a simple 100-mm anti-aircraft gun to a state-of-the-art self-propelled 155-mm gun.

Another significant problem is that Resolution 46/36 L does not invite states to report details on the age of the weapons, which often makes a substantial difference for the military balance. Some countries indicate that certain weapons are

<sup>18</sup> Force multipliers are non-lethal systems which, when used in conjunction with lethal systems (i.e., weapons), increase the effectiveness of those weapons, for example, by increasing range (air-refuelling aircraft), extending visibility (radar systems) or improving communication (computer networks).

<sup>19</sup> The member states of ECOWAS are Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. See chapter 3 for a brief discussion of the Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Light Weapons in ECOWAS Member States.

<sup>20</sup> Their point is correct in so far as, in many African countries, which often have small and poorly equipped armed forces, the acquisition of 10 000 rifles by an aggressive neighbour with links to rebel groups in neighbouring countries can be very destabilizing. This has been demonstrated in several West African conflicts during the past decade, for example, in Sierra Leone and in Liberia. However, the same 10 000 rifles, or for that matter 100 000 rifles, would make little difference for most of the Middle East or for India-Pakistan relations and threat perceptions.

<sup>21</sup> For a link to the reports see note 11.

<sup>22</sup> There are differences of opinion even regarding the term 'transfer'. The Panel of Governmental Technical Experts 'did not attempt to define arms transfers'. United Nations, Report of the Secretary General on the Register of Conventional Arms, UN document A/47/342, 14 Aug. 1992, p. 10. The panel's statement is cited only as a 'description' and a 'guideline' in United Nations, Department for Disarmament Affairs, *United Nations Register of Conventional Arms 2001 Information Booklet* (UN: New York, 2001), p. 16. The USA did not report most weapons leased or loaned to other countries until 2002 because it did not consider such transfers to be 'transfers of title'. This has left most of the warships transferred abroad by the USA out of the UNROCA. Other transfers, including transfers of some combat aircraft, have also been left out.

second-hand, but most do not. In 2001, for example, 192 cases of arms imports and exports were reported to the UN Register,<sup>23</sup> of which at least 85 can be identified (using the SIPRI arms transfers database and other public sources) as transfers of second-hand equipment. Only 2 of the 192 entries include a comment that a weapon is new, and only one entry (submitted by Jordan) notes that the weapons transferred are 'used'.<sup>24</sup>

In addition, the UNROCA does not ask for the context of arms transfers. There is always a need to replace old weapons with new ones, but data are seldom reported to the UNROCA on which weapons have been deleted from inventories—in contrast, for example, to the Annual Exchange of Military Information of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE),<sup>25</sup> in which countries report what has been acquired, what has been deleted and the sum of these (i.e., the actual inventory). The UNROCA cannot identify build-ups, since only new weapon imports, not existing inventories, are reported. Thus, data from the UNROCA might suggest a massive arms build-up when large numbers of weapons are delivered, when in fact the items may be a replacement for an equal or even a larger number of older weapons. For example, in 1991 and 1992 Greece and Turkey reported the most substantial transfers of tanks in the history of the UNROCA (897 and 966, respectively), but their replies to the UNROCA did not specify how many of the tanks were replacements for older tanks in their inventories. In 1991, *The Military Balance* reported that Greece had 1879 main battle tanks, but in 1996 the same source reported that Greece had only 1735 such tanks. In 1991, *The Military Balance* reported that Turkey had 3783 main battle tanks in its inventory, and in 1996 it reported that Turkey had 4280 such tanks. The total number of main battle tanks in Turkey's arms inventory had increased by 487, not 966 as suggested by the data Turkey submitted in 1991 and 1992 to the UNROCA.<sup>26</sup>

Although the UNROCA has generally failed to provide useful data, it does invite countries to provide additional quantitative and qualitative data as 'additional background information'. Most West European countries, as well as Brazil and Japan, have for many years provided data on their acquisition of weapons that are included in the UNROCA categories but have been acquired through national production. They have also provided data on their inventories of these weapons. Some countries have even provided data on their force structure and deployment; in 1993 Finland and Sweden provided to the UNROCA the data on armed forces deployment that they normally exchange within the OSCE (at that time still called the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, CSCE). Few countries, how-

<sup>23</sup> A total of 192 transfers were reported; in cases in which both sides of the transfer (i.e., both the import and the export) were reported to the UN Register in 2001, the transfer has been counted twice. No attempt has been made to remove duplicate entries that refer to the same transfer.

<sup>24</sup> Compiled from United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, Report of the Secretary General, UN document A/57/221, 17 July 2002.

<sup>25</sup> The participating states of the OSCE are listed at URL <<http://www.osce.org/general/participating-states/>>.

<sup>26</sup> International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), *The Military Balance 1991–1992* (Brassey's: London, 1991), pp. 62 and 73; and IISS, *The Military Balance 1996/97* (Oxford University Press: London, 1996), pp. 59 and 71.

ever, have provided much information to the UN Register on weapons other than those in the seven UNROCA categories. In 2000, the only year in which it reported to the UN Register, Togo provided import and inventory data on weapons within the UNROCA categories and on other weapons, including small arms, but few countries have followed its example. A few countries, such as the Philippines in 1994 and 1998, have also provided data on other weapon categories apparently because they misunderstood the UNROCA requirements.

### **Analysis, verification and follow-up**

The UNROCA has also failed to provide either a structure for analysing and acting upon the data reported, or a structure for improvement of the UN Register.

Acting upon the data provided to the UNROCA is not an easy task. To meet the UN Register's main objective—preventing excessive and destabilizing arms build-ups—there should be a reliable way of measuring the build-ups quantitatively and of assessing them (and their impact upon local and general security) qualitatively. There are, however, no objective criteria in existence to determine which weapons and which quantities are 'excessive and destabilizing'. Using the numbers alone, there is no way to determine what is 'excessive and destabilizing'. Even if the numbers, together with additional information on the quality of the weapons, could be used to identify major imbalances between adversaries, there remains the problem that these data are open to subjective, including political, interpretation and are genuinely ambivalent in their relevance to real security processes.

Probably the clearest illustration of this potential for interpretation is the arming of Iraq in the 1980s, often regarded as the catalyst that brought the UNROCA into being. After the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 and the subsequent threats to other Persian Gulf states, it was clear that a massive accumulation of weapon deliveries—from both Eastern (e.g., Poland and the Soviet Union) and Western (e.g., France, Italy and the United Kingdom) cold war adversaries, as well as other countries (e.g., Brazil, China and North Korea)—during the 1980s had created an excessively armed Iraq which was destabilizing for the region. However, while these deliveries were ongoing in the 1980s, the weapons were seen by suppliers and by countries in the region, such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait (which actually paid for some of the shipments) as stabilizing, countering the threat from revolutionary Iran. Another example of such interpretation was the debate about the East–West balance in both conventional and nuclear weapons throughout the cold war, in which the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) generally believed that quality offset quantity and context played a major role in the organization's assessment of the situation.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> For example, the fact that Warsaw Pact forces had a massive numerical superiority in tanks and artillery was not seen by NATO as excessively destabilizing or dangerous, since NATO tanks and artillery were of better quality and were incorporated in an organizational structure that made much more effective use of them than the structure of the Warsaw Pact forces made of its tanks and artillery. In addition, being on the defensive helped to further offset NATO's numerical inferiority.



Another major structural problem is that the UNROCA has no verification mechanism.<sup>28</sup> It is therefore necessary to use other, often unofficial sources to check the accuracy of the data reported.<sup>29</sup> Only in cases of obvious errors in reporting can the Department for Disarmament Affairs (DDA) ask the reporting country to check its report for errors made while filling in the reporting form (e.g., items placed in the wrong category). As mentioned above, there are often discrepancies between the reports of exporters and importers, but to some extent these can be explained. The notes included with the reporting forms can help to explain discrepancies, and there may be a time delay between a transfer's report by the exporter and by its importer. In addition, obvious mistakes are made, such as the inclusion of transfers of weapons that do not correspond to UNROCA categories, the reporting of planned rather than actual transfers, or the placement of weapons in the wrong categories. Discrepancies such as these are not a serious problem. They may result from misunderstandings about UNROCA reporting procedures or problems in the accounting or administrative procedures used by exporters or importers. Discrepancies may also be the result of a lack of cooperation and coordination between various government agencies. For example, a country's ministry of foreign affairs may submit the information to the UNROCA but obtain data from other government agencies such as customs or defence departments which are not under its control. These discrepancies may create confusion and lessen the usefulness of the data provided to the UNROCA, but they do not render the data completely unusable, certainly not for the purpose of preventing 'excessive and destabilizing accumulations of arms'. It should, indeed, be relatively easy to correct many of these errors through practical steps of guidance and enquiry, especially if the UN DDA is given the authority to take such steps.

### **Coverage and participation**

The fact that participation in the UNROCA is voluntary is also problematic. Countries are not obliged to report or to report fully. This leaves the register incomplete regarding both the number of countries participating and the actual data reported.<sup>30</sup>

While the UN and many other organizations point out that more than half of all countries do participate, many of these countries are in 'safe' regions such as Europe, the Pacific or the Caribbean where the threat of international conflict is very small and where no arms build-ups threatening international relations have taken place since the early 1990s. In addition, many of the reporting countries are in regions where transparency was already established as either an international CBM or as part of national debates on defence policy and budgets before the UNROCA was established. The fact that a number of strategically important

<sup>28</sup> The lack of a verification mechanism is not in itself a failure. Its omission is intended to make the reporting process as non-intrusive as possible in order to avoid deterring countries from reporting.

<sup>29</sup> Some of these unofficial sources are cited in note 5.

<sup>30</sup> Appendix 1 shows which countries report arms procurement data in various data exchange mechanisms that are accessible to other countries.

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countries simply do not report (and do not exchange or publish data through other mechanisms) defeats the purpose of the UNROCA. China, a major recipient of weapons, a country situated in an area of tension and an important supplier of weapons (especially to many areas of conflict and tension), has not reported since 1996. Officially, its failure to report is a protest against US reporting of deliveries to Taiwan, but it is not clear whether this is the only reason. (When the USA reported deliveries to Taiwan in 1996, China protested. The next year the USA reported deliveries to 'the Chinese province of Taiwan', acknowledging that Taiwan was a part of China, but China did not in turn begin to report to the UNROCA.)

