The UN Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA):
Developments, Trends, Challenges and Opportunities

BACKGROUND PAPER

BY

THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARIAT
Reporting voluntarily on weapons transfers can build trust between countries. Sharing such information helps to determine whether excessive or destabilizing accumulations of arms is taking place, and may contribute to early warning and preventive diplomacy. Furthermore, openness about armaments may encourage restraint in the transfer or production of arms. Transparency is as important for those countries that are large-scale arms traders, as it is for those importing or exporting few or no weapons.

As the Secretary-General outlined at the start of the new year, “mistrust among world powers is reaching fever pitch” and the potential of escalation is palpable. It is in this time of heightened tension and risks of misunderstandings and misperceptions that we are celebrating the 30th anniversary of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA), which became operational in 1992. UNROCA is a global good created by the United Nations to support transparency, confidence-building and dialogue in military matters. It provides an opportunity for Member States to share official national information on exports and imports of conventional arms, as well as on procurement through national production of such weapons, military holdings, and relevant national policies, legislation and doctrine.

Together with the Military Expenditure Report, UNROCA remains an important global transparency and confidence-building mechanism in the field of conventional arms. It has inspired other regional and multilateral instruments that seek to increase transparency in the international arms trade and contribute to regional and international confidence-building. In principle, these instruments reinforce the function of UNROCA by creating obligations and promoting efforts that would contribute to its goals. Yet there is a varying degree of overlap between UNROCA and these instruments, underscoring the need for coordination and streamlining in the implementation of the instruments.¹

Since 1994, UNROCA has been reviewed every three years to allow it to adapt to changing security environment and advances in technologies. As a result, its scope has been modestly expanded. Currently, Member States are encouraged to report on either international transfer of seven categories of major conventional arms or under the seven-plus-one formula, which includes the seven categories and international transfer of small arms and light weapons.

Despite the efforts of previous groups of governmental experts (GGE) to further develop UNROCA, less and less Member States have been participating. In the early 2000s, almost two thirds of the Member States submitted annual reports. Today, it is less than a quarter. Moreover, regional disparities in reporting remain high with higher participation by Eastern European States and Western European and other States, and lower participation by African States, Asia-Pacific States and Latin American and Caribbean States. Statistics of reporting suggest that the bulk of it is done by States from regions with a relatively large number of arms exporting countries. Although about 90 per cent of the world’s international transfers of conventional arms are reported to UNROCA, given that the information on these transfers submitted to UNROCA originate overwhelmingly from exporting countries, this is insufficient for better understanding the statistics and for enabling UNROCA to achieve its goal of serving as a universal transparency and confidence-building mechanism in the field of conventional arms. Member States that only import conventional arms, as well as those that have neither imports nor exports to report to UNROCA should still be encouraged to participate in order to strengthen the utility of the instrument for confidence-building purposes.

To address this trend, the 2019 GGE reviewed the relevance of UNROCA in addition to considering its operation and further development. It became clear that the relevance of UNROCA should be understood in terms not only of the level of participation and scope, but also of how the instrument could be used in such a way as to contribute to transparency and confidence-building among Members States. Looking at the relevance of UNROCA to international peace and security and possible incentives to encourage participation such as benefit for national security would be a useful starting point for deliberations of the 2022 GGE, before turning to developments in conventional arms and conflicts that should be addressed by UNROCA and concrete steps to encourage increased participation.

¹ See paragraphs 41-46 for more information.
1. **Introduction**

1. Reporting voluntarily on weapons transfers is a military confidence-building measure. Sharing such information builds trust among neighbours, helps determine whether excessive or destabilising accumulations of arms are taking place, and may thus contribute to early warning and preventive diplomacy.

2. Also, arms trade transparency can be seen as an invitation for dialogue. Transparency by an exporting country can be an indication that it has nothing to hide in its export policy and that it is open to scrutiny over its arms transfers. Transparency by an importing country can be an indication that it stands ready to discuss its decisions to increase or modernise its firepower.

3. The agreed global arrangement for such information exchange is the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA), created in 1991 at the initiative of the Netherlands, by a resolution of the UN General Assembly. The resolution’s principle is simple: establish an annual reporting mechanism through which governments share information on international transfers of specific conventional weapons systems that took place in the previous year. The UN then makes the reported information public. This provides an authoritative insight into current export policies and trends, and into the build-up and volume of conventional arsenals in receiving countries.

**What to report?**

The system of UNROCA reporting comprises two levels of transparency. First, Member States participate in the Register by reporting on either international transfers of seven categories of major conventional arms or under the seven-plus-one formula, which includes the seven categories and international transfers of small arms and light weapons for States in a position to do so. Member States are invited to contribute to higher level of transparency by providing additional background information on holdings and procurement through national production of these conventional arms and related relevant policies and national legislation. However, Member States that submit only the additional background information are considered not to have participated in UNROCA.

**International transfers of seven categories**

I. Battle tanks  
II. Armoured combat vehicles  
III. Large-calibre artillery systems  
IV. Combat aircraft and unmanned combat aerial vehicles  
V. Attack helicopters  
VI. Warships  
VII. Missiles / missile launchers

Member States, in a position to do so, provide information on international transfers of small arms & light weapons.

Additionally, countries can report on:
- Military holdings  
- Procurement through national production  
- Relevant policies / national legislation
4. UNROCA’s ability to achieve its declared aim depends on how well it covers all relevant weapons categories, and the extent of participation by governments. **UNROCA focuses primarily on transfers of seven categories of conventional arms.** The majority of international transfers of major weapons systems is reported to UNROCA. In 2003, countries decided that they could also report to UNROCA on small arms. Most countries submitting reports now include small arms in their submissions.

**Review every three years**

5. When the General Assembly created UNROCA, it also called for its subsequent regular review in order to allow the Register to adapt to a changing security environment where new weapons may become prevalent. Thus, one of the outcomes of the review could include recommendations to amend the scope of the Register to take into account such developments, as well as adjustments to the status of the background information that Member States are invited to provide. Thus, since 1994, the Secretary-General has appointed a Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) every three years to review the operation of UNROCA and make recommendations for its further development. As a result of GGE recommendations, its scope has been modestly expanded a number of times.

6. The 2016 governmental expert report included a recommendation for a new description and heading for category IV to include unmanned combat aerial vehicles as a subcategory, with the heading amended to read “Combat aircraft and unmanned combat aerial vehicles.”

7. The 2019 GGE also recommended that Member States, in a position do so, use the “seven plus one formula” to provide information on exports and imports of small arms and light weapons, as appropriate.

8. This paper provides a broad overview of the operation of UNROCA since its establishment in 1992. Following the practice recommended by the 2019 GGE, it recommends that the 2022 GGE examines the relevance of the UNROCA by exploring the relationship between participation, scope, and the use of UNROCA. The paper identifies key issues for consideration and discussion by previous GGEs, including:

- The GGE should continue to examine the impact of the recommendations made by previous GGEs to increase participation in UNROCA and the use of UNROCA’s data. In addition to assessing the impact of the recommendations of previous GGEs on participation in, and use of, the UNROCA, the 2022 GGE can explore other ways to support achieving the objective of the UNROCA. This may include outreach sessions with secretariats of (sub)-regional organizations, bilateral / trilateral workshops with States committed to improving military confidence-building between / among them, and other avenues for promoting the instrument. Without sustained attention to the potential use of UNROCA’s data, the level of reporting to the instrument could continue to fall.

- More analysis could be undertaken on the asymmetry between reporting on exports and reporting on imports.

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2 UNROCA has been reviewed every 3 years with the assistance of a GGE, with the exception of the 2012 GGE, which was postponed to 2013.

3 In its resolution 46/36 L, which establishes the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, the General Assembly decided, with a view to future expansion, to keep the scope of and the participation in the Register under review, including with regard to the addition of further categories of equipment and the elaboration of the Register to include military holdings and procurement through national production. See A/46/36 L, paragraph 11 (a).

4 The 2016 and 2019 Groups viewed the “seven plus one formula” as the reporting of international transfers of small arms and light weapons by Member States in parallel with the seven categories of the Register, using the standardized reporting form for international transfers of small arms and light weapons. Small arms and light weapons would not be represented as an eighth category on the standardized reporting form used for the existing seven categories. See paragraph 75 of the report of the 2016 GGE (A/71/259) and paragraph 115 of the 2019 GGE (A/74/211).

5 Paragraph 15 of the report of the 2013 GGE: “In discussing relevance and universality, the Group considered a range of factors: whether the Register addressed the security concerns of all Member States and regions, and the effect of misperceptions on regional participation; the fact that the Register did not include some categories of conventional arms, in particular small arms and light weapons; and the absence of data in the Register on non-State actors and the impact of the illicit trade on the security interests of Member States in various regions. The Group discussed ways of addressing these issues, including the potential contribution that the Register could make in identifying the point of diversion into the illicit trade. In addition, the Group considered the need for the Register to address technological developments to ensure that it reflected the security concerns of Member States and remained relevant.”

6 Paragraphs 121 and 122 of the 2019 GGE report include recommendations on increasing participation in UNROCA and use of the Register’s data. Paragraph 123 recommends that the next GGE (2022) review the impact of the implementation of these measures.
• In the same vein, the GGE may wish to engage in a discussion on the merits of elevating the status of reporting on procurement through national production, as it would give more balance to the instrument and could encourage more participation by importing States.

• Efforts should be made to raise awareness of the Register among relevant military officials and enhance their understanding of the benefits of transparency in armaments as a means to build confidence among States. UNODA, with the support of Member States, could contribute to those efforts, particularly by engaging with military officials in workshops, briefings and other activities aimed at promoting the Register. These efforts are consistent with the mandate given by Member States to UNODA and in line with the Agenda for Disarmament of the Secretary-General.  

• National Points of Contact on the Register could also play a role in this regard.

• In its discussion on the potential expansion of the scope of the Register, the GGE could consider the proposals for adjustments to the existing categories contained in previous GGE reports, as well as the increasing development and deployment of surface (land and water) and underwater unmanned vehicles / crafts in addition to unmanned aircraft.

• The GGE may wish to review the current use of the “seven plus one formula” and the proposal for an eighth category for small arms and light weapons. The Group can revisit the description for small arms and light weapons contained in paragraph 64 of the 2019 GGE in this regard.

• The GGE could continue its consideration of the implications for UNROCA of discussions on what would constitute “offensive” and “defensive” weapons.

• Opportunities for coordination between global and regional transparency commitments (e.g. ASEAN, ECCAS, OAS, OSCE) to increase participation in, and use of, the UNROCA could be discussed.

• The GGE may wish to consider adding a field in the standardised report form for providing information on model and type of weapon systems.

9. The GGE is a master of its own agenda. It can choose to take up any issue it deems pertinent, or to not take up any issue it deems less relevant.

2. CURRENT SUBSTANTIATIVE ISSUES

1) RELEVANCE OF THE REGISTER AS CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURE, INCLUDING IN POST-CONFLICT SITUATIONS

10. UNROCA was established as a confidence-building measure designed to prevent the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms, promote stability and strengthen regional or international peace and security. Indeed, in its initial resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to make available arms transfers data for consultations by Member States at their request. Member States should be encouraged to make use of the transparency function of UNROCA and engage with one another in discussions concerning data provided to the Register.

11. Transparency in armaments is not a goal in itself. Annual reporting should be a building block for confidence-building actions. Submissions to UNROCA could, in particular, form the basis for regular bilateral or (sub-)regional dialogue on defence plans, needs, and cooperation. This is important for the Register to fulfil its main function. To date, Member States have not regularly informed the Secretariat on the use of data provided to the Register for such purposes and therefore GGE discussions on the use of the Register rely on information provided by experts that participate in GGE sessions.