Almost the entire Middle East, the region which is often seen as the only real reason for the existence of the UNROCA, does not report. The exceptions are Israel, Jordan and, until 1998, Iran; most countries of the region have never reported to the UN Register. The League of Arab States claims that the exclusion of weapons of mass destruction from the reporting categories is discriminatory. It is, however, uncertain whether countries such as Saudi Arabia or Syria would report to the UNROCA even if WMD were included. Most of the members of the League of Arab States have never reported, even in 1992, before WMD became a major issue. As appendix 1 shows, not only do most Middle Eastern countries not report to the UNROCA but there are also no other mechanisms through which their adversaries are or can be informed about procurements in the region.

Most countries in Africa, another region of conflict, do not report, possibly because they have nothing to report, even though Resolution 46/36 L specifically invites all countries to enter a 'nil' report when no exports or imports have taken place. European Union (EU)<sup>31</sup> countries and others have reminded or pressured African countries to report, and the number of African countries that report to the UN Register has increased slightly since 2001. However, because of ongoing armed conflicts and their many new international commitments, such as ratification of the 1997 APM Convention,<sup>32</sup> the governments of these countries often do not have the personnel or the administrative structure to fulfil all their responsibilities at the same time.<sup>33</sup>

### **Failure to improve and develop**

The most serious structural problem within the UNROCA is not so much the fact that there is no structure for analysing the data, or that there are no agreed defini-

<sup>31</sup> The EU member states are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

<sup>32</sup> The Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction. The convention entered into force on 1 Mar. 1999; the text is available at URL <<http://disarmament.un.org/TreatyStatus.nsf/>>.

<sup>33</sup> This lack of personnel and structure has been recognized by both the UN and some of the more developed countries, such as Japan and some EU member states. Assistance and training for the provision of data to the UNROCA have been provided to African countries such as some of the ECOWAS member states.

tions of 'excessive' or 'destabilizing' arms build-ups, or that over one-third of the countries do not report,<sup>34</sup> but the fact that the UN Register was established as the expected first step in a process of development and refinement in conventional weapons monitoring, which was never in fact taken further. It can be argued, with the benefit of hindsight, that the establishment of the UN Register was rushed in this as in other respects and that too many aspects of its role and development were left open-ended.

The idea of 'starting simple' in 1992 and two years later having a group of specialists make proposals to fill the gaps in the reporting may have helped to get the UNROCA started quickly, but since then the work of three successive groups of government experts has had little impact on UNROCA reporting procedures. The only changes were a few cosmetic adjustments to the reporting form: for example, a line was added to the form so that each country could record its criteria for determining when an arms transfer becomes effective. All three groups (and the 1992 Panel of Governmental Technical Experts) have discussed most of the matters mentioned above extensively and have provided good ideas and proposals for improving the UNROCA. However, while expert groups have been able to agree on technical improvements to the UN Register, their proposals have been hostage to political will and have ultimately failed; differences of opinion on the inclusion of WMD have consistently blocked progress on all other issues.

Canada, the United States, the EU members and several other Western countries have consistently made it clear that they do not want to consider the inclusion of WMD in the UNROCA because these weapons are covered in other forums, such as the Conference on Disarmament (CD)<sup>35</sup> and because they believe that including WMD in the UNROCA would jeopardize it. Almost every year since 1992, the EU countries, often with the support of other states, have submitted a *note verbale* for inclusion in the Secretary-General's annual report on the UNROCA.<sup>36</sup> In contrast, the members of the League of Arab States,<sup>37</sup> Cuba, Iran and several others have consistently insisted on the inclusion of WMD. Both sides have repeatedly put forth their arguments, and it seems nearly impossible for either side to change its

<sup>34</sup> For the most recent statistics on which countries have reported to the UNROCA, see the 'overall participation' and 'composite table' sections of the UNROCA database at URL <[http://disarmament.un.org/UN\\_REGISTER.nsf](http://disarmament.un.org/UN_REGISTER.nsf)>.

<sup>35</sup> A list of the member states of the CD is available at URL <<http://disarmament.un.org/cd/index>>.

<sup>36</sup> For example, the 'Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey and the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway' aligned themselves with the 2002 *note verbale* submitted by the EU for the Secretary-General's report. 'Annex: Views received from Governments in accordance with paragraph 4(a) of General Assembly resolution 56/24 Q', in United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, Report of the Secretary General, UN document A/57/221, 17 July 2002, pp. 86–87.

<sup>37</sup> League of Arab States, 'Annex, Views received from Governments in accordance with paragraph 4 (a) of General Assembly resolution 56/24 Q,' 10 Oct. 2002, in United Nations, Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, Addendum, UN document A/57/221/Add.2, 22 Nov. 2002, pp. 12–13.

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position without losing face.<sup>38</sup> It would be interesting to see whether the inclusion of weapons of mass destruction would actually induce countries such as Saudi Arabia to report or whether, with this excuse removed, they would be found to have other reasons for not complying.

<sup>38</sup> UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan seems to have sided with the Western countries by stating that 'Transparency in non-conventional weapons should be pursued independently of the Register, so as to avert any controversy that could prove detrimental to conventional arms transparency'. Kofi Annan's message on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, UN Press Release SG/SM/8355, DC/2839, 30 Aug. 2002, URL <<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2002/sgsm8355.doc.htm>>.

### 3. Options for improvement

The central goals of transparency in armaments are twofold: confidence building between countries and accountability within countries. The first goal is related to relations between countries and the threat perceptions countries have of each other.<sup>39</sup> Transparency in armaments exists to prevent overarming, to promote confidence and to prevent ‘worst-case scenario’ thinking. The second goal, transparency within a country, is part of a state’s democratic system of accountability, which includes the parliament and/or the public in decision making for arms procurement, defence and arms exports.

It is an accepted fact that there is a need for more transparency at both the international and national level. Almost all UN member states voted in favour of establishing the UNROCA in 1991, and in many other forums for discussion of security and armaments, governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), researchers and the general public emphasize the need for transparency. The question of exactly what is to be achieved through transparency, however, has not been effectively addressed. As noted in chapter 1, the main goal of the UNROCA is to prevent arms build-ups that are potentially destabilizing. However, some who were involved with the initial development of the UNROCA have given the UN Register a slightly different focus. They see it as a confidence-building measure to ‘reduce the occurrence of dangerous misperceptions about the intentions of States and to promote trust among States’.<sup>40</sup> The implications and requirements of these two approaches are not entirely the same and certainly do not necessarily require the same treatment of data and structure.

Resolution 46/36 L mentions the following as secondary or additional goals for the UNROCA: the implementation of new CBMs, reduction of arms transfers, combating illicit arms trade and its effects on human rights, addressing the economic burden of arms acquisitions, and reduction of military expenditures. Many, especially NGOs, see democratization through accountability as an additional goal, and while this concept was not part of the discussion around the original creation of the UNROCA it has subsequently achieved a salience and degree of global acceptance (for instance in the context of security sector reform) that make it a legitimate addition to the demands upon any transparency regime. In fact, Resolution 46/36 L mentioned the possibility of opening the results of the UN Register not only to

<sup>39</sup> These threat perceptions are generally between countries which share a common land or sea border, but because modern weaponry has much longer ranges, threat perceptions relate more and more to countries in the same region that do not necessarily border each other. Threats can also be perceived over even longer, up to global, distances.

<sup>40</sup> Wagenmakers, H., ‘The coming into being of the UN Conventional Arms Register’, Presentation made at the seminar celebrating the 10th anniversary of the UNROCA, New York, 15 Oct. 2002, p. 2, URL <<http://disarmament.un.org/docs/wagenmakers.pdf>>. Wagenmakers, as Dutch Ambassador to the UN, was chairman of the Panel of Governmental Technical Experts in 1992 and of the Group of Governmental Experts in 1994. He contributed to the development of Resolution 46/36 L and the operational mechanisms of the UNROCA.

**Table 1.** Data and structural requirements for various transparency goals related to arms acquisitions

	Arms build-ups	Confidence-building measures	Enhanced democracy	Economic impact	Illegal transfers
Data from exporters	+/-	-	+/-	-	+/-
Data from importers	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-
Data on inventory	+	+	+/-	+/-	+/-
Import value data	-	-	+	+	-
Export value data	-	-	+/-	+	-
Military expenditure data	+/-	+/-	+	+	-
Numerical data	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	-
Numerical data with model numbers	+	+	+/-	-	-
Deployment	+	+	-	-	-
Doctrine	+	+	+/-	-	-
Policy	+	+	+	-	-
Data on major arms	+	+	-	-	-
Data on small arms	+/-	-	-	-	-
Data on ammunition	+	+	-	-	-
Data on force multipliers	+	+	-	-	+
Data on other military equipment	+	+	-	-	-
Public data	-	+/-	+	-	-
International data exchange	+	+	-	-	+/-
Restricted data exchange from government to parliament	-	-	+/-	-	-

+ = Needed; +/- = Useful; - = Neither useful nor needed.

Arms build-ups = preventing arms build-ups; Confidence-building measures = implementing new CBMs; Enhanced democracy = increasing the level of democracy; Economic impact = understanding the economic impact of arms acquisitions; Illegal transfers = combating illegal arms transfers; Data on other military equipment includes non-lethal equipment such as vehicles, bridging equipment, communication systems, and so on.

*Source:* Author's evaluation.

UN member states but also to the general public. As early as 1993, when replies were submitted for transfers made in 1992, the public had access to the data. Transparency to promote accountability and democracy is mentioned only

implicitly in other documents related to the UNROCA but is not included as an additional goal in the resolution. However, the fact that the UNROCA data are made public suggests that the UN Secretary-General's goal is to increase accountability and democracy related to arms transfers through public discussion. The UN's early grasp, in this connection, of the new possibilities for access to data offered by the Internet is a positive sign.

The problem with these different goals is that they have an important impact on the structure and content of data reporting. Reporting inventories of specific weapon models (i.e., reporting 100 M-60A1 tanks rather than just 100 tanks) is important for confidence building and identifying arms build-ups, but such data have little or no relevance for questions related to economic burden or military expenditure. For these questions, it is relevant to know the amount paid for the tanks and their yearly operating costs.<sup>41</sup> Table 1 lists the goals of transparency as discussed in the UNROCA debate (including those mentioned in Resolution 46/36 L). For each goal, the table shows which types of data and data exchange structure appear most relevant.

Nearly all states subscribe to the principle of transparency in armaments and express their support for it in government publications and international meetings concerning transparency in armaments.<sup>42</sup> However, some states only pay lip service to the concept of transparency; when challenged to make a true commitment, they tend to hesitate. For example, Saudi Arabia voted in favour of establishing the UN Register but, as mentioned earlier, has never reported to the UNROCA.