12. The Secretariat is not mandated to identify or investigate discrepancies between the data submitted by importing and exporting States, to seek clarification or explanations or to interpret the data submitted UNROCA. The Secretariat recognizes that UNROCA is potentially relevant in post-conflict settings. In recent years, experts on monitoring panels of sanction

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committees of the Security Council have sought data on arms transfers with a view to examining States' compliance with arms embargoes mandated by the Council. In particular, there is value in data regarding transfers to States bordering countries under a UN arms embargo.

13. Moreover, in post-conflict situations, UNROCA can be applied as a tool for security sector reform and peace building. After conflict, there is often little knowledge of the volume of weapons circulating in the area – even those under government control. When rebuilding armed forces and law enforcement institutions, careful consideration should be given to rearmament. Information provided to UNROCA can be used as a basis for discussions regarding the need for military hardware in a State having emerged from conflict or facing the lifting of an arms embargo. The Security Council expert panels on Côte d’Ivoire and Sudan have recommended, independently from each other, that a State in that situation submit a baseline assessment of their military holdings. An element not addressed in such recommendations is the assistance that would often be needed to properly execute such a country-wide baseline assessment of military holdings.

2) Expansion of the scope

14. UNROCA has a triennial review process, carried out by a Group of Governmental Experts, which has a mandate to consider the functioning of the instrument as well as its further development – particularly the expansion of its scope. Adjusting the scope of UNROCA is a key condition for the Register to maintain its relevance. The 1992 Panel of Governmental Technical Experts suggested that future review of the operation of UNROCA could take into account:

- The possibility of expanding existing categories by modifying their parameters (e.g. tonnage, range, calibre, roles, capabilities and characteristics) or by introducing new parameters, or by including subcategories;
- Significant technical developments relating to the weapons within the existing seven categories;
- The possibility of including weapons not covered by existing categories, which should be considered because of their destabilizing potential.

a) Adjustments to existing categories

15. The previous GGEs have examined the scope of each of the seven categories. As a result, the scope of UNROCA has been expanded several times to encompass new types of weapons or to enhance the scope of individual categories.

- Category III (large-calibre artillery systems): The reporting threshold was lowered from 100 mm to 75 mm, thereby including a wider range of artillery systems (2003 GGE);
- Category IV (combat aircraft): a new description and heading for category IV was adopted, including unmanned combat aerial vehicles as a subcategory, with the heading amended to read “Combat aircraft and unmanned combat aerial vehicles” (2016 GGE);
- Category V (warships): The threshold of reporting warships (including submarines) was lowered from 750 metric tonnes to 500 metric tonnes, thereby including new classes of naval vessels such as mine-sweepers;
- Category VII (missiles and missile launchers) was subdivided in order to include, ‘on an exceptional basis’, the reporting of man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS) (2003 GGE).

16. Several proposals made by experts in past GGEs were not adopted (see Annex II). In recent GGEs, the questions of combat support capabilities, force projection and force multiplier capabilities, and the offensive-defensive nature of weapons systems arose frequently in the discussions of the experts.

b) Possible addition of new categories

i) Small arms

17. The question of the relevance of small arms and light weapons (SALW) to UNROCA has been a recurring one in recent reviews of the Register. In the first review in 1994, the need for including light weapons in its scope was underlined, as then SALW posed a great security concern to many States, particularly in the context of intra-State conflicts Africa. After the adoption of the United Nations Programme of Action to Combat Prevent and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons (PoA) in 2001, the GGEs began to consider including SALW in discussions on the scope. The 2003 GGE recommended that
interested Member States in a position to do so provide additional information on transfers of SALW made or modified to military specification and intended for military use.

**2006 GGE**

18. The 2006 GGE discussed introducing an eighth category in UNROCA for reporting SALW transfers. Also, noting the disparity of formats used by the limited number of States that had submitted SALW reports following the previous GGE’s recommendation, the 2006 GGE adopted an optional standardized reporting form on international transfers of SALW. However, reporting on SALW transfers was to remain part of ‘additional background information’.

**2009 GGE**

19. The 2009 GGE considered a proposal for adding SALW as a new category. It considered various proposals for a description of the scope of the category. Experts pointed out that more transparency for SALW would keep UNROCA relevant for many Member States that were not engaged in international transfers of the seven categories and have security concerns about the uncontrolled spread of SALW, particularly States in Africa and the Latin American and the Caribbean region. The GGE also noted UNROCA’s potential as a tool to assist in the monitoring and highlighting the destabilizing accumulation of SALW. Some experts mentioned the need for a clearer definition of SALW and capacity difficulties related to compiling data on international transfers of SALW. The Group did not reach agreement on adding SALW as a new category, and only noted that this issue merited continued review by future GGEs.

20. Following the work of the 2009 GGE, the General Assembly adopted resolution 64/54, requesting the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States, including whether the absence of SALW as a main category has limited UNROCA’s relevance and directly affected decisions on participation. Six out of 193 Member States provided their views on this issue in 2010, and one more Member State did so in 2011 (see Annex IV).

21. Despite the magnitude of problems regarding the uncontrolled spread of SALW in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, few States in these regions have reported SALW transfers. This may be an indication of limited capacity. It could also be an indication that these States did not see UNROCA as relevant to them without a formal SALW category. In addition, many of the largest exporters of SALW have not provided information on their transfers of SALW, even though they regularly report their transfers of conventional weapons in seven categories. Since SALW are traded in large quantities, concerns were expressed in earlier reviews of UNROCA that their formal inclusion could add a significant burden on both the States that report their transfers and on the Secretariat.

22. The above capacity concerns may have become less pertinent for many Member States following the inclusion of SALW in the scope of the ATT, and the resulting obligation on the States Parties to the Treaty – representing at present just over half of UN Member States – to report on their annual transfers of SALW.

**2013 GGE**

23. The 2013 GGE continued consideration of the issue of including SALW as a new category but did not reach agreement. The Group did, however, recommend that Member States in a position to do so provide data and information on international transfers of SALW on the basis of the standardized reporting form. In considering whether the inclusion of SALW as a new category would enhance the relevance of UNROCA, the Group noted that some States would not be in a position to submit data on their international transfers of SALW until these weapons were included as an UNROCA category.

**2016 GGE**

24. The 2016 GGE recommended that Member States use a ‘7+1 formula’ for reporting their international transfers of SALW, under which Member States report the international transfer of small arms and light weapons in parallel with the seven categories of the UNROCA, using the standardized reporting form for international transfers of small arms and light weapons.

25. The 2019 GGE recommended that Member States, in a position to do so, use the ‘7+1 formula’ to provide information on exports and imports of small arms and light weapons, including using the online reporting tool.

**ii) Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV)**

26. The discussion on the development of armed unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) and their relevance to the Register started in the 2003 GGE. The 2006 GGE discussed the issue intensively and observed that category IV (combat aircraft) already covered those armed unmanned platforms that were versions of combat aircraft or that otherwise fell within the existing definition but were not specifically designed as armed UAVs. The Group also discussed whether other types of UAVs, for example those designed for reconnaissance, should be covered by UNROCA. UAVs were also discussed in the context of category V (attack helicopters) in the 2006 GGE.
27. The 2009 GGE discussed a non-paper submitted by one of the experts that contained a proposal to add UAVs as a new category. Experts also reviewed a proposal to include those vehicles as a subcategory of category IV (combat aircraft), but they did not recommend any action.

28. The 2013 GGE considered that armed fixed-wing or variable-geometry wing UAVs are included in the category IV (combat aircraft) and that armed rotary-wing UAVs are included in category V (attack helicopters). Accordingly, the GGE recommended that Member States report on armed UAVs in a manner consistent with the descriptions provided.\(^9\)

29. The 2016 GGE recommended a new description and heading for category IV to include unmanned combat aerial vehicles as a subcategory, with the heading amended to read “Combat aircraft and unmanned combat aerial vehicles”.

30. The 2016 GGE reviewed several options to clarify the status of rotary-wing unmanned aerial vehicles in category V, “Attack helicopters”. The GGE considered a proposal to amend both the heading and the description of category V, to divide it into two subcategories: manned rotary-wing aircraft and unmanned rotary-wing aircraft. The GGE recommended that the 2019 GGE further consider the above-mentioned proposal, paying particular attention to actual transfers of, and developments in relevant technologies of, rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles. The GGE also encouraged those Member States providing information on international transfers of rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles to utilize the comments column of the reporting form to identify these systems (see annex I).

31. The 2019 GGE recommended that the 2022 GGE further consider the proposal to amend the heading of category V to “Attack helicopters and rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles” and the description of category V to be divided into two subcategories: manned rotary-wing aircraft and unmanned rotary-wing aircraft.

32. The Register is a living instrument and, consequently, its scope and descriptions need to be reviewed periodically by the GGEs, in order to ensure that the instrument remains relevant. Advances in weapons technology are an important factor for consideration in the conduct of such reviews.

\(\text{iii) Surface and underwater unmanned (remotely-piloted) weapons systems}\)

33. Rapid advances in unmanned weapons systems are reshaping the international security landscape and military doctrines. The development of unmanned ground, water and underwater vehicles, in addition to air vehicles, pose new challenges to transparency in armaments. These challenges are further complicated by the emergence of optionally manned vehicles / crafts, which will increasingly blur the distinction between manned and unmanned weapons systems. Consequently, in reviewing the scope of UNROCA, the GGE may wish to give special consideration to that trend, particularly regarding how it might affect the existing categories of UNROCA. In this regard, the GGE may wish to consider a few questions, such as: would it be necessary for the categories to be divided in sub-categories, to capture exports and imports of armed unmanned weapons systems, along the lines of the adjustments made to Category IV? Is there merit in doing away with the distinction between manned and unmanned systems in reporting transfers under the various categories, thus obviating the need to create sub-categories?

\(\text{iv) Autonomous weapons}\)

34. The growing research and experimentation on the application of artificial intelligence to military hardware in aid of the development of armed autonomous systems create new realities with possible implications for UNROCA.

\(\text{3) Additional background information (excluding SALW)}\)

35. In early reviews of UNROCA, a main focus of the discussions regarding the expansion of the scope of the instrument was to bring military holdings and procurement through domestic production on par with international transfers. Developing countries were concerned that reporting on conventional arms transfers alone would create a discriminatory regime, entailing an imbalance in reporting obligations between States with production capacity and States that need to import weapons. As a compromise, and to allay such concerns by developing States, the General Assembly created, within the Register, a framework in which Member States could provide information on military holdings and procurement through domestic production and put in place a building block for the expansion of UNROCA’s scope. The inclusion of such background information explains why the instrument was not named “the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms Transfers” as intended by its original sponsors.

36. In their reviews, the 1994, 1997, 2000 and 2003 GGEs reaffirmed the goal of an early expansion of UNROCA by the inclusion of data on military holdings and on procurement through national production, but could not reach agreement on the

\(^9\) A/68/140, para. 69.
modalities for their inclusion on the same basis as for international transfers. The 1994 GGE considered proposals concerning the issue but could not reach an agreement on them. In 1997, the group studied the question of the technical and practical aspects linked to the terms ‘military holdings’ and ‘procurement through national production’. The 2003 GGE noted that although some States attached great importance to this issue, security concerns could make it difficult for some States to provide both types of information. The 2013 GGE separated the discussions on procurement and holdings because the latter was regarded as more sensitive than the former. This separation continued to be utilized by the 2016 and 2019 GGEs.

37. It may be argued, however, that for UNROCA to effectively fulfill its confidence-building purposes, the GGE should continue its consideration of the above issue, particularly regarding the possibility of elevating the status of reporting on procurement through national production, which would bring more balance to UNROCA.

38. The 2009 GGE discussed the possibility of adopting a standardized form for submitting background information, with a view to improving the type of data provided and making them easier to access, compare and analyse. The 2016 and 2019 GGEs noted that the standardization of the submission of background information could be beneficial because there is now an online reporting tool.