Among independent researchers there is a strong view that the UNROCA is of limited value.<sup>43</sup> This view is echoed in the (closed) discussions of the groups of governmental experts, in which most participants also take a critical approach.<sup>44</sup>

The UNROCA's focus is on early warning of arms build-ups that could be destabilizing—an important goal. While the other goals of transparency are also important, they will have to be addressed for the time being in other mechanisms and forums, such as the UN Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures.<sup>45</sup> One might consider including in the UNROCA (or any other formal or informal data

<sup>41</sup> For data on military expenditure, the UN has an even older reporting mechanism—the UN Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures, established in 1980. This mechanism seemed almost forgotten in the early 1990s, when fewer than 30 countries reported to it. Recently, however, the Instrument has been revived, with 68 countries reporting in 2002. See URL <<http://disarmament.un.org/cab/milex.html>>.

<sup>42</sup> These views are evident, for example, in United Nations, General Assembly Resolution A/RES/57/75, 18 Dec. 2002. International meetings on transparency in arms include the UN General Assembly discussions which begin every Sep. and the UNROCA workshops for ECOWAS and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) member states organized by the UN Transparency in Armaments Sponsors Group, which consists of Canada, Germany, Japan and the Netherlands. The concerns of the SADC are discussed further below; its member states are Angola, Botswana, Congo (Democratic Republic of), Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

<sup>43</sup> See, for example, Goldblat (note 8); and Chalmers and Greene (note 8).

<sup>44</sup> Selected members of the Group of Government Experts, Private communication with the author, June 2000.

<sup>45</sup> See note 41.

exchange on arms imports) all supplies that are used by armed forces, since all supplies have an impact on the effectiveness or size of the armed forces. The scale of such an endeavour, however, would make it unmanageable. It therefore makes sense for the UNROCA to be restricted to a limited number of weapon types, although the number of types included is too low, and the level of detail and the methods of acquisitions to be reported are far from sufficient.

The question then arises: what are the options for creating a useful data exchange or register of weapons?

### **The UNROCA options**

There are a number of ways in which the UNROCA could be brought back to the forefront of work for transparency. The first is to use the traditional method of consensus (or near-consensus) in the General Assembly to bury differences regarding the WMD issue and agree a broader scope for the UNROCA, producing a register which includes all types of weapon and all methods of acquisition. It should be obligatory to report, and a system should be set up which, at the very least, allows the UN Secretariat to ask for an explanation when data differ either within the UNROCA or possibly even when there are discrepancies between UNROCA data and those reported in other official sources. Preferably, there should be an annual discussion on the data in the General Assembly or the Security Council. The way in which the General Assembly has used the results of the three reviews and the statements made by countries and groups of countries over the past decade, however, reflect a state of deadlock which leaves little hope that this optimum set of improvements could be achieved through the currently prescribed UN channels.

Second, instead of the review and General Assembly route, there is the alternative of transferring the issue to the CD to broaden the discussion.<sup>46</sup> This option has been considered many times since the establishment of the UN Register, but the UNROCA issue would probably be ‘lost’ in the CD, whose own agenda is currently largely blocked, and in the end the issue would probably come back to the General Assembly for a final discussion and vote. In addition, the WMD stumbling block (which is behind most of the CD impasses) would remain as fundamental in this context as ever.

A third option is to employ the ‘non-consensual majority rule’, whereby an issue can be forced and the General Assembly votes on a new resolution drafted without over-extensive consideration for the views of the ‘unwilling’ countries. One can argue that the non-reporting countries have, at any rate, forfeited their rights to be involved in the further development of the UNROCA. Without these countries, a new UNROCA without consensus (but still underwritten by the vast majority of the UN member states) would be produced, and there would be room for hope that at least some of the non-reporters would eventually start to report. If this procedure

<sup>46</sup> UN General Assembly Resolution 46/36 L (note 1), paras 13–16, asks the CD to include in its discussions the issue of increased transparency both for conventional weapons and for WMD.



were invoked, it would most likely succeed, since a majority of states submit reports and in many instances have reported more than the UNROCA's minimum requirements. The UN Security Council's policy of operating on a majority rule basis is unlikely to be adopted by the General Assembly, where in general most resolutions are adopted by near-consensus, if not full consensus. (More modest variants of this non-consensual approach would be to allow the states having submitted data to the Register to hold exclusive annual meetings among themselves to discuss it; and/or to invite the government experts group carrying out the review process to include recommendations in its report to the General Assembly for which there is substantial support but no full consensus among group members.)

The fourth and final option is a 'strong arm' option, in which the willing countries would force the unwilling to report by threatening them with sanctions.

The idea that licences to supply weapons and other controlled equipment should be refused to countries not participating in the UNROCA has emerged both on the national and international level. In addition to using the concept in its national export policy, in 1997 and 1998 the Netherlands worked for the acceptance of the idea by the EU, connecting the concept with the sixth criterion of the 1998 EU Code of Conduct for Arms Exports—a criterion concerned with the client's behaviour with regard to the international community and international agreements.<sup>47</sup> The Netherlands also promoted in the Wassenaar Arrangement the idea of linking the granting of export licences with UNROCA participation.<sup>48</sup> It was agreed within the WA in 1998 that participation in the UNROCA could be used as one of many factors to assess the behaviour of countries of final destination.<sup>49</sup>

However, the relative importance of non-participation in the UNROCA for such assessments has remained unclear in the above-mentioned discussions. Participation in the UNROCA, including the accurate reporting (where applicable) of

<sup>47</sup> Criterion 6 of the EU Code of Conduct for Arms Exports, adopted on 8 June 1998, states that, when making decisions on arms transfers, the behaviour of the buyer country with regard to the international community, in particular its respect for international law, should be taken into account, and that 'Member States will take into account inter alia the record of the buyer country with regard to:

(a) its support or encouragement of terrorism and international organised crime;  
 (b) its compliance with its international commitments, in particular on the non-use of force, including under international humanitarian law applicable to international and non-international conflicts;  
 (c) its commitment to non-proliferation and other areas of arms control and disarmament, in particular the signature, ratification and implementation of relevant arms control and disarmament conventions referred to in sub-paragraph b) of Criterion One.'

For the full text of the EU Code of Conduct see URL <<http://projects.sipri.se/expcon/eucode.htm>>.

<sup>48</sup> Dutch Government, 'Brief aan de Voorzitter van de Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal' [Letter of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and State-secretary of Economic Affairs to the Chairman of the 2nd Chamber of the Dutch Parliament], Document no. BEB/DHI/ES 99083034, The Hague, 22 Feb. 2000. See also Dutch Government, 'Openbaar jaarrapport Nederlands wapenexportbeleid 1998' [Public annual report on Dutch arms export policy 1998], The Hague, 1 Sep. 1999.

<sup>49</sup> 'Elements for objective analysis and advice concerning potentially destabilising accumulations of conventional weapons,' paper adopted at the 1998 Wassenaar Arrangement Plenary on 3 Dec. 1998, available at URL <<http://projects.sipri.se/expcon/waoban.htm>>. See also Dutch Government, *The Coalition Agreement: new accents in the arms exports policy*, Parliamentary Proceedings 22 054, No. 40, Dec. 1998. The English version of the Agreement is available at URL <[http://www.ez.nl/pdfs/agreement\\_eng.pdf](http://www.ez.nl/pdfs/agreement_eng.pdf)>.

exports previously received, could be used as one of many factors to assess the recipient's bona fides and hence the desirability of arms exports to a country, but no country or organization has made participation a precondition for granting an export licence. Aside from signalling political concern, any such precondition would only be useful if all major countries and several smaller producing countries followed the same rule. Otherwise, buyer countries would shift from one supplier to another. It must be noted, however, that even if not all suppliers joined, it would be very difficult for some of the non-reporting importers to shift to other suppliers. Such a shift can only be undertaken relatively smoothly when a country is not overly dependent on imports, or when the existing inventory and structure of its armed forces are simple and small. For example, if Saudi Arabia, which has never reported to the UNROCA, were facing an embargo by its suppliers (mainly the USA, the UK and France), it would be able to buy everything it needs from other suppliers (Russia), but at the cost of completely changing its large and expensive inventory at much higher economic and security costs than it could conceivably accept.

Several members have stated that participation in the UNROCA by a prospective recipient could be relevant for the decision to grant an export licence,<sup>50</sup> but in general the Dutch attempt to emphasize the matter was not received favourably by EU member states. To set a positive example, the Netherlands decided to officially include participation in the UNROCA as part of the Dutch interpretation of the sixth criterion of the EU Code of Conduct and to add a specific public note in the Dutch arms exports reports for any cases in which licences are refused on the basis of non-participation in the Register.<sup>51</sup> In 2001, the Netherlands refused exports of cartridge links for ammunition to Egypt, citing Egypt's non-participation in the UNROCA as a reason for the denial under the terms of the EU Code of Conduct for Arms Exports.<sup>52</sup>

Another 'strong arm' option could be that countries, groups of countries, or for that matter international organizations such as the World Bank would begin to link reporting to the UNROCA with access to economic and financial benefits such as aid, loans or trade partner status. An advantage of this option would be that unwilling countries would be unlikely to find much help from non-Western countries, which may be alternative arms suppliers but do not have the financial resources to become major donors or lenders. Realistically, of course, one has to consider that the greatest concern (for potentially destabilizing arms transfers) is the Middle East, and that cutting off some access to loans or markets could easily affect oil

<sup>50</sup> Dutch Government, 2000 (note 48).

<sup>51</sup> The English versions of the official Dutch arms export reports are available at URL <[http://www.ez.nl/default\\_bel.asp?pagina=exportcontroleen](http://www.ez.nl/default_bel.asp?pagina=exportcontroleen)>. For the 6th criterion of the EU Code of Conduct for Arms Exports, see note 47.

<sup>52</sup> Dutch Government, Denial no. NL 12/2001, July 2001 in 'Openbaar jaarrapport Nederlands wapenexportbeleid 2001' [Public annual report on Dutch arms export policy 2001], The Hague, 2002, p. 45. The main text of the annual report is in Dutch, but the notices of export licence denial under the EU Code of Conduct are in English.

prices as well as the flow of economic benefits (such as investments) in the opposite direction.

### **The regional options**

If the deadlock over the UNROCA cannot be resolved, a solution might be found in a ‘second track’ register or registers established on a regional basis. When the UNROCA was established, it was clear that many countries and regions had differing needs for transparency. Not all of them saw major conventional weapons as the greatest destabilizing threat or socio-economic problem. Resolution 46/36 L (1991) therefore specifically invited countries to establish regional or sub-regional transparency mechanisms in addition to the UNROCA.<sup>53</sup>

Apart from the OSCE region, which already had an established system of reporting (including prior notification of acquisitions) and checking on many conventional weapons by the time the UNROCA was established,<sup>54</sup> several other regional groups have adopted and discussed this idea.

Only one other region has gone further than the UNROCA since 1992. In July 1999 the Organization of American States (OAS) adopted its own mechanism, the Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisitions.<sup>55</sup> While reporting is limited to the same weapons as those covered by the UNROCA, the convention differs from the UNROCA in that it is a legally binding agreement, it includes arms acquired through means other than imports, and it includes not only reporting for the past year but also reporting of all acquisitions within 90 days of their incorporation into the armed forces.<sup>56</sup> The convention entered into force on 21 November 2002, 30 days after the sixth OAS member had ratified it. However, as indicated in appendix 1, even though most OAS members have reported fairly consistently to the UN Register, several have not reported to the UNROCA and have neither signed nor ratified the convention. For example, Colombia reported to the UNROCA in 1992 only, and Venezuela reported in 1997 and 2002 only. Both states signed the OAS Convention in 1999, but neither has

<sup>53</sup> Para. 17 of Resolution 46/36 L (note 1) ‘calls upon all Member States to cooperate at a regional and sub-regional level, taking fully into account the specific conditions prevailing in the region or sub-region, with a view to enhancing and coordinating international efforts aimed at increased openness and transparency in armaments’.

<sup>54</sup> See OSCE, Forum for Security Co-operation, ‘Exchange of information’, URL <[http://www.osce.org/fsc/info\\_exchange/](http://www.osce.org/fsc/info_exchange/)> for details.

<sup>55</sup> US Department of State, Bureau of Political–Military Affairs, ‘Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisitions’, Fact Sheet, 24 Sep. 2002, URL <<http://www.state.gov/t/pm/rls/fs/2002/9259.htm>>. For the text see the OAS Internet site, URL <<http://www.oas.org/csh/english/docc&t%20convweap.htm>>. The member states of the OAS are listed at URL <<http://www.oas.org>>. In the UNROCA it is possible for a delivery to be reported as long as 17 months after it took place, since the UN asks countries to report by May on transfers that took place in the previous calendar year.

<sup>56</sup> It also differs from the UNROCA in that it keeps the data ‘secret’. Unlike UNROCA data, the OAS data and reports are not available to the public. Arms Control Association, ‘The Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisitions’, Fact Sheet, Washington, DC, 2001, URL <<http://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/iactcwa.asp>>.

ratified it. By the time it entered into force, only 20 of 34 OAS member states had signed the convention. By June 2003, only 8 states had ratified it.<sup>57</sup>

Among the regional organizations, the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) has on several occasions discussed a regional register and other types of data exchange, but so far the only result has been the production of defence White Papers<sup>58</sup> outlining general defence policy within the framework of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).<sup>59</sup>

Several African countries, particularly in West Africa, have repeatedly stated that major conventional weapons as reported to the UNROCA are not their main concern, and that they require more data on small arms and light weapons, either through the addition of SALW to the UNROCA or through a separate mechanism.<sup>60</sup> None of these countries, however, has given much concrete guidance as to how such data could be gathered, and within the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) little has been done in this matter.<sup>61</sup> The OAU recently became the African Union (AU), and the new organization is to follow the model of the EU as an international cooperation organization. It will be interesting to see whether the AU will work for increased transparency on armaments and other military matters to address the problems of conflict and tension among its members.<sup>62</sup>

The case made repeatedly by African countries for inclusion of SALW in the UNROCA has divided other commentators, both political and in the research community. It is now generally agreed that proliferation of SALW is a serious problem, and that it is certainly an important, even a major factor in the outbreak and continuation of violent conflict. It has also been pointed out, however, that conflicts in which SALW become significant are not primarily the result of relations between countries, but primarily of relations within countries. Because the UNROCA is a mechanism focused on relations between countries, it would be

<sup>57</sup> Information on signature and ratifications is available on the OAS Internet site at URL <<http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/sigs/a-64.html>>. The OAS member states that have not signed the convention are all small countries.

<sup>58</sup> See, for example, PRC [People's Republic of China] Information Office of State Council, 'White Paper on China's national defense in 2002', 9 Dec. 2002, URL <<http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/china/doctrine/natdef2002.html>>.

<sup>59</sup> The members of ASEAN are Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar (Burma), the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. The members of the ARF are the 10 ASEAN states plus Australia, Canada, China, the European Union, India, Japan, Korea (North), Korea (South), Mongolia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Russia and the USA.

<sup>60</sup> Westdal, C., 'Statement at the Symposium Marking the Tenth Anniversary of the UN Register of Conventional Arms', 15 Oct. 2002, United Nations, New York, pp. 3–4, URL <<http://disarmament.un.org/docs/westdal.pdf>>.

<sup>61</sup> The member states of the African Union are listed at URL <<http://www.au2002.gov.za/about/oamembers.htm>>.

<sup>62</sup> For more information on the African Union see Adisa, J., 'The African Union: the vision, programmes, policies and challenges', *SIPRI Yearbook 2003: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2003), pp. 79–85.

illogical to include all SALW, especially if this would make the reporting unclear or would prevent further development of the UNROCA.<sup>63</sup>

The impact of small arms transfers can hardly be assessed if the end-user (e.g., army, police, paramilitary or private customer) is unknown, but the UNROCA does not ask for end-user information, and to extract this in the context of a voluntary reporting mechanism would pose huge problems. However, at least one country has provided data on small arms imports and end-user information; Jamaica has generally reported only small arms imports, and then only those specifically meant for private end-users. The challenge of SALW would be much more appropriately handled at a regional or sub-regional level, without disrupting work in other regions where SALW are definitely not the main problem.

In its moratorium on small arms and light weapons acquisitions, ECOWAS includes a provision for the exchange of data. However, since the moratorium prohibits the import or other acquisition of small arms and light weapons, this data exchange is little more than a means for countries to notify each other if and when they intend to 'break' the moratorium by acquiring weapons covered by it.<sup>64</sup> It appears that not all ECOWAS member states have upheld the moratorium. In 2001, for example, a UN Security Council report on the arms embargo against Liberia included information on deliveries of SALW to Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire—weapons which were then delivered to rebels in Liberia in exactly the kind of transfer which the moratorium was designed to prevent.<sup>65</sup>

With the exception of the OAS convention, none of these regional initiatives seems very promising yet. However, there is much more opportunity to create a useful mechanism for transparency at the regional level than in the UN General Assembly. Data exchange, policy clarifications and actual moratoria have been discussed and in some cases implemented, and the UN Department for Disarmament Affairs has included the aim of strengthening cooperation with such regional and sub-regional arrangements (specifically, in Europe and the Arab world) as part of its regional desk's work programme in 2002–2003. In summary, future improvement in transparency is likely to be regional, but probably not public.

<sup>63</sup> See, for example, Shropshire, S. (compiler), *Report on the International Conference on European Arms Export Controls, 13–14 November 1997, Riksdagshuset (Parliament Building), Stockholm, Sweden* (Saferworld: London; Kristna Fredsrörelsen: Stockholm, 1998), pp. 14–15.

<sup>64</sup> The text of the ECOWAS Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Light Weapons in ECOWAS Member States of 31 Oct. 1998 is available at URL <<http://www.fas.org/nuke/control/pcased/text/ecowas.htm>>. ECOWAS has no mechanisms that cover weapons other than SALW.

<sup>65</sup> United Nations Security Council, Report of the Panel of Experts pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1343, paragraph 19, concerning Liberia, UN document S/2001/1015, 26 Oct. 2001, pp. 37–38.

## 4. Conclusions

The UNROCA does not and cannot do what its creators intended it to do. Whatever ground it may have gained in establishing international norms and habits of transparency, and whatever inspiration and synergy it may have provided for like-minded regional endeavours, it has not been designed, implemented or followed up in such a way as to fulfil its goal of preventing destabilizing arms build-ups—above all in the regions of greatest concern. After 10 years of operation, it has yet to make any significant progress to this end.

The General Assembly meeting in the autumn of 2003 has both the unique opportunity and the substantial responsibility to take measures to make the UNROCA a useful tool. By that time, a group of government experts established by General Assembly resolution 57/75 of 18 December 2002 will have reviewed the UNROCA and added its ideas and recommendations to those of earlier review groups. It is difficult to ask countries to be patient after 10 years of only minimal progress; the General Assembly must produce results that can inject new life into the reporting process. Rather than continuing to make statements on the development and improvement of the UN Register, the General Assembly, and the UN member states, must take action to make the UNROCA more effective. The idea of using a data exchange to encourage arms transparency is valid and has brought results in other contexts, but at global level and within the limits of the UNROCA's competence the results of the exchange have been of very limited use. It is up to the General Assembly to change the UN Register so that meaningful data are obtained. First, the scope of the UN Register must be broadened to include much more than just the bare facts on imports and exports of major weapons, and then action must be taken based on the data that are submitted. If no agreement can be reached on what action should be taken to improve the UN Register, the General Assembly should mandate the UN to provide more active support, including funding, to regional efforts in which the issues that most often impede progress (such as WMD) could be bypassed.

Broadening the scope of the UNROCA categories to encompass more types of weapon and widening the scope of acquisitions to include weapons acquired from national production will not be enough to make the UN Register effective. These measures would provide some early warning of potential arms build-ups, but in order to accurately identify an arms build-up data on states' arms inventories are needed. In order to establish whether an arms build-up is 'destabilizing', analysts require more than just data showing the number of weapons in service. The political context of the transfer and the location of the weapons are a better indication of aggressive intentions than numbers and details on types of weapon.

In order to prevent destabilizing build-ups, a second step must be taken. After identifying an arms build-up, and after establishing that the weapons may be destabilizing through analysis of factors such as the political context of the acquisition, and the way in which the weapons fit into the importing country's existing arms inventory, action must be taken to prevent further destabilization and weapons

accumulation. Such action requires a mechanism that allows ad hoc consultations, including both the parties involved in the arms build-up (the acquiring country and the supplier country, unless the weapons have been produced in the country) and the states that feel threatened by the build-up. Such a mechanism might build on the mandate of the Security Council or allow the Secretary-General more freedom to use the UNROCA data. Alternatively, a regular consultation schedule for the discussion of data from the UNROCA (e.g. as part of the regular General Assembly meetings) might be possible.