4) **Weapons of mass destruction**

39. The divisive nature of the debate on transparency in weapons of mass destruction (WMD) complicated the negotiations to create UNROCA. Some Member States argued that the new transparency instrument should also cover military high technology and WMD. Ultimately, the Register was set up to cover only conventional arms.

40. The 1997 GGE considered a proposal to add a new category on WMD, but were not able to reach agreement on the proposal. The 2000 GGE, while recognizing the importance of the principle of transparency and its relevance to WMD, agreed that the question of transparency in WMD was an issue that should be addressed by the General Assembly. Subsequent GGEs, including 2013 GGE, reaffirmed the agreement reached in 2000 GGE.

5) **Relationship with other instruments**

41. A number of international instruments and arrangements have been adopted that share the same objective as UNROCA. Some are legally-binding instruments while others are political documents reflecting commitments agreed to by States. The scope of such instruments varies, ranging from global instruments and regional conventions to bilateral treaties. The focus of these instruments is often twofold: 1) transparency and confidence-building on military matters, and 2) regulation of arms transfers and control of SALW. In principle, these instruments reinforce the function of UNROCA by creating obligations and promoting efforts that would contribute to its goals. Yet there is a varying degree of overlap between UNROCA and these instruments, underscoring the need for coordination and streamlining in the implementation of the instruments.

a) **Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisitions**

42. In 1999, the Organization of American States (OAS) adopted the Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisitions. This legally-binding convention is an unprecedented regional transparency regime that

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10. With regard to military holdings, the 1997 group studied the types of organization holding equipment such as regular or active forces; reserve forces; paramilitary forces, including elements such as gendarmerie, coast guard and border guards, government-owned storage facilities in varying states of readiness; and facilities conducting repairs, overhauls, refits or modernizations. With regard to procurement through national production, the group considered equipment: a) assembled in commercial or state-owned facilities, on the territory of the reporting State, and delivered to the Government or one of its agencies as a complete item; b) acquired from both licensed production and assembly of kits on national territory; c) upgraded at national facilities which then fall into the UNROCA categories; and acquisition from international collaborative projects.

11. See the report of the 2013 Group of Governmental Experts, A/68/140, paragraph 52.

12. In its report, the 2000 GGE stated: “The Group recognized the importance of the principle of transparency and its relevance to weapons of mass destruction. In its consideration of proposals to add a new category to include such weapons, the Group reviewed the nature of the Register, regional security concerns and existing international legal investments concerning the subject matters, as well as General Assembly resolution 46/36 L. In view of all these factors, particularly taking into account that the Register covered conventional arms only, the Group agreed that the question of transparency in weapons of mass destruction was an issue that should be addressed by the General Assembly.” (A/55/281). This position was reiterated in the report of the 2013 GGE (A/68/140, para. 64).
requires its States-parties to annually report on their weapons exports and imports, as well as make timely notifications of their weapons acquisitions, whether imported or produced domestically. It entered into force in 2002. Currently, 20 States of the region have signed the Convention and eight have ratified it. The list of conventional weapons covered by this convention is based on UNROCA, although due to subsequent modifications by GGEs to the scope of some of the categories of the Register, there is now some divergence. Recognizing the shared interest between the UN and the OAS in broadening participation to the two instruments by the OAS Member States, UNODA and the Secretariat of the OAS concluded a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in 2011 to enhance cooperation between the two organizations, including on the exchange of information regarding incoming reports, and on cross-referencing notification to relevant States.

b) The Wassenaar Arrangement

43. The Wassenaar Arrangement (1996) is a multilateral export control regime with membership criteria focused on producers and exporters. Its objective (see www.wassenaar.org) is to enhance regional and international security and stability by promoting transparency and greater responsibility in transfers of conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies, thus preventing destabilizing accumulations. The Wassenaar Arrangement has specific information exchange requirements, with six-monthly notifications of arms transfers, covering eight categories of conventional arms (the first seven categories are based on the seven categories of UNROCA, while the eighth category covers SALW). The Participating States are also required to report transfers or denials of transfers of certain controlled dual-use items. The participating States in the Wassenaar Arrangement revised its Initial Elements in 2011, expanding the scope of the exchange of information. The scope of the Arrangement encompasses information on weapons of mass destruction, UAVs and SALW. In December 2015, the Plenary of the Arrangement adopted “Elements for Effective Fulfilment of National Reporting Requirements”, which provides guidance on processes and procedures to enable States to report on international arms transfers.

c) 1999 Vienna Document on Security- and Confidence-Building Measures

44. The 1999 Vienna Document on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures is a key set of military confidence-building measures developed by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Under the title concerning exchange on conventional arms transfers, the participating States share information each year on their exports and imports of conventional weapons, using seven categories that are identical to those of UNROCA. The participating States also complete a questionnaire on their policy, practices and procedures for the export of conventional arms and related technologies. In addition, OSCE participating States exchange information on imports and exports of SALW, in line with provisions contained in the OSCE SALW Document.

45. In 2012, UNODA and the Secretariat of OSCE signed a MoU to promote greater cooperation in the security- and confidence-building area, including sharing information regarding States’ reporting to the UN and OSCE instruments, as well as promoting their respective instruments. In February 2016, a study on the different reporting obligations of OSCE participating States was presented within OSCE, which included considerations to enable OSCE participating States to fulfil their OSCE commitments and report to the UNROCA.13

d) Other relevant instruments

46. The member States of the European Union are obliged to report on arms exports under the European Union Common Position 2008/944/CFSP of 8 December 2008 defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment. The ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition and Other Related Material contains a reporting obligation for SALW transfers. Also, Article 21 of the Kinshasa Convention provides for a sub-regional electronic database of transfers of SALW, their ammunition and all parts and components that can be used for their manufacture, repair and assembly.14 In Asia-Pacific, ASEAN States, in their 3-year work programme (2017-2019), have committed to sharing information on submissions to UNROCA.15

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14 Central African Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition and all Parts and Components that can be used for their manufacture, Repair and Assembly, Page 19. https://www.unrec.org/docs/Kinshasa.pdf (5 March 2019)
6) **The Arms Trade Treaty**

a) **Substantive issues**

47. UNROCA is a central reference in the ATT, as this Treaty’s scope mirrors that of the Register’s ‘7 +1 formula’ – i.e. 7 categories of major conventional arms plus small arms and light weapons. The ATT obliges its States Parties to report annually on their international transfers of these eight categories of conventional arms. ATT reporting is mandatory, while reporting to UNROCA is voluntary.

48. The ATT provides that national definitions of any of the categories covered under its Article 2 (1) (a)-(g) shall not cover less than the descriptions used in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms at the time of entry into force of the Treaty. This provision creates an additional link between the two instruments, the implication of which might merit consideration by the GGE.

49. UNROCA is open to the entire membership of the United Nations; participation in this instrument includes both Member States that are a party to the ATT and those that are not. In principle, this could allow for a complete picture of the international arms trade (see paragraphs 65-68 below). Moreover, UNROCA is an uncontested transparency instrument (all information submitted to UNROCA is made publicly available), whereas under the ATT, States parties may choose to restrict access to information on their ATT annual reports. This complementarity is a valid argument for the continued value of UNROCA in parallel to the ATT.

50. A further distinction between UNROCA and the ATT stems from the option to report military holdings and procurement through national production, which are not covered under the ATT. This is also a pertinent argument supporting the continued value of UNROCA.

51. In addressing issues relating to the relationship between UNROCA and the ATT, the GGE should be mindful of the political realities and sensitivities surrounding the issue. While the ATT was negotiated in the framework of the United Nations, the Treaty is governed solely by its States parties. UNROCA, on the other hand, belongs to the realm of the General Assembly. It is thus natural that States parties to the ATT would not welcome perceptions of interference by the General Assembly in the affairs of the ATT. Conversely, some UN Member States would not take kindly to perceptions that the operation and the scope of UNROCA being driven by the ATT.

52. In discussing the issue of the relationship between UNROCA and the ATT, the GGE should strike the right balance between the need to ensure that the Register remains relevant in the face of pertinent developments, including those related to the ATT, and the imperative of retaining the broadest support for UNROCA in the General Assembly, including of Member States that are not enthusiastic about the ATT.

b) **Participation in UNROCA of Member States not parties to the ATT**

53. To date, 110 States have joined the ATT. Pursuant to the provisions of the Treaty, 105 of those 110 States were required to submit an annual report to the ATT Secretariat on arms transfers that took place in 2019.

54. 67 out of the 85 UN Member States that are not States Parties or about to become States Parties to the ATT have submitted reports to the Register at least once. Out of the 67 States mentioned above, 33 have made at least 10 submissions of reports, with 18 of these having submitted reports at least 15 times.

55. The case of Asia-Pacific is of interest, for while the vast majority of the States in the Regional Group have submitted at least one report to UNROCA over the years, only 11 States in the Group are States parties to the ATT.

56. It should also be noted that out of the top 10 exporters of arms in the period 2016-2020, three States that are not parties to the ATT (Israel, the Russian Federation and the United States of America) have submitted reports to UNROCA almost every year. Of these, Israel and the United States are signatories to the Treaty. Only three (Australia, China, Republic of Korea) of the top 10 importers of arms in 2016-2020 is a party to the ATT, while one (United Arab Emirates) is signatories to the Treaty. Out of

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17 See Article 5 (3) of the ATT. Ibid.
these 10 countries, Algeria, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have never submitted a report to UNROCA. Four of those top importers (Australia, India, Pakistan and the Republic of Korea) have submitted reports to UNROCA almost every year.18

7) Promotion Efforts by the Secretariat

57. UNODA continues to enhance its efforts to increase the Register’s universality and relevance. UNODA maintains and updates a list of National Points of Contact. In the beginning of each calendar year, it sends notes verbales to all Member States to inform them of the deadline to submit their national reports. The note verbales is followed by email reminders, along with tweets and reminders posted on the website of UNODA. Between 2017 and 2019, UNODA also circulated a questionnaire referred to in paragraph 6 (a) of resolution 71/44, which sought the views of Member States on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development, including on whether the absence of small arms and light weapons as a main category in the Register has limited its relevance and directly affected decisions on participation. The Secretariat received returns from 17 states (Argentina, Bhutan, Brazil, China, Dominican Republic, Finland, Germany, Italy, Japan, Madagascar, Netherlands, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Singapore, Turkey and Ukraine). The number of replies is too low to warrant any meaningful analysis.

58. UNODA also resorts to high-level intervention to encourage Member States’ participation, including appeals by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs to high-level officials from Member States. Since 2019, the Secretariat has dispatched a letter from the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs to Permanent Representatives, in which the High representative refers to the note verbales mentioned above, emphasizing the importance of reporting to UNROCA and reminding Member States to submit their annual reports.

59. UNODA makes use of the First Committee, the Disarmament Commission as well as other global meetings in the area of conventional arms (e.g., Biennial Meetings of States, Review Conferences on the Programme of Action) to hold briefings, raise awareness and provide guidance on reporting. In particular, a side event commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms was held in 2016 at the margin of the First Committee.

60. Following a recommendation of the 2016 GGE, UNODA issued an updated version of the information booklet on the Register. The updated booklet, which is entitled “The Global Reported Arms Trade: Transparency in Armaments through the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms” was issued as a UNODA Study Series special edition for the 25th anniversary of UNROCA. The booklet is available in hard copy and online.

61. UNODA follows up on reporting developments under the ATT. UNODA contacts States parties to the ATT that submitted their annual reports to the ATT Secretariat, encouraging them to also submit an UNROCA report or, alternatively, to extract the relevant data from their ATT reports and input them into the UNROCA database.