The fact that the UNROCA is too limited in scope was in itself not a problem when the UN Register was established in 1991. At that time, the UNROCA was seen as a process in which reporting on arms transfers of a limited range of weapons would be only a first step. The process was promising: nearly all countries underwrote the principle of transparency in armaments through a system of reporting to the UN. The achievement of establishing a global norm of transparency on a matter still seen as 'top secret' in most countries should not be underestimated. However, the process was fatally undermined at a very early stage when it became clear that most countries were expecting further steps to be taken soon after the establishment of the UNROCA, but were at the same time incapable of agreeing on how to extend its scope. The blame lies not with the UN, which after all simply takes direction from the General Assembly and the Security Council, nor does it lie with the groups of government experts that have reviewed the UNROCA. The process of reviewing the UNROCA worked quite well, with small groups of experts providing many worthy ideas. The problem lies with the members of the General Assembly, which has been able to do very little with the good ideas provided by the groups of government experts. In the General Assembly, all progress was blocked mainly, but not only, by the problem of whether WMD should be included in the UN Register.

Data exchanges to identify arms build-ups, and mechanisms to prevent such build-ups, can be carried out at an international, regional or sub-regional level. Exchanges at different levels can coexist. The UN has often emphasized that its work complements that of the regional approaches to arms data exchanges. In the matter of transparency in armaments, the UNROCA represents an attempt to manage the issue at the global level, and the approach has fallen victim both to its inherent difficulties and limits and to the lack of political will for overcoming them.

Data exchanges at the regional and sub-regional levels are more manageable than the UNROCA since fewer countries are involved. Progress that might be blocked at a higher level is possible at the regional or sub-regional level. In addition, these mechanisms can be adjusted to address specific regional or sub-regional concerns. For example, the scope of the data to be included is important for the African countries that favour the inclusion of data on SALW. Another concern can be secrecy: although the UN data are public, conflicts can be prevented effectively even when data are not shared with the public. Lower-level cooperation is starting to take place on the issue of preventing arms build-ups. The most notable example is the

extensive exchange of data, inspections and regular consultations that now takes place within the OSCE. The OAS and ECOWAS have also recently taken initiatives in this field. Existing regional organizations such as SADC, ASEAN and ARF have added security to their agenda and may be appropriate forums for regional data exchanges.

The considerable expertise of the UN might be more effectively used to establish regional data exchanges that work well than to pursue efforts on a larger scale which face greater obstacles and have a weaker grip on the real areas of concern. The countries that support the UNROCA and are keen to see it develop further would be just as likely to provide regional efforts with financial, political and moral support.

Nearly all countries have embraced transparency in armaments as a norm and an absolute necessity, and they continue to issue statements that underline the importance of transparency. This both provides the context and underlines the need for more active targeting of countries that seem unwilling or not interested in taking action to increase their own transparency. Providing training and financial support for global or regional efforts to change their behaviour through a cooperative process is preferable, but it may also be appropriate to use coercive policies that force countries to report to the UNROCA or a regional mechanism or to face the consequences, such as economic sanctions.



## Appendix 1. International arms transparency measures, by country

The table lists the mechanisms by which countries provide arms procurement data that are made available to other countries. It shows whether countries provide information on weapon designations (model numbers), national production and arms inventories, whether public reports on arms transparency are available, and their overall level of transparency in the period 1999 to 25 June 2003. Countries are grouped by region/sub-region; countries in a region of international tension or conflict and involved in the tension or conflict are shown in italics. All data are as of 25 June 2003.

Country	UNROCA		Detail	Nat. prod.	Inven-tory	Other IO	Public reports	Level of transparency
	1992–2001	1999–2001						
<b>South America</b>								
Argentina	10*	3*	Yes	–	–	OAS(s)	Yes	2–3
Bolivia	4	3	Yes	–*	–	OAS(s)	?	2
Brazil	10*	3*	Yes	Yes	Yes	OAS(s)	Yes	3
Chile	10	3	Yes	–	–	OAS(s)	Yes	2–3
Colombia	– <sup>a</sup>	–	n.a.	–	–	OAS(s)	–	0
Ecuador	6	3	n.a.	–*	–	OAS(r)	–	1
Guyana	6	3	n.a.	–*	–	OAS	?	1
Paraguay	5*	3*	n.a.	–*	–	OAS(r)	–	1
Peru	10*	3*	Yes	–	–	OAS(r)	–	2
Uruguay	4*	3*	Yes	–*	–	OAS(s)	–	2
Venezuela	1*	–*	n.a.	–	–	OAS(s)	–	1
<b>Central America</b>								
Belize	6*	3*	n.a.	–*	–	OAS	?	2–3
Costa Rica	4*	3*	n.a.	–*	–	OAS(s)	?	2–3
El Salvador	1	–	n.a.	–*	Yes	OAS(r)	?	0
Guatemala	6*	6*	n.a.	–	–	OAS(r)	?	1–2
Honduras	6	3	n.a.	–*	–	OAS(s)	?	1–2
Mexico	10*	3*	Yes	–	–	OAS(s)	?	2–3
Nicaragua	–	–	n.a.	–*	Yes	OAS(r)	?	2
Panama	4*	2*	n.a.	–*	–	OAS	?	2
<b>Caribbean</b>								
Antigua & Barbuda	5	2	n.a.	–*	–	OAS	?	?
Bahamas	3	1	n.a.	–*	–	OAS	?	?
Barbados	7	2	n.a.	–*	–	OAS	?	?
Cuba	10*	3*	n.a.	–*	–	– <sup>b</sup>	–	1
Dominica	6	2	n.a.	–*	–	OAS(s)	?	?
Dominican Republic	3	1	n.a.	–*	–	OAS	?	?

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Country	UNROCA							
	1992–2001	1999–2001	Detail	Nat. prod.	Inven-tory	Other IO	Public reports	Level of transparency
Grenada	7	3	n.a.	–*	–	OAS	?	?
Haiti	1*	1*	n.a.	–*	–	OAS(s)	?	?
Jamaica	6*	3*	n.a.	–*	–	OAS	?	?
St Kitts & Nevis	3	2	n.a.	–*	–	OAS	?	?
St Lucia	4	–	n.a.	–*	–	OAS	?	?
St Vincent & the Grenadines	3	1	n.a.	–*	–	OAS	?	?
Trinidad & Tobago	5	2	Yes	–*	–	OAS	?	2
<b>North America</b>								
Canada	10*	3*	Yes	Yes	Yes	OAS(r) <sup>c</sup>	Yes	3
USA	10*	3*	Yes	Yes	Yes	OAS(r) <sup>d</sup>	Yes	3
<b>Southern Africa</b>								
Angola	–	–	n.a.	–*	–	–	–	0
Botswana	1	1	n.a.	–*	–	–	?	1–2
Comoros	1	1	n.a.	–*	–	–	–	?
<i>DRC</i>	–	–	–	–*	–	–	–	0
Lesotho	3*	1*	n.a.	–*	–	–	–	?
Madagascar	6	2	n.a.	–*	–	–	?	?
Malawi	3*	2*	n.a.	–*	–	–	–	?
Mauritius	9	3	n.a.	–*	–	–	–	?
Mozambique	–	–	–	–*	–	–	–	0
Namibia	3	–	n.a.	–*	–	–	–	1
South Africa	7*	2*	n.a. <sup>e</sup>	–	–	–	Yes	3
Swaziland	–	–	n.a.	–*	–	–	–	0
Zambia	2*	2*	n.a.	–*	–	–	?	1–2
<i>Zimbabwe</i>	–	–	n.a.	–*	–	–	–	0
<b>East Africa and Horn of Africa</b>								
<i>Burundi</i>	–	–	–	–*	–	–	–	0
Djibouti	1	1	n.a.	–*	–	–	?	?
Eritrea <sup>f</sup>	–	–	n.a.	–*	–	–	–	?
Ethiopia	2	–	n.a.	–*	–	–	–	?
Kenya	3	2	n.a.	–	–	–	?	?
<i>Rwanda</i>	1	1	n.a.	–*	–	–	?	?
Seychelles	6	3	n.a.	–*	–	–	?	?
<i>Somalia</i>	–	–	–	–*	–	–	–	0
<i>Sudan</i>	–	–	–	–*	–	–	–	0
Tanzania <sup>g</sup>	6	1	n.a.	–*	–	–	?	?
<i>Uganda</i>	–	–	–	–*	–	–	Yes	?
<b>West Africa</b>								
Benin	4	–	n.a.	–*	–	ECOWAS	–	0
<i>Burkina Faso</i>	5	2	n.a.	–*	–	ECOWAS	–	1
Cameroon	3	–	Yes	–*	–	–	–	0
Cape Verde	–	–	n.a.	–*	–	ECOWAS	?	?