62. Given that the Register serves as a point of reference and inspiration for regional and international confidence-building mechanisms and arms control and transfer control instruments, UNODA has been exploring synergies with other international and regional organizations to facilitate participation in UNROCA. UNODA signed Memoranda of Understanding with the Organization of American States and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe in 2011 and 2012 respectively, seeking cooperation regarding information exchange of arms transfer data, among others. In 2018, UNODA sent a letter to OAS, recalling the MOU between two organizations and suggesting the deepening of the cooperation. UNODA also explored collaboration with Viet Nam on the further development of regional confidence-building measures and processes during its chairmanship of the ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting (ADMM) in 2020. Taking note that the ADMM work plan included a commitment to share information on submission to UNROCA, UNODA took the opportunity to encourage national reporting of ASEAN States.

63. UNODA encourages the application of UNROCA data and attaches importance to cooperation with think tanks. Through teleconference, UNODA and SIPRI agreed to engage in regular exchange of information on reports submitted after the deadline for the submission of reports.

64. UNODA has been exploring means to facilitate reporting for Member States. As recommended by 2016 GGE, Member States that do not have plans to procure items covered by the categories of the Register for several years can provide a rolling ‘nil return’, which can be valid for up to a maximum of three years. One step to be considered is to send tailored rather than

generic notes verbales and follow-up emails to Member States that have submitted rolling ‘nil returns’, to remind them to provide updates on arms transfers, if there is any, or submit a report for a new calendar year (when the validity of the rolling nil reports has expired).

3. **Previous GGE Reports and Recommendations**

65. UNROCA has been reviewed by GGEs convened in 1994, 1997, 2000, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2013, 2016, and 2019. The GGEs have recommended a number of adjustments to the categories of conventional arms of the Register, established new standardized reporting forms (nil returns and SALW transfers), and proposed a wide range of measures aimed at achieving universal participation and increasing the relevance of the instrument. The General Assembly has endorsed these recommendations, and Member States and the Secretariat have been implementing them to the extent possible. A list of key recommendations from previous GGEs is contained in Annex I.  

4. **Technical Challenges**

1) **Preparation and Processing of Reports**

66. The Secretariat has experienced several challenges in processing data and information provided by Member States. This results in difficulties in reflecting information in the consolidated report of the Secretary-General. Challenges include:

- Use of languages other than the six official languages of the UN;
- Incorrect use of reporting forms;
- Increased work load related to the handling of the reports containing highly detailed information on small arms;
- Mistakes in reported data including reports on transfers to non-Member States, reports on transfers to peace operations, museums etc., incomprehensible abbreviations under ‘remarks’—which challenges translations—duplication from previous submissions, inclusion of ammunition items under artillery, etc;
- Diverse quality of reporting on military holdings and procurement through national production, stemming from the absence of a standardized form;
- Failure by member States to provide updated information on national points of contact (despite repeated requests by UNODA), leading to accumulation of obsolete NPC information and difficulties in contacting the NPCs.
- Late submissions.

2) **UNROCA Database and Electronic Filing of Reports**

67. In accordance with the 2006 GGE recommendations, the Secretariat overhauled the UNROCA database on its website and launched a new map-based platform entitled “The Global Reported Arms Trade” ([https://www.unroca.org/](https://www.unroca.org/)). The database allows for direct access to and comparison of all data on arms exports and imports submitted by Member States since the beginning of the operation of UNROCA in the early 1990s. Users can retrieve data on specific transfers by State, year and type of weapons. The platform includes a facility for filing reports online.

68. All web platforms need continuous maintenance and updating. In 2015 the “Global Reported Arms Trade” platform was further refined, increasing speed and user-friendliness.

3) **Reporting Template: Considering Possible Changes to Headings**

69. At present, the UNROCA reporting template contains one column with the heading “State of origin (if not exporter)”.

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19 Recommendations from earlier GGEs can be found also be found in GGE reports published in the UN Register Website: www.un.org/disarmament/convarms/Register/
Secretariat has noticed that this term can lead to confusion with some reporting States. The term “State of origin” is sometimes interpreted as the State which is undertaking the export – whereas the term is supposed to refer to the country of manufacture of the weapon if this is a country other than the exporter.

5. Participation by States in UNROCA

1) Overall participation

Table 1. Total submissions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2001</th>
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<th>2004</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>115</td>
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<td>2011</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>57</td>
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Table 2. Percentage of ‘nil reports’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
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<th>2008</th>
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<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

70. Since its establishment in 1992, 170 Member States have reported at least once to UNROCA. The level of participation was high compared with the United Nations Report of Military Expenditures but in the past five years, it has decreased to a similar level. In the 1990s, the level of participation averaged 94 submissions per year. In the period from 2001 and 2007, the participation increased to an average of 117 submissions per year.

71. The level of participation in the Register has declined significantly since 2008, with an average level of 61 submissions in the period between 2008 and 2021. The lowest level of participation was registered in 2021, when 39 States reported to the Register. This decline in reporting has been observed across all aspects of UNROCA (total participation, number of States reporting on transfers, ‘nil reports’, additional background information, SALW transfers), and in all regions.

Table 2. Percentage of ‘nil reports’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
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<th>2008</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>11%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>10%</td>
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72. Table 2 shows the proportion of nil returns in relation to the total number of reports submitted each year from 2001 to 2021. The table reveals a downward trend in the proportion of nil returns, implying that the decrease in the number of nil reports

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20 Statistics in this section are based on information taken from the Reports of the Secretary-General on UNROCA (https://www.un.org/disarmament/convarms/register/) and UNROCA website (https://www.unroca.org/). Also, they use the years when the reports were submitted, not the reporting period (e.g. “2001” means the reports submitted in 2001, which contain information on transfers in 2000).
account for a significant part of the overall decrease in submissions. As these reports do not contain data on transfers of arms, it can be concluded that the impact of the decline in reporting on the data on international arms transfers captured by UNROCA is less significant than the figures in table 1 suggest.

73. It is worth noting that the General Assembly has not been unanimous in its support to the further development of UNROCA. The number of abstentions from voting on the UNROCA resolution, “Transparency in armaments” has increased from a low of 16 in 2000 to a high of 29 in 2016. The last resolution, adopted in 2019, saw abstentions from 23 States. While the number of abstentions has increased, no Member State has voted against the resolution. Also, since 2000, the number of States voting in favour has remained between 140 and 160, with exceptions of 2001 (135) and 2005 (99).

2) Analyzing the decrease in participation

74. It is not possible to identify a single reason for the decline in submitted reports. But the lack of practical use of the collected data could be a significant factor: If States do not discuss with each other the information they have provided, the purpose of providing such information becomes elusive.

75. The 2013 GGE considered several possible factors for the decline in reporting, including: (a) reduction in follow-up efforts regarding reporting; (b) an increasing burden on Member States with regards to reporting on conventional arms issues; (c) “reporting fatigue” felt by Member States that reported regularly in the past; (d) limited relevance of the Register while SALW were not included as a main category; and (e) the focus on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) process at the UN in recent years.\(^{21}\)

3) Information on transfers in the seven categories

Table 3. Number of reports on exports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
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<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>25</td>
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Table 4. Number of reports on imports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
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<th>2007</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>39</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>45</td>
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<td>37</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
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76. The number of States reporting on exports under the main categories remained steady between 2001 and 2019, while there were some fluctuations (see table 3). The number seems to start decreasing from 2020. The number of States reporting on

\(^{21}\) See A/68/140, para. 16.
imports remained relatively steady, with some fluctuations again, until 2011 (see table 4). There has been a decline since 2012, which matches the overall drop in the number of reports in 2012.

### 4) Additional background information

**a) Military holdings**

Table 5. Number of reports containing additional background information on military holdings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
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<td>28</td>
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<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>26</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
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</table>

77. Table 5 shows that the level of reporting on military holdings has been generally low. The table also reveals a gradual decline in reporting on military holdings, except for 2012 when there was a spike in reporting.

78. It is conceivable that increased public demand for greater transparency in armaments and for governments to embrace confidence-building measures may eventually lead Member States to pay more attention to reporting on military holdings. The GGE should continue its forward-looking consideration of the issue of the status of reporting on military holdings in the Register.

79. Previous GGEs have reviewed a proposal to invite Member States to report on military holdings on a standardized form but have not made a recommendation in this regard. The GGE recommended that future GGEs continue reviewing this issue, together with other substantive matters.

**b) Procurement through national production**

Table 6. Number of reports containing additional background information on procurement through national production

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
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<td>25</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>2021</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

80. Table 6 shows that the level of reporting on procurement through national production has been low and there is gradual declining trend.

81. This may reflect the fact that little progress has been made toward addressing the issue of transparency on procurement through national production as an integral part of UNROCA and bringing it on a par with transfers of major conventional arms.

82. The GGE should continue its forward-looking consideration of the issue of the status of reporting on procurement through national production in the Register. Previous GGEs have also reviewed a proposal to invite Member States to report on this on a
standardized form but have not made a recommendation. The GGE recommended that future GGEs continue reviewing this issue, together with other substantive matters.

5) Additional information on SALW transfers

Table 7. Number and percentage of reports containing information on SALW transfer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 (6%)</td>
<td>39 (35%)</td>
<td>48 (53%)</td>
<td>46 (57%)</td>
<td>43 (59%)</td>
<td>50 (57%)</td>
<td>35 (61%)</td>
<td>37 (51%)</td>
<td>34 (60%)</td>
<td>38 (67%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>23 (43%)</td>
<td>31 (70%)</td>
<td>37 (76%)</td>
<td>31 (67%)</td>
<td>35 (80%)</td>
<td>50 (57%)</td>
<td>35 (61%)</td>
<td>37 (51%)</td>
<td>34 (60%)</td>
<td>38 (67%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>20 (38%)</td>
<td>27 (52%)</td>
<td>27 (50%)</td>
<td>22 (41%)</td>
<td>19 (35%)</td>
<td>16 (30%)</td>
<td>32 (59%)</td>
<td>30 (56%)</td>
<td>33 (61%)</td>
<td>32 (59%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>9 (17%)</td>
<td>16 (30%)</td>
<td>15 (28%)</td>
<td>8 (15%)</td>
<td>4 (7%)</td>
<td>4 (7%)</td>
<td>11 (20%)</td>
<td>17 (31%)</td>
<td>17 (31%)</td>
<td>9 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>10 (19%)</td>
<td>18 (35%)</td>
<td>14 (27%)</td>
<td>7 (13%)</td>
<td>5 (9%)</td>
<td>6 (11%)</td>
<td>23 (43%)</td>
<td>31 (70%)</td>
<td>37 (76%)</td>
<td>31 (67%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>11 (21%)</td>
<td>19 (37%)</td>
<td>15 (29%)</td>
<td>9 (17%)</td>
<td>5 (9%)</td>
<td>6 (11%)</td>
<td>23 (43%)</td>
<td>31 (70%)</td>
<td>37 (76%)</td>
<td>31 (67%)</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>10 (19%)</td>
<td>18 (35%)</td>
<td>14 (27%)</td>
<td>7 (13%)</td>
<td>5 (9%)</td>
<td>6 (11%)</td>
<td>23 (43%)</td>
<td>31 (70%)</td>
<td>37 (76%)</td>
<td>31 (67%)</td>
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<td>2017</td>
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<td>2018</td>
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<td>2019</td>
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<td>23 (43%)</td>
<td>31 (70%)</td>
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<td>2020</td>
<td>10 (19%)</td>
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<td>7 (13%)</td>
<td>5 (9%)</td>
<td>6 (11%)</td>
<td>23 (43%)</td>
<td>31 (70%)</td>
<td>37 (76%)</td>
<td>31 (67%)</td>
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83. Since the 2003 GGE recommended that Member States in a position to do so be encouraged to report on their transfers of small arms and light weapons (SALW), 89 Member States reported their transfers of SALW at least once, including ‘nil reports’ on transfers of SALW. In particular, following the introduction of the standardized reporting forms for SALW in 2006, the number of States providing information on SALW increased.

84. Since the recommendation by the 2016 GGE, Member States have an option to report using the “seven plus one formula”. Since 2017, the number of reports on the international transfers of small arms and light weapons has remained stable between 31 and 37. Although the percentage of submissions that included this seem to be increasing, it is due to the decline in the overall submissions. The continued high proportion of reporting on SALW in the past five years seems to confirm the relevance of including transfers of SALW in the Register.

6) Regional participation

Table 8. Regional participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa (total: 54)</td>
<td>11 (20%)</td>
<td>17 (31%)</td>
<td>17 (31%)</td>
<td>9 (17%)</td>
<td>16 (30%)</td>
<td>16 (30%)</td>
<td>15 (28%)</td>
<td>8 (15%)</td>
<td>4 (7%)</td>
<td>4 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia and the Pacific (total: 54)</td>
<td>32 (59%)</td>
<td>31 (57%)</td>
<td>30 (56%)</td>
<td>33 (61%)</td>
<td>32 (59%)</td>
<td>28 (52%)</td>
<td>27 (50%)</td>
<td>22 (41%)</td>
<td>19 (35%)</td>
<td>16 (30%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe (total: 23)</td>
<td>21 (91%)</td>
<td>21 (91%)</td>
<td>22 (96%)</td>
<td>20 (87%)</td>
<td>21 (91%)</td>
<td>21 (91%)</td>
<td>22 (96%)</td>
<td>22 (96%)</td>
<td>19 (83%)</td>
<td>19 (83%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latin America and Caribbean (total: 33)</td>
<td>23 (70%)</td>
<td>26 (79%)</td>
<td>24 (73%)</td>
<td>21 (64%)</td>
<td>18 (55%)</td>
<td>21 (64%)</td>
<td>20 (61%)</td>
<td>11 (33%)</td>
<td>13 (39%)</td>
<td>8 (24%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Western Europe and other States (total: 29)</td>
<td>29 (100%)</td>
<td>29 (100%)</td>
<td>28 (100%)</td>
<td>29 (100%)</td>
<td>29 (100%)</td>
<td>28 (100%)</td>
<td>29 (100%)</td>
<td>28 (100%)</td>
<td>26 (90%)</td>
<td>26 (90%)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>116</td>
<td>124</td>
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<td>112</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>73</td>
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<tr>
<td>Africa (total: 54)</td>
<td>2 (4%)</td>
<td>1 (2%)</td>
<td>3 (6%)</td>
<td>1 (2%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>1 (2%)</td>
<td>1 (2%)</td>
<td>2 (4%)</td>
<td>1 (2%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
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</table>
Regional disparities in reporting to UNROCA remain high. On average, over the past 10 years, approximately 2% of African States, 16% of Asia and the Pacific States, 71% of Eastern European States, 17% of Latin American and Caribbean States, and 70% of Western Europe and other States reported. These averages suggest that the bulk of reporting is done by States from regions with a relatively large number of arms exporting countries.

Table 8 also reveals that three regional groups experienced major decreases in reporting in 2008 (Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean). In the case of Africa, reporting dropped from a high of 17 in 2002 and 2003 to a range of 0 - 3 reports in the last decade. In the Asia-Pacific Group, the rate of participation declined from over half of its members in the period 2001-2007, to less than a quarter in 2017-2021. For the States of Latin America and the Caribbean, the participation rate declined from a high of close to 80 per cent of the Group’s membership, in 2002, to a quarter or less in the 2014 – 2021 period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
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<th>2007</th>
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<tr>
<td>Asia and the Pacific</td>
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<td>Eastern Europe</td>
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<td>Latin America and Caribbean</td>
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<td>Western Europe and other States</td>
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Table 9. Reporting on SALW per region
Regional disparities were also manifest in reporting on SALW. The rate of reporting remained low among three regional groups (Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean), although, as mentioned above, the overall proportion of reports containing information on SALW remained high.

The low level of reporting for Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean seems counter intuitive, given the high importance attributed to the issue of SALW by States of those regions. This may be due to a capacity problem: SALW imports and exports are typically more frequent, contain more items, and may involve more national actors (e.g., armed forces, law enforcement) than transfers of heavy weapons. The low level of reporting could also be partly political: a decision by some States of these regions to not report to UNROCA or to not include SALW transfers as long as SALW are not included as a category in UNROCA.

7) Capacity-building

a) Institutional support for the Register

In their previous reviews, the GGEs recognized the central role of the Secretariat in enhancing awareness of the operation and procedures of UNROCA. The Secretariat does so by:

- circulating notes verbales at the beginning of the year;
- including appeals for increased participation in UNROCA in talking points for meetings of the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs;
- sending reminders to permanent missions in New York and to national points of contacts;
- encouraging timely submission of reports;
- providing briefings to Member States and to disarmament fellows;
- maintaining a user-friendly Web platform and Web-based reporting;
- assisting States with technical queries;
- updating the list of national points of contact;
- sending letters to regional organizations;
• Highlighting UNROCA both within and outside the UN system;
• Presentations at workshops and other events.

90. The Secretariat stands ready to continue its tasks in promoting UNROCA.

b) Regional workshops

91. Previous GGEs recognized the role that regional and sub-regional workshops and seminars played in promoting UNROCA, particularly with regard to encouraging greater participation in and understanding of this instrument. With extra-budgetary resources provided by interested States, UNODA organized three such meetings in 2009-2010. The regional workshops held in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean showed mixed outcomes in terms of their impact.

92. Following a workshop for West African States in Dakar, Senegal in June 2009, not a single State that participated in the workshop submitted a report to UNROCA.

93. Following a workshop in Lima, Peru in 2010, submissions by States in the region numbered 16 (out of 33) in 2011 and 6 in 2012.


95. Since 2010, the Secretariat has not been able to organize a regional workshop due to the absence of financial resources.

96. The results of the workshops held in 2009 and 2010 warrant a reassessment of the merits of regional workshops, particularly in the light of their financial and human resources costs. Online training modules provide cost-effective guidance on how to report. However, funding would be required for such materials to be developed.
Recommendations by Groups of Governmental Experts, 1994 – 2019
(Corresponds to Annex I referred to in the background note by the Secretariat)

A. Adjustments to categories

- 2019 GGE (A/74/211, para. 113)

The Group recommends that the next Group of Governmental Experts should further review the proposals for amendments to the existing categories contained in paragraphs 51 to 61 above, taking into account all of the technological developments in conventional arms and the destabilizing potential of conventional arms not currently covered by the Register.

- 2019 GGE (A/74/211, para. 114)

The Group recommends that the next Group of Governmental Experts further consider the proposal contained in paragraph 57 above to amend the heading and definitions for category V, Attack helicopters, paying particular attention to actual transfers of, and developments in relevant technologies of, rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles. Pending the recommendation of a future Group of Governmental Experts to amend the heading and definitions for category V, those Member States providing information on international transfers of rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles are encouraged to utilize the “Comments” column of the reporting form to identify those systems.

- 2016 GGE (A/71/259, para. 81)

Category IV Combat aircraft and unmanned combat aerial vehicles

Includes fixed-wing or variable-geometry wing aerial vehicles as defined below:

Manned fixed-wing or variable-geometry wing aircraft, designed, equipped or modified to engage targets by employing guided missiles, unguided rockets, bombs, guns, cannons or other weapons of destruction, including versions of these aircraft which perform specialized electronic warfare, suppression of air defence or reconnaissance missions;

Unmanned fixed-wing or variable-geometry wing aircraft, designed, equipped or modified to engage targets by employing guided missiles, unguided rockets, bombs, guns, cannons or other weapons of destruction. The terms “combat aircraft” and “unmanned combat aerial vehicles” do not include primary trainer aircraft, unless designed, equipped or modified as described above.

- 2016 GGE (A/71/259, para. 82)

The Group recommends that the next Group of Governmental Experts further consider the proposal contained in paragraph 57 above to amend the heading and definition for category V, Attack helicopters, paying particular attention to actual transfers of, and developments in relevant technologies of, rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles. Pending the recommendation of a future Group of Governmental Experts to amend the heading and definition of category V, those Member States providing information on international transfers of rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles, are encouraged to utilize the comments column of the reporting form to identify these systems

- 2013 GGE (A/68/140, para. 45)
IV. Combat aircraft
Combat aircraft includes manned and unmanned aerial vehicles as defined below:

(a) Manned fixed-wing or variable-geometry wing aircraft, designed, equipped or modified to engage targets by employing guided missiles, unguided rockets, bombs, guns, cannons or other weapons of destruction, including versions of these aircraft which perform specialized electronic warfare, suppression of air defence or reconnaissance missions;

(b) Unmanned fixed-wing or variable-geometry wing aircraft, designed, equipped or modified to engage targets by employing guided missiles, unguided rockets, bombs, guns, cannons or other weapons of destruction.

The term “combat aircraft” does not include primary trainer aircraft, unless designed, equipped or modified as described above.

• 2013 GGE (para. 46)

V. Attack helicopters
Attack helicopters include manned and unmanned aerial vehicles as defined below:

(a) Manned rotary-wing aircraft, designed, equipped or modified to engage targets by employing guided or unguided anti-armour, air-to-surface, air-to-subsurface, or air-to-air weapons and equipped with an integrated fire control and aiming system for these weapons, including versions of these aircraft which perform specialized reconnaissance or electronic warfare missions;

(b) Unmanned rotary-wing aircraft, designed, equipped or modified to engage targets by employing guided or unguided anti-armour, air-to-surface, air-to-subsurface, or air-to-air weapons and equipped with an integrated fire control and aiming system for these weapons.

• 2003 GGE (A/58/274, para. 112)

III. Large-calibre artillery systems
Guns, howitzers, artillery pieces combining the characteristics of a gun or a howitzer, mortars or multiple-launch rocket systems, capable of engaging surface targets by delivering primarily indirect fire, with a calibre of 75 mm and above.

VII. Missiles and missile launchers

(a) Guided or unguided rockets, ballistic or cruise missiles capable of delivering a warhead or weapon of destruction to a range of at least 25 kilometres, and means designed or modified specifically for launching such missiles or rockets, if not covered by categories I through VI. For the purposes of the Register, this sub-category includes remotely piloted vehicles with the characteristics for missiles as defined above but does not include ground-to-air missiles.

(b) Man-Portable Air-Defence Systems (MANPADS).

VI. Warships
Vessels or submarines armed and equipped for military use with a standard displacement of 500 metric tons or above, and those with a standard displacement of less than 500 metric tons, equipped for launching missiles with a range of at least 25 kilometres or torpedoes with similar range.