Country	UNROCA		Detail	Nat. prod.	Inventory	Other IO	Public reports	Level of transparency
	1992–2001	1999–2001						
CAR	1	–	n.a.	–*	–	ECOWAS	–	0
Chad	1	–	n.a. <sup>h</sup>	–*	–	ECOWAS	–	0
Congo, Rep. of	–	–	–	–*	–	–	–	0
<i>Côte d'Ivoire</i>	1	–	n.a.	–*	Yes	ECOWAS	–	0
Equat. Guinea	–	–	n.a.	–*	–	–	–	0
Gabon	1	–	n.a.	–*	–	–	–	0
Gambia	1*	1*	n.a.	–*	–	ECOWAS	–	0–1
Ghana	–	–	–	–*	–	ECOWAS	–	0
<i>Guinea</i>	–	–	–	–*	–	ECOWAS	–	0
Guinea-Bissau	–	–	–	–*	–	ECOWAS	–	0
<i>Liberia</i>	–	–	–	–*	–	ECOWAS	–	0
Mali	–	–	–	–*	–	ECOWAS	–	0
Mauritania	2	–	n.a.	–*	–	–	–	0
Niger	6	2	n.a.	–*	–	ECOWAS	?	1
Nigeria	–	–	–	–*	–	ECOWAS	–	0
Sao Tome & Principe	2	2	n.a.	–*	–	–	?	?
Senegal	2	1	n.a.	–*	–	ECOWAS	?	0–1
<i>Sierra Leone</i>	1*	1*	n.a.	–*	–	ECOWAS	?	?
Togo	1	1	n.a.	Yes	Yes	ECOWAS	?	?
<b>North Africa and Middle East</b>								
Algeria	–	–	–	–*	–	–	–	0
Bahrain	–	–	–	–*	–	–	–	0
<i>Egypt</i>	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	0
<i>Iran</i>	6	–	Yes	–	–	–	–	0
<i>Iraq<sup>i</sup></i>	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0
<i>Israel</i>	10*	3*	Yes	–	–	–	Yes	2–3
Jordan	6*	3*	Yes	–*	–	–	–	1–2
Kuwait	–	–	–	–*	–	–	Yes	1–2
<i>Lebanon</i>	2*	1*	n.a.	–*	–	–	–	1
<i>Libya<sup>j</sup></i>	3	3	n.a.	–*	–	–	–	0
Morocco	–	–	–	–*	–	–	–	0
Oman	–	–	–	–*	–	–	–	0
<i>Palestine<sup>k</sup></i>	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.*	n.a.	–	–	0
Qatar	2	1	–	–*	–	–	–	0
Saudi Arabia	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0
<i>Syria</i>	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0
Tunisia	1	–	n.a.	–*	–	–	–	0
UAE	–	–	–	–*	–	–	–	0
Yemen	–	–	–	–*	–	–	–	0
<b>South Asia</b>								
Bangladesh	4	3	Yes	–*	–	–	–	1
Bhutan	10*	3*	n.a.	–*	–	–	?	–
<i>India</i>	10	3	Yes	–	–	–	Yes	2–3
Maldives	10	3	n.a.	–*	–	–	?	1
Nepal	8*	3*	n.a.	–*	–	–	–	1

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Country	UNROCA							
	1992– 2001	1999– 2001	Detail	Nat. prod.	Inven- tory	Other IO	Public reports	Level of transparency
<i>Pakistan</i>	10*	10*	Yes	–	–	–	–	1–2
Sri Lanka	4	–	Yes	–*	–	–	–	1–2
<b>Central Asia</b>								
Afghanistan	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0 <sup>l</sup>
Kazakhstan	8*	3*	Yes	Yes	–	OSCE	–	1–2
Kyrgyzstan	1	–	n.a.	–	–	OSCE	–	1–2
Tajikistan	5	1	n.a.	–*	–	OSCE	–	1–2
Turkmenistan	5	2	n.a. <sup>m</sup>	–*	–	OSCE	–	1
Uzbekistan	3	3	n.a.	–*	–	OSCE	–	1–2
<b>South–East Asia</b>								
Brunei	2	–	Yes	–*	–	–	–	1–2
Darussalam								
Cambodia	3	3	– <sup>n</sup>	–*	Yes	–	–	1
Indonesia	10*	3*	– <sup>o</sup>	–	–	–	–	1–2
Laos	–*	–*	n.a.	–*	–	–	–	1
Malaysia	10 <sup>p</sup>	3	Yes	–*	–	–	Yes	3
<i>Myanmar</i> ( <i>Burma</i> )	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0
Philippines	10*	3*	Yes	–*	–	–	Yes	3
Singapore	10*	3*	Yes	–	–	–	Yes	2
<i>Thailand</i>	9*	3*	Yes	–	–	–	Yes	2
Timor-Leste <sup>q</sup>	–*	–*	–	–*	–	–	–	–
Viet Nam	8*	3*	Yes	–	–	–	–	1
<b>Australia and Oceania</b>								
Australia	10*	3*	Yes	Yes	Yes	–	Yes	3
Fiji	7	2	n.a.	–*	–	–	?	?
Kiribati	3*	2*	n.a.	–*	–	–	?	?
Marshall Is.	6*	3*	n.a.	–*	–	–	?	?
Micronesia	2*	1*	n.a.	–*	–	–	?	?
Nauru	2	2	n.a.	–*	–	–	?	?
New Zealand	10*	3*	Yes	Yes <sup>*r</sup>	Yes	–	Yes	3
Palau <sup>s</sup>	2*	2*	n.a.	–*	–	–	?	?
Papua New Guinea	6	–	n.a.	–*	–	–	–	1
Samoa	7	2	n.a.	–*	–	–	?	?
Solomon Is.	6*	2*	n.a.	–*	–	–	?	?
Tonga	1	1	n.a.	–*	–	–	?	?
Tuvalu	1	1	n.a.	–*	–	–	?	?
Vanuatu	6	2	n.a.	–*	–	–	?	?
<b>East Asia</b>								
<i>China</i> <sup>t</sup>	5	–	Yes	–	–	–	–	?
Japan	10*	3*	Yes	Yes	Yes	–	Yes	3
Mongolia	10	3	n.a.	–*	–	–	–	1
<i>North Korea</i>	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0
<i>South Korea</i>	10	3	Yes	–	–	–	Yes	2–3

Country	UNROCA		Detail	Nat. prod.	Inventory	Other IO	Public reports	Level of transparency
	1992–2001	1999–2001						
<i>Taiwan</i>	n.a. <sup>u</sup>	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	–	–	Yes	2–3
<b>European Union</b>								
Austria	10	3	Yes	Yes	Yes	OSCE	Yes	3
Belgium	10	3	Yes	–	– <sup>v</sup>	OSCE	Yes	3
Denmark	10*	3*	Yes	Yes	Yes	OSCE	Yes	3
Finland	10*	3*	Yes	Yes	Yes	OSCE	Yes	3
France	10	3	Yes	Yes	Yes	OSCE	Yes	3
Germany	10*	3*	Yes	Yes	Yes	OSCE	Yes	3
Greece	10*	3*	Yes	Yes	Yes	OSCE	Yes	3
Ireland	10	3	Yes	–*	Yes	OSCE	Yes	3
Italy	10*	3*	Yes	–	– <sup>w</sup>	OSCE	Yes	3
Luxembourg	9*	3*	Yes	–*	– <sup>x</sup>	OSCE	Yes	3
Netherlands	10*	3*	Yes	Yes	Yes	OSCE	Yes	3
Portugal	10*	3*	Yes	–	– <sup>v</sup>	OSCE	Yes	3
Spain	10	3	Yes	Yes	Yes	OSCE	Yes	3
Sweden	10*	3*	Yes	Yes	Yes	OSCE	Yes	3
UK	10	3	Yes	Yes	Yes	OSCE	Yes	3
<b>European Union candidates</b>								
Bulgaria	8	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	OSCE	?	2–3
Cyprus	9*	3*	Yes	–*	–	OSCE	–	2–3
Czech Rep.	10*	3*	Yes	–	– <sup>z</sup>	OSCE	Yes	3
Estonia	8*	3*	Yes	Yes*	Yes	OSCE	?	3
Hungary	10*	3*	Yes	–	– <sup>aa</sup>	OSCE	Yes	3
Latvia	6*	3*	–	–*	–	OSCE	?	2
Lithuania	8	3	Yes	–*	–	OSCE	?	2
Malta	10*	3*	Yes	– <sup>bb</sup>	–	OSCE	?	3
Poland	9*	2*	Yes	Yes	Yes	OSCE	Yes	3
Romania	10*	3*	Yes	Yes	Yes	OSCE	Yes	3
Slovakia	10*	3*	Yes	Yes	Yes	OSCE	Yes	2–3
Slovenia	10*	3*	Yes	–	–	OSCE	Yes	3
Turkey	10*	3*	Yes	Yes	Yes	OSCE	Yes	3
<b>Other European</b>								
Albania	3*	1*	n.a.	–*	– <sup>cc</sup>	OSCE	–	2
Andorra	8*	3*	n.a. <sup>dd</sup>	–*	–	OSCE	?	2–3
Armenia	9*	3*	Yes	Yes*	Yes	OSCE	–	2
Azerbaijan	5	2	n.a.	–*	– <sup>ee</sup>	OSCE	–	2
Belarus	8*	3*	Yes	–	– <sup>ff</sup>	OSCE	–	2
Bosnia & Herzegovina	3*	3*	Yes	–	–	OSCE	–	2
Croatia	9*	3*	n.a. <sup>gg</sup>	Yes	Yes <sup>hh</sup>	OSCE	–	2–3
Georgia	9*	3*	Yes	– <sup>ii</sup>	Yes	OSCE	–	2
Holy See	–	–	n.a.	–*	–	OSCE	–	0
Iceland	10*	3*	n.a.	–*	–	OSCE	Yes	3
Liechtenstein	10*	3*	n.a.	–*	–	OSCE	?	3
Macedonia	5	3	Yes	Yes	Yes	OSCE	–	2

Country	UNROCA							
	1992–2001	1999–2001	Detail	Nat. prod.	Inven-tory	Other IO	Public reports	Level of transparency
Moldova <sup>jj</sup>	4*	2*	Yes	–*	–	OSCE	?	2
Monaco	7*	3*	n.a.	–*	–	OSCE	?	?
Norway	10*	3*	Yes	–	–	OSCE	Yes	3
Russia	8	3	–	–	–	OSCE	Yes	3
San Marino	3	2	n.a.	–*	–	OSCE	?	?
Serbia & Montenegro <sup>kk</sup>	4*	1*	n.a. <sup>ll</sup>	–	–	OSCE	?	?
Switzerland	10* <sup>mm</sup>	3*	Yes	Yes	Yes	OSCE	Yes	3
Ukraine	10*	3*	Yes	–	–	OSCE	–	2

The table does not take into account arms procurement data that are not available to other countries or data on arms exports. The years given in the columns and the notes are the years covered in the replies to the UNROCA, not the years in which the replies were submitted. Replies submitted to the UNROCA usually provide data for the previous calendar year (e.g., replies submitted in 2003 usually cover transfers made in 2002 only). Some countries have submitted replies that cover several years rather than just the previous calendar year.

The figures in the column ‘1992–2001’ indicate the number of years for which a country reported arms imports to the UNROCA in the period 1992–2001.

The figures in the column ‘1999–2001’ indicate the number of years for which a country reported arms imports to the UNROCA in the period 1999–2001. For both columns, \* indicates that the country also reported in 2002. It is possible that some reports for 2002 have not yet been received by the UNROCA.

‘Detail’ indicates whether or not a country provided weapon designations (model numbers, e.g. ‘F–16’ rather than only ‘combat aircraft’) for the most recent year in which the country reported to the UNROCA.

‘n.a.’ indicates that all of the country’s import reports to the UNROCA have been ‘nil’ replies.