**B. Reporting methods**

- The Group recommends that those Member States in a position to do so, using the seven-plus-one formula, provide information on exports and imports of small arms and light weapons, as appropriate, through the online reporting tool or the optional standardized form for reporting international transfers of small arms and light weapons (see annex III). (2019 GGE. A/74/211, para 115)

- The Group recommends that the Secretary-General continue to invite Member States that are in a position to do so, to provide the Register with additional background information on procurement through national production. Member States providing such additional background information are invited to use the online reporting tool or any other method of reporting that they deem appropriate. (2019 GGE. A/74/211, para 116)

- The Group recommends that the Secretary-General continue to invite Member States in a position to do so to provide additional background information on military holdings to the Register. Member States providing such additional background information are invited to use the online reporting tool or any other method of reporting that they deem appropriate. (2019 GGE. A/74/211, para 117)

- The Group recommends that the Secretary-General continue to invite Member States that are in a position to do so, to provide additional background information on relevant policies using any format they deem appropriate. (2019 GGE. A/74/211, para 118)

- The Group recommends that the Secretary-General appeal to Member States in a position to do so to provide information on international transfers of small arms and light weapons using the standardized reporting form for international transfers of small arms and light weapons. The Group recommends that the seven plus one formula, as described in paragraph 75 above, be utilized on a trial basis for the period leading up to the deliberations of the next Group of Governmental Experts, and that the response to this trial use inform the deliberations of the next Group of Governmental Experts on whether to include small arms and light weapons as a new category in the Register. These deliberations should also take into account the results of the recommended questionnaire and other information regarding this issue. (2016 GGE. A/71/259, para 83)

- The Group recommends that the Secretary-General continue to invite Member States in a position to do so to provide data and information on procurement through national production to the Register as part of their additional background information. Member States providing such information are invited to use the de facto reporting form on procurement through national production. This does not preclude Member States from using any other method of reporting they deem appropriate. (2016 GGE. A/71/259, para 84)

- The Group recommends that the Secretary-General continue to invite Member States in a position to do so to provide data and information on military holdings to the Register as part of their additional background information. Member States providing such information are invited to use the de facto reporting form on military holdings. This does not preclude Member States from using any other method of reporting they deem appropriate. (2016 GGE. A/71/259, para 85)
• The Group recommends that Member States be provided with the opportunity to submit a “nil” return valid for a maximum of three years. The Secretariat should continue to send an annual request to participate in the Register to such Member States, but these Member States would only have to respond if imports or exports of conventional arms have taken place during the reporting period. (2016 GGE.A/71/259, para. 89).

• The Group recommends that Member States report armed unmanned aerial vehicles in a manner consistent with paragraphs 45 and 46 of its report (2013 GGE. A/68/140, para. 69).

• The Group recommends that Member States that are in a position to do so provide data and information on international transfers of small arms and light weapons to the Register as part of additional background information on the basis of the standardized reporting form on international transfers of small arms and light weapons (2013 GGE, para. 71);  

• The Group recommends that Member States that are in a position to do so provide data and information on procurement through national production and also on military holdings to the Register as background information (2013 GGE, para. 72);

• The Group also recommends that Member States consistently submit reports by the 31 May deadline, including “nil” returns, in order to promote the universality of the Register. The Group stressed the importance of the Secretariat’s efforts in encouraging Member States to report to the Register. It also recognized the role that relevant regional organizations and the United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament could play in that regard (2013 GGE, para. 73);

• Member States in a position to do so should make use of the Remarks column in the standardized reporting form to provide additional information, such as types and models (1997 GGE, para. 64 (f), 2000 GGE, para. 94 (c), 2003 GGE, para. 113 (c), 2006 GGE, para. 126 (d));

• The simplified form for submitting nil returns on exports and imports should be amended to allow for the provision of information on a national point of contact; (2003 GGE, para. 113 (g));

• Member should report to the Register transfers involving only States Members of the United Nations (2006 GGE, para. 126 (a));

• States providing data on military holdings and procurement through national production may request that this data not be published (1997 GGE, para. 64 (g) (iii), 2000 GGE, para. 94 (I) (i), 2003 GGE, para. 114 (d)).

• The existing reporting format and explanatory notes continue to be used but amended to take account of the recommendations in subparagraph (c) above [provision on information on national points of contact], to note the national definitions of a transfer and to indicate changes in national policies, as shown in Appendix II (1997 GGE, para. 64 (e));

C. Recommendations to Member States

• The Group recommends that Member States:

22 A similar recommendation is reflected in the reports of the 2003 GGE (A/58/274 para. 113 (e)) and 2006 GGE (A/61/261 para. 125).
- Provide the Secretariat with details of their national points of contact, preferably through the online reporting tool, and keep these updated in a timely manner;
- Report by the 31 May deadline in order to facilitate early compilation and dissemination of data and additional background information provided in the annual submissions of Member States;
- Utilize the online reporting tool for the electronic filing of reports;
- Keep in mind the flexible approach that can be used for participation in the Register (i.e., entailing the use of rolling nil reports or the seven-plus-one formula). At the same time, Member States should ensure that the data and additional background information submitted are of sufficient quality to contribute to the purpose of the instrument;
- Enhance coordination among relevant government agencies, ministries and departments so as to ensure that national procedures and processes are in place for collecting and submitting data and additional background information to the Register and other relevant instruments;
- Continue to provide information to the Secretariat on national reporting systems, as well as on challenges faced by Member States in reporting to the Register and needs for assistance, as well as views on the continuing operation and relevance of the Register and its further development;
- Take measures to promote participation in the Register, in accordance with the indicative list of measures contained in annex IV below;
- Use the Register in relation to relevant confidence-building measures, drawing inspiration from the indicative list of confidence-building measures for Member States contained in annex V;
- Conduct targeted engagement, awareness raising and capacity-building for key stakeholders in Member States that have shown political support for the Register or that have reported to the Register but that no longer do so;
- Conduct targeted engagement and awareness raising through bilateral consultations and participation in multilateral instruments with those Member States that are regular importers but that do not participate in the Register. The Group recommends that major exporters of conventional arms, which also regularly report to the Register, seize opportunities to promote participation in the Register;
- Consider providing financial support to the Secretariat to fulfil recommendations contained in paragraph 122 (i) to 122 (m). (2019 GGE. A/74/211, para 121)

- The Group recommends that Member States report by the 31 May deadline in order to facilitate early compilation and dissemination of data and information provided in the annual submissions of Member States. The Group also recommends that Member States utilize the updated online reporting tool for the electronic filing of reports. (2016 GGE. A/71/259, para 88)

- The Group recognizes that additional resources will need to be provided to the Secretariat in order to complete the tasks described in paragraphs 90-92 of the present report and recommends that Member States consider providing financial support to the Secretariat to fulfil these recommendations. (2016 GGE. A/71/259, para 90)

- The Group recommends that Member States continue to provide the Secretary-General with their views on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development, including on whether the absence of small arms and light weapons as a main category in the Register has limited its relevance and directly affected decisions on participation. The Group recommends that the 2016 Group further consider, among other matters, the issue of small arms and light weapons in all its aspects (2013 GGE, para. 70);
• Member States participate in the Register with a view to achieving the shared goal of **universal participation** in this instrument (1997 GGE, para. 64 a, similar 2000 GGE, para. 94 (a), 2003 GGE, para. 113 (a), 2006 GGE, para. 126 (b));

• Member States should be encouraged to **report promptly** in order to help ensure the early dissemination to States of the data and the information in the reports (1997 GGE, para. 64 (d), 2000 GGE, para. 94 (d), 2003 GGE, para. 113 (d), 2006 GGE, para. 126 (e));

• Member States should **submit nil reports** to confirm that they do not have any international transfer to declare. (2006 GGE, para. 126 (d), similar 2009 GGE, para. 73);

• Member States nominate a **national point of contact** for matters connected with the Register and that details on the contact point be sent with the annual report on the understanding that this information will be held by the Secretariat and provided on request to Governments only (1997 GGE, para. 64 (c), 2006 GGE, para. 126 (f)). The standardized reporting form should be amended to allow for the **provision of an e-mail address and should also specify a reference to Division/Section after Organization** for the national point of contact (2003 GGE, para. 113 (f));

• The General Assembly **decide on the appropriate time to conduct a full review** of the continuing operation of the Register and its further development at an early date (1997 GGE, para. 64 h, 2000 GGE, para. 94 (h)).

**D. International assistance, provision of resources**

• Taking into account the concerns expressed in paragraph 41, the Group recommends that the next General Assembly resolution on transparency in armaments include an explicit request that sufficient resources be made available by the United Nations to enable the Secretariat to effectively implement its core functions for the effective operation of the Register, as outlined in paragraph 122 (a) to 122 (h) above. (2019 GGE, para 124)

• Member States should consider providing **support and assistance to the Secretariat** in carrying out the recommendations addressed to it, including the holding of workshops and seminars to advance the objectives of the Register (2006 GGE, para. 126 (o));

• Member States should consider providing **direct bilateral support to those States** undertaking Register-related activities (2006 GGE, para. 126 (p));

• Interested Member States, NGOs and individuals should be encouraged to contribute **financial support** to the relevant Department of Disarmament Affairs **trust fund** earmarked for United Nations Register activities and programmes (2003 GGE, para. 113 (k));

• The General Assembly should consider a **provision for additional resources** to the Secretariat to operate and maintain the Register (2000 GGE, para. 94 (I), similar 2003 GGE, para. 114);

• Since the resources of the Secretariat devoted to operating and managing the United Nations Register are also utilized for implementing other departmental responsibilities, ..., it should **consider providing adequate resources, including a full-time General Service staff for data inputting and other support services** on a regular basis (2006 GGE, para. 126 (m));
• The Secretariat should make all possible efforts to promote the Register as a confidence-building measure and a means of conflict prevention and restore the financial and administrative resources that were originally devoted to setting up and operating the Register (2003 GGE, para. 113 (g)).

E. Role of the UN Secretariat

• The Group recommends that the Secretariat:
  o Circulate to Member States the deadline for reporting to the Register, reporting forms, a clear description of the current status of the Register as described in paragraph 92 above and descriptions of categories, and guidance on using the online reporting tool for the electronic filing of submissions, under cover of a note verbale to permanent missions to the United Nations in New York and Geneva, as well as copies to national points of contact located in national capitals, at the beginning of each calendar year;
  o Send subsequent reminders to permanent missions to the United Nations in New York and Geneva, as well as national points of contact, containing the information listed in paragraph 122 (a) in order to encourage submissions;
  o Contact the permanent missions to the United Nations in New York and Geneva, as well as national points of contact, in particular those that are considered to be “regular reporters”, when the Secretariat has not received a submission by 31 July, to elicit information on the status of the submission or to ensure that there have not been technical problems with the use of the online reporting tool;
  o Provide confirmation to the permanent missions to the United Nations in New York and Geneva, as well as to the national points of contact, when a submission has been received, including a summary of data and additional background information contained in the submission. The Secretariat can also request further clarification on the submission, as appropriate;
  o Use resources made available through the regular budget to translate the online reporting tool and the content of the Register database website into all six official languages of the United Nations as a priority for the continuing operation of the Register;
  o Ensure that data and additional background information provided by Member States is made available and accessible in a timely manner through the Register website (http://unroca.org);
  o Update and reissue the Guidelines for Reporting International Transfers to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms pursuant to the conclusions and recommendations of the 2019 Group of Governmental Experts;
  o Maintain regular contact with secretariats of relevant international instruments, including the Arms Trade Treaty, to enable the Register secretariat to engage in direct communication with Member States that have provided data on exports and imports of conventional arms for other relevant instruments, but that have not participated in the Register. The Register secretariat should ask these Member States whether the data provided for other relevant instruments can be included in a submission to the Register;
  o Take measures to promote participation in the Register, in accordance with the indicative list of measures contained in annex IV;
  o Support interested Member States in organizing a special event to promote reporting to the Register in order to and raise awareness of the Register’s relevance and increase participation, including its implications for enhancing the use of confidence-building measures, in connection with the sessions of the General Assembly or other activities within the United Nations related to conventional arms, where appropriate;
  o Assist Member States in conducting targeted engagement, awareness raising and capacity-building for key stakeholders in Member States that have shown political support for the
Register or that did report to the Register but that no longer do so, in particular Member States that are recognized as significant importers of conventional arms;

- Assist Member States and their points of contact with respect to their participation in the Register. Such activities could include regular updating of the information booklet in coordination with the report of each Group of Governmental Experts;
- Make information available to Member States on opportunities for capacity-building to enable participation in the Register, such as possible work with non-governmental organizations and regional organizations in undertaking capacity-building activities in support of participation in the Register, with support from dedicated funding instruments;
- Consider that a Member State has participated in the Register only if it submits data on international transfers of conventional arms, including nil returns. The Secretariat shall not consider a Member State that provides only additional background information as participating in the Register. (2019 GGE. A/74/211, para 122)

- The Group recommends that the Office for Disarmament Affairs distribute the questionnaire attached to the present report as annex V, which could aid the Secretariat’s future work and that of future Groups of Governmental Experts. The questionnaire seeks the views of Member States on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development, including on whether the absence of small arms and light weapons as a main category in the Register has limited its relevance and directly affected decisions on participation. (2016 GGE. A/71/259, para.86)

- The Group recommends that the Secretariat update and reissue the information booklet on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. This information booklet should be made easily accessible on the Register website and be provided in all official languages of the United Nations. The Group recommends that the updated Guidelines should also include: (a) guidance on establishing and maintaining effective national reporting systems; and (b) guidance with regard to the role, tasks and responsibility of national points of contact. (2016 GGE. A/71/259, para 87)

- The Group recommends that the Secretariat should circulate to Member States the reporting forms, category descriptions and guidance on using the online reporting tool for the electronic filing of submissions, under cover of a note verbale to permanent missions to the United Nations in New York, as well as copies to national points of contact, at the beginning of each year. The Secretariat should also send subsequent reminders to permanent missions to the United Nations in New York and to national points of contact to help to facilitate submissions. (2016 GGE. A/71/259, para.88)

- The Group recommends that the translation of the online reporting tool into all official languages of the United Nations be a priority for the continuing operation of the Register. The Group recognizes that additional resources will need to be provided to the Secretariat in order to complete the tasks described in paragraphs 90-92 of the present report and recommends that Member States consider providing financial support to the Secretariat to fulfil these recommendations. (2016 GGE. A/71/259, para 90)

- The Group recommends that the online Register database be updated as soon as possible after receipt of new data and information from Member States. In addition, the new Register website and database merits a press release to draw attention to this new resource, ideally after it has been updated with information provided by Member States regarding transfers for the 2015 calendar year. The Register website should serve as the main repository for all basic data and information relevant to the Register and should be available in all official languages of the United Nations. (2016 GGE. A/71/259, para 91)
To mark the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the Register, an event should be organized on the margins of the First Committee at the seventy-first session of the General Assembly. This event could also be used to promote the new Register website and database and the report of the 2016 Group of Governmental Experts. The anniversary should also be reflected in the General Assembly resolution on transparency in armaments to be adopted at its seventy-first session. Other opportunities to promote the Register should also be examined, including through the regional centres of the Office for Disarmament Affairs. (2016 GGE. A/71/259, para 92)

The Group strongly recommends enhanced budgetary support and human resources for the Register so that the Conventional Arms Branch of the Office for Disarmament Affairs can increase its role in maintaining and promoting participation in the Register. The Group also encourages Member States in a position to do so to provide voluntary contributions to the Secretariat. The Group encourages Member States and the Secretariat to render assistance, upon request, to Member States in order to build capacity to submit reports to the Register (2013 GGE, para. 74);

Based on the recommendations made by the 2003, 2006, 2009 and 2013 groups of governmental experts (see A/58/274, A/61/261, A/64/296 and A/68/140), the Group made recommendations to promote reporting to the Register. They are set out in the annex to its report (2013 GGE, para. 75);

The Group recommended that the Secretariat continue to assist Member States to build capacity to submit meaningful reports, including capacity to report on SALW, and encourage States to submit “nil” returns, where appropriate (2009 GGE, para. 71);

The General Assembly should consider a provision for additional resources to the Secretariat to send a note verbale, with the reporting forms, to Member States by the end of January and reminders, where appropriate, at the beginning of June (2000 GGE, para. 94 (1) (ii), including through the daily Journal of the United Nations or direct contact by the Secretariat (2003 GGE, para. 114 (b), similar 2006 GGE, para. 127 (b));

The note verbale which the Secretariat sends annually to the Member States along with the standard reporting forms should also include an attachment for the filing of nil returns by States that do not have transfers to report. (2000 GGE, para. 94 (f));

The General Assembly should consider a provision for additional resources to the Secretariat to update the United Nations information booklet on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms on the basis of the present recommendations and distribute it among the Member States (2000 GGE, para. 94 (i) (i), 2003 GGE, para. 114 (a));

The General Assembly request the Secretary-General to ensure sufficient resources are made available to continue to provide to the General Assembly the annual consolidated report of data and information registered, including that provided on a voluntary basis on military holdings and procurement through national production, together with an index of other additional background information. (1997 GGE, para. 64 (g) (iii), 2000 GGE, para. 94 (i) (iii), 2003 GGE, para. 114 (d), 2006 GGE, para. 127(d));

The General Assembly should consider a provision for additional resources to the Secretariat to send complete submissions to capitals and to all permanent missions to the United Nations in electronic form or hard copy, as appropriate (2000 GGE, para. 94 (i) (vii), 2003 GGE, para. 114 (h));
• Maintain **an updated list of national points of contact** and request such information, where required, in order to keep its record up-to-date and circulate it to all Member States (2006 GGE, para. 126 (g));

• The General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to ensure sufficient resources are made available to conduct **informal briefing meetings** in conjunction with the meetings of the First Committee of the General Assembly in order to promote understanding of the Register's procedures (1997 GGE, para. 64. (g) (vii), similar 2000 GGE, para. 94 (i) (viii), 2003 GGE, para. 114 (i), 2006 GGE, para. 127 (g));

• The Group recommended that the Secretary-General **seek the views of Member States**, including whether **the absence of SALW as a main category** in the United Nations Register has limited the relevance of the Register and directly affected decisions on participation (2009 GGE, para. 75).

**F. Regional workshops**

• The General Assembly to request the Secretary-General to ensure sufficient resources are made available to, when requested, **support regional efforts** with advice and expertise to promote participation in the Register (1997 GGE, para. 64 (g) (v));

• The Secretariat should further **strengthen the role of the Regional Centres** of the Department for Disarmament Affairs in facilitating progress of the Register (2003 GGE, para. 113 (i), similar 2006 GGE, para. 126 (i));

• The General Assembly to request the Secretary-General to ensure sufficient resources are made available to **organize seminars and workshops**, with the support of Member States, to promote understanding of the Register (1997 GGE, para. 64 (g) (iv), similar 2000 GGE, para. 94 (i) (ix), 2003 GGE, para. 114 (k));

• The workshop series should be sustained, **focusing on regions and subregions that have not yet hosted a workshop, as well as returning to regions and subregions periodically, for example every two or three years**, to strengthen and consolidate the progress of the Register and receive feedback from regions and subregions on the operation and further development of the Register (2003 GGE, para. 113 (j), similar 2006 GGE, para. 126 (j));

• Member States should also consider **including the subject of the United Nations Register in workshops** and other relevant meetings organized by them in the disarmament field (2006 GGE, para. 126 (q));

• The General Assembly should consider providing additional resources to the Secretariat to facilitate the **inclusion of sessions on the Register in the agenda of relevant meetings of regional and subregional organizations**, other groupings of Member States and organs and agencies of the United Nations system (2003 GGE, para. 114 (j), 2006 GGE, para. 127 (h)).

**G. Online reporting and database**
• The General Assembly should consider a provision for additional resources to the Secretariat to undertake a study with the assistance of a technical expert to determine the feasibility of electronic filing of national submissions to the Register (2000 GGE, para. 94 (i) (v), 2003 GGE, para. 114 (f));

• The Department should conduct a pilot project with the support of interested Member States to test the feasibility of electronic filing of reports to the Register in order to determine the practical requirements for making such a facility available to Member States (2006 GGE, para 126 (n));

• Overhaul the Register database on its website with a view to making it more user-friendly and up-to-date technologically (2006 GGE, para. 126 (l)).

H. Website

• The General Assembly to request the Secretary-General to ensure sufficient resources are made available to establish a more visible icon on the Register in the existing United Nations homepage (1997 GGE, para. 64 (g) (ix));

• The General Assembly should consider providing additional resources to the Secretariat to ensure that all information relating to the Register is electronically available as soon as possible. The updated United Nations information booklet on the Register should also be made available on the Register web site both as a hypertext linked series of pages and as a downloadable document (2000 GGE, para. 94 (i) (iii), 2003 GGE, para. 114 (c), similar 2006 GGE, para. 127 (a));

• The General Assembly should consider a provision for additional resources to the Secretariat to ensure that all basic data and information relevant to the Register is available electronically in all official languages of the United Nations (2000 GGE, para. 94 (i) (iv), 2003 GGE, para. 114 (e), similar 2006 GGE, para. 127 (e));

• The General Assembly should consider a provision for additional resources to the Secretariat to develop a separate home page for the Register, using a graphic design for efficient use of the Register data, and establish links between this home page and other comparable registers and data banks established by other international and regional organizations (2000 GGE, para. 94 (i) (iv), similar 2003 GGE, para. 114 (g), 2006 GGE, para. 127 (f)).
Proposals for adjustments, points of discussion on the seven categories of the Register by GGEs, SALW and other additional background information, 1997 – 2019
(Corresponds to Annex II referred to in the background note by the Secretariat)

Category I: Battle tanks

2019: Emphasized that Member States should report battle tanks falling below the weight threshold of 16.5 metric tons as “armoured combat vehicles” in category II. The Group did not consider any new proposals to amend the scope of category I. (para. 53)

2016: Considered a proposal for removing the weight limit of 16.5 metric tons from the description of battle tanks. Noted that the current description for category II, Armoured combat vehicles, covered tanks that weigh less than 16.5 metric tons. (para. 51)

2009: No need to adjust this category (para. 42).

2006: Noted the trend towards lighter, more mobile and deployable tanks, potentially with a smaller gun to offset the lighter weight (para. 93).

2003: Observed the technological trend in two areas: tanks with higher tonnage and gun calibre or using new technologies to develop lighter tanks, although not less than 16.5 metric tons (para. 85).

2000: Observed that the technological trend was towards the development of tanks of higher rather than lower tonnage and gun calibre (para. 50).

Category II: Armoured combat vehicles

2019: Re-examined the proposal considered by the previous Group of Governmental Experts to amend category II to include additional descriptions as follows:
• Armoured combat vehicles equipped for specialized reconnaissance, command and control of troops or electronic warfare;
• Armoured recovery vehicles, tank transporters and amphibious and deep-water fording vehicles, including armoured bridge-launching vehicles. (para. 54)

2016: Examined a proposal to expand the scope of category II, by including the following force multiplier and force projection items in two additional subcategories:
- equipped for specialized reconnaissance, command and control of troops or electronic warfare;
- armoured recovery vehicles, tank transporters and amphibious and deep-water fording vehicles, including armoured bridge-launching vehicles. (para. 52)

2009: Tracked, semi-tracked or wheeled self-propelled vehicles, with armoured protection and cross-country capability:
(a) designed and equipped to transport a squad of four or more infantrymen;
(b) armed with an integral or organic weapon of at least 12.5-millimetre calibre or a missile launcher;
(c) equipped for specialized reconnaissance, command and control of troops or electronic warfare (para. 43).

2006: Armoured vehicles designed for bridge-laying as well as vehicles designed for reconnaissance and electronic warfare (para. 94).

2003: Discussed capabilities related to reconnaissance and electronic warfare, as well as other functions such as armoured recovery vehicles and tank transporters. Concluded that all tanks were covered by either category I or II (para. 86).

2000: Cover reconnaissance and target acquisition systems, bridge-laying equipment, armoured recovery vehicles and electronic warfare systems (para. 51).