‘Nat. prod.’, national production, indicates whether data were provided as ‘background information’ on arms acquisitions from national production for the most recent year in which the country reported.

\* indicates that information in publicly available sources suggests that the country has no arms production capability.

‘Inventory’ indicates whether data were provided as ‘background information’ on the arms inventory for the most recent year in which the country reported to the UNROCA.

‘Other IO’ indicates membership of an international organization other than the UN which has a data exchange on arms acquisitions and/or inventory. International organizations whose data exchanges cover only arms exports, such as the Wassenaar Arrangement, are not included.

For member states of the OAS, (s) indicates that the state has signed the OAS Convention (the Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisitions) and (r) indicates that the state has ratified the convention.

'Public records' indicates whether the country makes available to the public its records on procurement (e.g., yearly reports on defence procurement, parliamentary discussions, individual procurement notifications and press releases on procurement/contracts), including data on numbers and types of weapon that have been or will be procured (as opposed to financial or budget data only).

Level of transparency (for 1999 to 25 June 2003):

3 = High level of transparency; provides the public with details for all types of arms procurement, including exact numbers and types of major weapons and at least some smaller weapons and other military equipment.

2 = Medium level of transparency; provides details for all types of arms procurement with exact numbers and types or provides data on arms inventories, but only on major weapons. These details are not necessarily made available to the public.

1 = Low level of transparency; provides very general information only (general numbers of weapon types procured, or import data as requested by the UNROCA only).

0 = No transparency; provides no or almost no information on arms procurement (an exception can be occasional press statements on specific orders placed).

n/a = not applicable.

- = no/ none.

? = data not available or impossible to assess the level of transparency due to lack of data.

For definitions of the acronyms used in this appendix, see page v.

<sup>a</sup> Colombia replied in 1992, but instead of reporting its imports, it filled in its inventory on the reporting form.

<sup>b</sup> Cuba is a member of the OAS, but has been excluded from participation since 1962.

<sup>c</sup> Canada is also part of the data exchange within the OSCE, but only for forces in Europe.

<sup>d</sup> The USA is also part of the data exchange within the OSCE, but only for forces in Europe.

<sup>e</sup> South Africa provided specific details of weapons exported, but not of weapons imported, in all years when it reported exports.

<sup>f</sup> Eritrea became independent in 1993.

<sup>g</sup> 'United Republic of Tanzania' in the UNROCA database.

<sup>h</sup> Chad provided specific details of weapons exported, but not of weapons imported in 1993.

<sup>i</sup> Since Aug. 1991, Iraq has been under a UN embargo prohibiting all deliveries of weapons.

<sup>j</sup> Between Mar. 1992 and Apr. 1999, Libya was under a UN embargo prohibiting all deliveries of weapons.

<sup>k</sup> Palestine is not recognized as an independent state by the UN and has therefore not been asked to provide data to the UNROCA.

<sup>l</sup> The government of Afghanistan has changed dramatically since 2001 and the degree of transparency of the new government cannot yet be assessed.

<sup>m</sup> Turkmenistan provided specific details on weapons exported, but not on weapons imported in 1999.

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<sup>n</sup> Cambodia provided specific details on weapons in its inventory in 2000.

<sup>o</sup> Indonesia provided details on weapons imported until 1998, but has provided no details on weapons imported since then.

<sup>p</sup> Most of these replies do not pertain to actual deliveries of weapons, but rather on contracts signed (in some cases, with delivery scheduled for several years later).

<sup>q</sup> Timor-Leste has been independent since May 2002.

<sup>r</sup> New Zealand provided information on procurement through national production and on inventory until 2001, but did not do so for 2002.

<sup>s</sup> Palau has been independent since 1994. The country has no armed forces, and its defence is still the responsibility of the USA, which previously administered it as a trust territory.

<sup>t</sup> Since 1997, China has boycotted the UNROCA to protest reporting by the USA of transfers to Taiwan. See 'Coverage and participation', chapter 2.

<sup>u</sup> Taiwan is not a member of the UN and has not been asked to report to the UNROCA.

<sup>v</sup> Belgium provided data on its arms inventory until 2000, but did not do so in 2001.

<sup>w</sup> Italy provided data on its arms procurement through national production and inventory until 2001, but did not do so in 2002.

<sup>x</sup> Luxembourg provided data on its arms procurement through national production and its inventory between 1996 and 2000, but did not do so in 2001 or 2002.

<sup>y</sup> Portugal provided data on its arms procurement through national production and its inventory between 1992 and 2001, but did not do so in 2002.

<sup>z</sup> The Czech Republic provided data on its arms procurement through national production and inventory until 2000, but did not do so in 2001 or 2002.

<sup>aa</sup> Hungary provided data on its arms procurement through national production and inventory in 1993 and 1998.

<sup>bb</sup> Malta replied in 1994 that it procures no weapons through national production.

<sup>cc</sup> Albania provided data on its inventory in 1992.

<sup>dd</sup> Andorra provided details on small arms imported in 1995.

<sup>ee</sup> Azerbaijan provided data on its inventory between 1995 and 1997.

<sup>ff</sup> Belarus provided data on its inventory in 1993 and 1995.

<sup>gg</sup> Croatia provided details on weapons exported, but not on weapons imported in 2000.

<sup>hh</sup> Croatia provided data on its arms procurement through national production and its arms inventory for 2001 but not for 2002.

<sup>ii</sup> Georgia provided data on its arms procurement through national production in 1999.

<sup>jj</sup> 'Republic of Moldova' in the UNROCA database.

<sup>kk</sup> In 2002, the name of Yugoslavia was changed to Serbia and Montenegro.

<sup>ll</sup> Yugoslavia (now Serbia and Montenegro) provided specific details on weapons exported in 2001.

<sup>mm</sup> Switzerland, while not a member of the UN until 2002, has been asked to report to the UNROCA every year and has done so.

*Source:* Compiled by the author. UNROCA data from the UNROCA database, at URL <[http://disarmament.un.org/UN\\_REGISTER.nsf](http://disarmament.un.org/UN_REGISTER.nsf)>, as of 25 June 2003. Other data from SIPRI files.



## Appendix 2. United Nations General Assembly Resolution 46/36 L of 9 December 1991

### Transparency in armaments

*The General Assembly,*

*Realizing* that excessive and destabilizing arms build-ups pose a threat to national, regional and international peace and security, particularly by aggravating tensions and conflict situations, giving rise to serious and urgent concerns,

*Noting with satisfaction* that the current international environment and recent agreements and measures in the field of arms limitation and disarmament make it a propitious time to work towards easing tensions and a just resolution of conflict situations, as well as more openness and transparency in military matters,

*Recalling* the consensus among Member States on implementing confidence-building measures, including transparency and exchange of relevant information on armaments, likely to reduce the occurrence of dangerous misperceptions about the intentions of States and to promote trust among States,

*Considering* that increased openness and transparency in the field of armaments could enhance confidence, ease tensions, strengthen regional and international peace and security and contribute to restraint in military production and the transfer of arms,

*Realizing* the urgent need to resolve underlying conflicts, to diminish tensions and to accelerate efforts towards general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control with a view to maintaining regional and international peace and security in a world free from the scourge of war and the burden of armaments,

*Recalling also* that in paragraph 85 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly it urged major arms supplier and recipient countries

to consult on the limitation of all types of international transfer of conventional arms,

*Disturbed* by the destabilizing and destructive effects of the illicit arms trade, particularly for the internal situation of affected States and the violation of human rights,

*Bearing in mind* that, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, Member States have undertaken to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources, and that the reduction of world military expenditures could have a significant positive impact for the social and economic development of all peoples,

*Reaffirming* the important role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and the commitment of Member States to take concrete steps in order to strengthen that role,

*Recalling* its resolution 43/75 I of 7 December 1988,

*Welcoming* the study submitted by the Secretary-General, pursuant to paragraph 5 of resolution 43/75 I and prepared with the assistance of governmental experts, on ways and means of promoting transparency in international transfers of conventional arms, as well as the problem of the illicit arms trade, taking into account views of Member States and other relevant information,

*Recognizing* the major contribution of an enhanced level of transparency in armaments to confidence-building and security among States, and also recognizing the urgent need to establish, under the auspices of the United Nations, as a first step in this direction, a universal and non-discriminatory register to include data on international arms transfers as well as other interrelated information provided to the Secretary-General,

*Stressing* the importance of greater transparency in the interest of promoting readiness to exercise restraint in accumulation of armaments,

*Considering* that the standardized reporting of international arms transfers together with the provision of other interrelated information to a United Nations register will constitute further important steps forward in the promotion of transparency in military matters and, as such, will enhance the role and effectiveness of the United Nations in promoting arms limitation and disarmament, as well as in maintaining international peace and security;

*Recognizing also* the importance of the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction,

1. *Recognizes* that an increased level of openness and transparency in the field of armaments would enhance confidence, promote stability, help States to exercise restraint, ease tensions and strengthen regional and international peace and security;

2. *Declares its determination* to prevent the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms, including conventional arms, in order to promote stability and strengthen regional or international peace and security, taking into account the legitimate security needs of States and the principle of undiminished security at the lowest possible level of armaments;

3. *Reaffirms* the inherent right to individual or collective self-defence recognized in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, which implies that States also have the right to acquire arms with which to defend themselves;

4. *Reiterates its conviction*, as expressed in its resolution 43/75 I, that arms transfers in all their aspects deserve serious consideration by the international community, *inter alia*, because of:

(a) Their potential effects in further destabilizing areas where tension and regional conflict threaten international peace and security and national security;

(b) Their potentially negative effects on the progress of the peaceful social and economic development of all peoples;

(c) The danger of increasing illicit and covert arms trafficking;

5. *Calls upon* all Member States to exercise due restraint in exports and imports of conventional arms, particularly in situations of tension or conflict, and to ensure that they have in place an adequate body of laws and administrative procedures regarding the transfer of arms and to adopt strict measures for their enforcement;

6. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his study on ways and means of promoting transparency in international transfers of conventional arms, which also addressed the problem of the illicit arms trade;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to establish and maintain at United Nations Headquarters in New York a universal and non-discriminatory Register of Conventional Arms, to include data on international arms transfers as well as information provided by Member States on military holdings, procurement through national production and relevant policies, as set out in paragraph 10 below and in accordance with procedures and input requirements initially comprising those set out in the annex to the present resolution and subsequently incorporating any adjustments to the annex decided upon by the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session in the light of the recommendations of the panel referred to in paragraph 8 below;

8. *Also requests* the Secretary-General, with the assistance of a panel of governmental technical experts to be nominated by him on the basis of equitable geographical representation, to elaborate the technical procedures and to make any adjustments to the annex to the present resolution necessary for the effective operation of the Register, and to prepare a report on the modalities for early expansion of the scope of the Register by the addition of further categories of equipment and inclusion of data on military holdings and procurement through national production, and to report to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session;

9. *Calls upon* all Member States to provide annually for the Register data on imports and exports of arms in accordance with the procedures established by paragraphs 7 and 8 above;

10. *Invites* Member States, pending the expansion of the Register, also to provide to the Secretary-General, with their annual report on imports and exports of arms, available background information regarding their military holdings, procurement through national production and relevant policies, and requests the Secretary-General to record this material and to make it available for consultation by Member States at their request;

11. *Decides*, with a view to future expansion, to keep the scope of and the participation in the Register under review, and, to this end:

(a) *Invites* Member States to provide the Secretary-General with their views, not later than 30 April 1994, on:

(i) The operation of the Register during its first two years;

(ii) The addition of further categories of equipment and the elaboration of the Register to include military holdings and procurement through national production;

(b) *Requests* the Secretary-General, with the assistance of a group of governmental experts convened in 1994 on the basis of equitable geographical representation, to prepare a report on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development, taking into account the work of the Conference on Disarmament as set forth in paragraphs 12 to 15 below and the views expressed by Member States, for submission to the General Assembly with a view to a decision at its forty-ninth session;

12. *Requests* the Conference on Disarmament to address, as soon as possible, the question of the interrelated aspects of the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms, including military holdings and procurement through national production, and to elaborate universal and non-discriminatory practical means to increase openness and transparency in this field;

13. *Also requests* the Conference on Disarmament to address the problems of, and

the elaboration of practical means to increase, openness and transparency related to the transfer of high technology with military applications and to weapons of mass destruction, in accordance with existing legal instruments;

14. *Invites* the Secretary-General to provide to the Conference on Disarmament all relevant information, including, *inter alia*, views submitted to him by Member States and information provided under the United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures, as well as on the work of the Disarmament Commission under its agenda item entitled 'Objective information on military matters';

15. *Further requests* the Conference on Disarmament to include in its annual report to the General Assembly a report on its work on this issue;

16. *Invites* all Member States, in the meantime, to take measures on a national, regional and global basis, including within the appropriate forums, to promote openness and transparency in armaments;

17. *Calls upon* all Member States to cooperate at a regional and subregional level, taking fully into account the specific conditions prevailing in the region or subregion, with a view to enhancing and coordinating international efforts aimed at increased openness and transparency in armaments;

18. *Also invites* all Member States to inform the Secretary-General of their national arms import and export policies, legislation and administrative procedures, both as regards authorization of arms transfers and prevention of illicit transfers;

19. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session on progress made in implementing the present resolution, including relevant information provided by Member States;

20. *Notes* that effective implementation of the present resolution will require an up-to-date database system in the Department for Disarmament Affairs of the Secretariat;

21. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-seventh session an item entitled 'Transparency in armaments'.

## ANNEX

**Register of Conventional Arms**

1. The Register of Conventional Arms ('the Register') shall be established, with effect from 1 January 1992, and maintained at the Headquarters of the United Nations in New York.

2. Concerning international arms transfers:

(a) Member States are requested to provide data for the Register, addressed to the Secretary-General, on the number of items in the following categories of equipment imported into or exported from their territory:

*I. Battle tanks*

A tracked or wheeled self-propelled armoured fighting vehicle with high cross-country mobility and a high level of self-protection, weighing at least 16.5 metric tonnes unladen weight, with a high muzzle velocity direct fire main gun of at least 75 millimetres calibre.

*II. Armoured combat vehicles*

A tracked or wheeled self-propelled vehicle, with armoured protection and cross-country capability, either: (a) designed and equipped to transport a squad of four or more infantrymen, or (b) armed with an integral or organic weapon of at least 20 millimetres calibre or an anti-tank missile launcher.

*III. Large calibre artillery systems*

A gun, howitzer, artillery piece combining the characteristics of a gun and a howitzer, mortar or multiple-launch rocket system, capable of engaging surface targets by delivering primarily indirect fire, with a calibre of 100 millimetres and above.

*IV. Combat aircraft*

A fixed-wing or variable-geometry wing aircraft armed and equipped to engage targets by employing guided missiles, unguided rockets, bombs, guns, cannons, or other weapons of destruction.

*V. Attack helicopters*

A rotary-wing aircraft equipped to employ anti-armour, air-to-ground, or air-to-air

guided weapons and equipped with an integrated fire control and aiming system for these weapons.

*VI. Warships*

A vessel or submarine with a standard displacement of 850 metric tonnes or above, armed or equipped for military use.

*VII. Missiles or missile systems*

A guided rocket, ballistic or cruise missile capable of delivering a payload to a range of at least 25 kilometres, or a vehicle, apparatus or device designed or modified for launching such munitions.

(b) Data on imports provided under the present paragraph shall also specify the supplying State; data on exports shall also specify the recipient State and the State of origin if not the exporting State;

(c) Each Member State is requested to provide data on an annual basis by 30 April each year in respect of imports into and exports from their territory in the previous calendar year;

(d) The first such registration shall take place by 30 April 1993 in respect of the calendar year 1992;

(e) The data so provided shall be recorded in respect of each Member State;

(f) Arms 'exports and imports' represent in the present resolution, including its annex, all forms of arms transfers under terms of grant, credit, barter or cash.

3. Concerning other interrelated information:

(a) Member States are invited also to provide to the Secretary-General available background information regarding their military holdings, procurement through national production, and relevant policies;

(b) The information so provided shall be recorded in respect of each Member State.

4. The Register shall be open for consultation by representatives of Member States at any time.

5. In addition, the Secretary-General shall provide annually a consolidated report to the General Assembly of the data registered, together with an index of the other inter-related information.

APPENDIX B  
Standardized forms for reporting international transfers of conventional arms

*EXPORTS*  
Report of international conventional arms transfers  
(according to United Nations General Assembly resolution 46/36 L)  
Reporting country: \_\_\_\_\_  
Calendar year: 1992

A Category (I–VII)	B Final importer State(s)	C Number of items	D* State of origin (if not exporter)	E* Intermediate location (if any)	REMARKS**	
					Description of item	Comments on the transfer
I. Battle tanks	1) 2) 3)					
II. Armoured combat vehicles	1) 2) 3)					
III. Large calibre artillery systems	1) 2) 3)					
IV. Combat aircraft	1) 2) 3)					
V. Attack helicopters	1) 2) 3)					
VI. Warships	1) 2) 3)					
VII. Missiles and missile launchers	1) 2) 3)					

Background information provided: yes/no \_\_\_\_\_

\* See para. 18 of the present report.  
\*\* See para. 19 of the present report.

*Note:* ‘Para. 18’ refers to paragraph 18 of United Nations, Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, UN document A/47/342, 14 Aug. 1992, p. 13, which reads: ‘Columns D and E on the form are included to accommodate data on countries which are not the countries of export or import. In the case of an international transfer involving an export of equipment by a State other than the State of origin, the name of the country of origin should be entered in column D. In the case of an international arms transfer involving transport of equipment to an intermediate location, or involving retention of equipment at an intermediate location for the purpose of the integration of equipment of one category within the Register with equipment of another category, the name of the intermediate location should be entered in column E (e.g. the export of missiles to an intermediate location for integration there with a combat aircraft manufactured at the intermediate location, or vice versa).’ ‘Para. 19’ refers to paragraph 19 of United Nations, Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, UN document A/47/342, 14 Aug. 1992, p. 13, which reads: ‘The right hand column on the form, divided into two parts, “description of item” and “comments on the transfer”, is designed to accommodate additional information on the transfers. Since the provision of such information might be affected by security and other relevant concerns of Member States, this column should be filled in at Member States’ discretion; no specific patterns are prescribed. To aid the understanding of the international transfers reported, Member States may wish to enter designation, type or model of equipment, or use various

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descriptive elements contained in the definitions of categories I to VII, which also serve as guides to describe equipment transferred. Member States may also use this column to clarify, for example, that a transfer is of obsolete equipment, the result of co-production, or for other such explanatory remarks as Member States see fit.’

APPENDIX B (concluded)  
*Standardized forms for reporting international transfers of conventional arms*

**IMPORTS**  
 Report of international conventional arms transfers  
 (according to United Nations General Assembly resolution 46/36 L)  
 Reporting country: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Calendar year: 1992

A Category (I-VII)	B Final exporter State(s)	C Number of items	D* State of origin (if not exporter)	E* Intermediate location (if any)	REMARKS**	
					Description of item	Comments on the transfer
I. Battle tanks	1) 2) 3)					
II. Armoured combat vehicles	1) 2) 3)					
III. Large calibre artillery systems	1) 2) 3)					
IV. Combat aircraft	1) 2) 3)					
V. Attack helicopters	1) 2) 3)					
VI. Warships	1) 2) 3)					
VII. Missiles and missile launchers	1) 2) 3)					

Background information provided: yes/no \_\_\_\_\_

\* See para. 18 of the present report.  
 \*\* See para. 19 of the present report.

*Source:* Excerpt from United Nations, Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, UN document A/47/342, 14 Aug. 1992, pp. 13–14, 21–27 (Appendix A: General Assembly Resolution 46/36 L of 9 December 1991: Transparency in armaments) and pp. 28–29 (Appendix B: Standardized forms for reporting international transfers of conventional arms). For updated versions of the reporting forms, see United Nations, Report of the Secretary-General on the continuing operation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and its further development, UN document A/52/316, 29 Aug. 1997, pp. 30–33.

## About the author

Siemon T. Wezeman (Netherlands) is a Researcher on the SIPRI Arms Transfers Project. He is co-author (with Edward J. Laurance and Herbert Wulf) of SIPRI Research Report no. 6, *Arms Watch: SIPRI Report on the First Year of the UN Register of Conventional Arms* (1993); (with Bates Gill and J. N. Mak) of *ASEAN Arms Acquisitions: Developing Transparency* (1995) and (with Pieter D. Wezeman) of *Dutch Surplus Weapons*, a paper for the Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC) (1996). He contributed to SIPRI Research Report no. 13, *Arms, Transparency and Security in South-East Asia*, edited by Bates Gill and J. N. Mak (1997), and has contributed to the SIPRI Yearbook since 1993.