**Category III: Large-calibre artillery systems**

2019: Reviewed a proposal to lower the calibre threshold for category III to 50 mm or 35mm and to rename the category “Artillery systems”, noting that changes to the description under this category should take into account the intrinsic link to the issue of the potential inclusion of small arms and light weapons as a new category. Experts noted that further reducing the calibre threshold would capture mainly direct fire weapons and move the focus of the category away from its traditional focus on indirect fire weapons. (para. 55)

2016: Reviewed proposals to lower the calibre threshold of category III to 35 mm or 50 mm and rename the category “Artillery systems”. Noted that changes to this category should take into account the intrinsic link to the issue of the inclusion of small arms and light weapons as a new category, as well as the effect that changes in the category’s threshold would have on its focus on “indirect fire” weapons. (para. 53)

2009: Artillery with a calibre of 50-75 mm and including gun carriers and tractors specially designed for towing artillery (para. 44).

2006: Lower the reporting threshold to 50 mm, gun tractors specifically designed for towing artillery (para. 95).

2003: Lower the calibre to 75 mm.
   Lower the calibre to 35 mm (para. 87).

2000: Include artillery systems between the ranges of 35 and 100 mm (para. 52).

1997: Lower the calibre to 75mm (para. 31 (a)).

**Category IV: Combat aircraft**

2019: Reviewed the proposal contained in paragraph 54 of the report of the 2016 Group of Governmental Experts to amend the description of category IV to include:

Fixed-wing or variable geometry wing aircraft which are designed, equipped or modified to perform reconnaissance, command and control of troops, specialized electronic warfare, and refuelling or airdrop missions. (para. 56)
2016: Reviewed a proposal to expand the description of category IV to cover aircraft that contribute force multiplier effects or force projection capabilities, as follows: Fixed-wing or variable geometry wing aircraft that are designed, equipped or modified to perform reconnaissance, command and control of troops, specialized electronic warfare and refuelling or airdrop missions. (para. 54).

Reviewed several options to clarify the status of unmanned aerial vehicles in category IV, Combat aircraft, based on the description contained in paragraph 45 of the report of the 2013 Group of Governmental Experts. (para. 55)

2009: Fixed-wing or variable geometry wing aircraft designed, equipped or modified to perform reconnaissance, command and control of troops, electronic warfare and refuelling missions (para. 45).

2006: Force projection capabilities, such as aircraft designed to perform military transport and airdrop missions, as well as air-to-air refuelling.

With regard to unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), observed that category IV already covered those unmanned platforms that were versions of combat aircraft or that otherwise fell within the existing definition but not specifically designed UAVs. Discussed whether other types of UAVs, for example those designed for reconnaissance, should be covered by the Register (para. 96).

2003: Include force multipliers, such as command of troops and force projection capabilities such as air-to-air refuelling and aircraft designed to perform military transport and airdrop missions. Discussed whether “versions of combat aircraft”, covered all military aircraft that performed electronic warfare, suppression of air defence and reconnaissance missions.

The Group discussed developments in unmanned aerial vehicles and their relevance to the Register (para. 88).

2000: Include force multipliers such as reconnaissance, command of troops, electronic warfare and force projection capabilities such as air-to-air refuelling and aircraft designed to perform troop transport and airdrop missions (para. 53).

**Category V: Attack helicopters**

2019: Reviewed the proposal elaborated in paragraph 57 of the report of the 2016 Group of Governmental Experts to amend both the heading and description of category V as follows:

**V. Attack helicopters and rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles**

Includes rotary-wing aerial vehicles as defined below:

(a) Manned rotary-wing aircraft, designed, equipped or modified to engage targets by employing guided or unguided anti-armour, air-to-surface, air-to-subsurface, or air-to-air weapons and equipped with an integrated fire control and aiming system for these weapons, including versions of these aircraft which perform specialized reconnaissance or electronic warfare missions;

(b) Unmanned rotary-wing aircraft, designed, equipped or modified to engage targets by employing guided or unguided anti-armour, air-to-surface, air-to-subsurface, or air-to-air weapons and equipped with an integrated fire control and aiming system for these weapons. (para. 57)
Re-examined the proposal contained in paragraph 56 of the report of the 2016 Group of Governmental Experts to amend the description of category V to include:

Rotary-wing aircraft which are designed, equipped or modified to perform specialized reconnaissance, target acquisition, communications, command and control of troops, electronic warfare, mine-laying missions, or troop transport tasks. (para. 58)

2016: Reviewed a proposal to expand the description to cover helicopters that contribute force multiplier effects or force projection capabilities. as follows: Rotary-wing aircraft that are designed, equipped or modified to perform specialized reconnaissance, target acquisition, communications, command and control of troops, electronic warfare, mine-laying missions or troop transport tasks. (para. 56)

Reviewed several options to clarify the status of rotary-wing unmanned aerial vehicles in category V, Attack helicopters, based on the description contained in paragraph 46 of the report of the 2013 Group of Governmental Experts. In particular, considered a proposal to amend category V as “Attack helicopters and rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles”. (para 57).

2013: The Group reviewed a proposal for changing the title of category V to “Combat helicopters”.

2009: Rotary-wing aircraft which are designed, equipped or modified to perform reconnaissance, target acquisition, command and control of troops, electronic warfare and mine-laying missions.

Change the name of the category to “Combat helicopters or military helicopters” (para. 46).

2006: Helicopters that performed airdrop missions and troop transport roles. Systems that performed combat support functions, such as mine-laying missions and communication and command of troops (para. 97).

2003: Combat support systems, such as target acquisition (including anti-submarine warfare), communications, command of troops, mine-laying missions or military transport tasks (para. 89).

2000: Significant combat support systems, for example, target acquisition (including anti-submarine warfare), communications, command of troops, electronic warfare, mine-laying and transport helicopters (para. 54).

Category VI: Warships

2019: Reviewed the proposal considered by the previous Group of Governmental Experts to lower the threshold for the minimum standard displacement of vessels or submarines from 500 to 150 tons. Examined proposals to lower or remove the 25-kilometre range threshold for missiles and torpedoes. (para. 59)

2016: Reviewed a proposal to lower the threshold for the minimum standard displacement of vessels or submarines to 150 metric tons. Examined proposals to lower or remove the range threshold for missiles and torpedoes. (para. 58)
2013: Amend category VI to reduce the standard displacement of vessels or submarines to 150 metric tons or more and/or remove the reference to the range for missiles and torpedoes (para. 48).

2013: Remove the range for torpedoes entirely (para. 48).

2009: Drop the standard displacement of vessels or submarines to 150 tonnes or more and/or alter the definition with regard to the range of torpedoes (para. 47).

2006: Lower the tonnage of surface vessels and submarines to 500 metric tons. Reporting thresholds such as 150 metric tons for surface vessels and 50 metric tons for submarines. Removing the range limits for missiles and torpedoes (para. 98).

2003: Lower the tonnage from 750 to 400 metric tons and remove the range limits for missiles and torpedoes.
Lower the tonnage of submarines from 750 to 50 metric tons with the possibility of no reference to missiles and torpedoes which would include midget submarines.
Lower the tonnage of surface warships to 150 metric tons, and lower the tonnage of submarines to 50 metric tons while keeping the range of missiles and torpedoes to at least 25 kilometres (para. 90).

2000: Lower of the threshold to 400 metric tons that would include mine-laying and amphibious vessels.
Vessels operated by coast guards for domestic law enforcement, and other vessels that have a coastal patrol role or are devoted to coastal defence (para. 55).
Only vessels with a “blue water” capability or also include other warships that are significant in a regional context.
The defensive and offensive role of some classes of surface warships, in particular mine-laying/sweeping vessels (para. 56).

1997: Lower the tonnage of warships to 400 metric tons (para. 31 (b)).

**Category VII: Missiles and missile launchers**

2019: Examined a new proposal to amend the description for category VII to remove the exemption for ground-to-air missiles:

(a) Guided or unguided rockets, ballistic or cruise missiles capable of delivering a warhead or weapon of destruction to a range of at least 25 kilometres and means designed or modified specifically for launching such missiles or rockets, if not covered by categories I through VI or small arms and light weapons. For the purpose of the Register, this subcategory includes remotely piloted vehicles with the characteristics for missiles as defined above;
(b) Man-portable air-defence systems. (para. 60)

Reviewed the proposals considered by the 2016 Group of Governmental Experts to lower or remove the range threshold for missiles covered by category VII. (para. 61)

2016: Reviewed proposals to lower or remove the range threshold for missiles and to include ground-to-air missiles and missile launchers. (para. 59)
2013: Amend category VII to lower or eliminate the range threshold for missiles and to include surface-to-air missiles and missile launchers (para.49).

2009: Include missiles of below 25 km range and ground-to-air missiles (para. 48).


2003: Missile systems with ranges of less than 25 kilometres, including anti-armour and ground-to-air missile systems.
Increased transparency in the international transfer of MANPADS, and the interrelationship between MANPADS and SALW (para. 91).

2000: Defensive/offensive nature of missiles of less than 25 km range, particularly surface-to-air systems.
Increased transparency in the international transfer of MANPADS, and the interrelationship between MANPADS and SALW (para. 57).

1997: Disaggregate missiles and missile launchers (para. 31 (c)).
Lower the range of missiles to 10 kilometres and the inclusion of ground-to-air missiles (para. 31(d)).

**SALW:**

2019: Considered proposals for an eighth category for reporting imports and exports of small arms and light weapons including the following description:

**Category VIII. Small arms and light weapons**

Small arms and light weapons are any man-portable lethal weapons that expel or launch, are designed to expel or launch, or may be readily converted to expel or launch, a shot, bullet or projectile by the action of an explosive, excluding antique small arms and light weapons or their replicas. Antique small arms and light weapons and their replicas will be defined in accordance with domestic law. In no case will antique small arms and light weapons include those manufactured after 1899:

(a) “Small arms” are, broadly speaking, weapons designed for individual use. They include, inter alia, revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, sub-machine guns, assault rifles and light machine guns;

(b) “Light weapons” are, broadly speaking, weapons designed for use by two or three persons serving as a crew, although some may be carried and used by a single person. They include, inter alia, heavy machine guns, hand-held under-barrel and mounted grenade launchers, portable anti-aircraft guns, portable anti-tank guns, recoilless rifles, portable launchers of anti-tank missile and rocket systems, portable launchers of anti-aircraft missile systems, and mortars of a calibre of less than 75 millimetres. (para. 64)

2016: Reviewed the long-standing proposal to establish a new main category for small arms and light weapons in the Register. (para. 60)

2013: Reporting small arms and light weapons as an eighth category in the Register, including two subcategories for “small arms” and “light weapons” and six subcategories for
“small arms” and seven subcategories for “light weapons” (the same subcategories as provided for in the optional reporting form)\textsuperscript{23} (para. 50).

**Additional background information (excluding SALW)**

2019: Reviewed a proposal for an optional standardized reporting template for this type of additional background information to facilitate reporting and comparability. (para. 70)

2016: The Group examined a proposal to request Member States to provide information on procurement through national production to the Register on the same basis as for international transfers. (para. 62)

2013: Invite Member States to provide additional background information on military holdings and on procurement through national production on a standardized reporting form (para. 51).

2013: Include procurement through national production in the Register as an integral part of national reporting, given that Member States could also acquire arms in that way (para. 52).

\textsuperscript{23} See A/61/261, annexes I and II.
Views received from Governments in accordance with paragraph 6 (a) of General Assembly resolution 68/43 and 71/44

1. Operative paragraph 6 (a), RES/71/44
“Calls upon Member States to submit their views on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development, including on whether the absence of small arms and light weapons as a main category in the Register has limited its relevance and directly affected decisions on participation, by completing the questionnaire to be dispatched by the Office for Disarmament Affairs of the Secretariat.”

2. Operative paragraph 6 (a) RES/68/43
“Recalls its request to Member States to provide the Secretary-General with their views on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development, including on whether the absence of small arms and light weapons as a main category in the Register has limited its relevance and directly affected decisions on participation, and on transparency measures related to weapons of mass destruction.”

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Questionnaires received 13

| 2019 | 4 (Brazil, Dominican Republic, Japan, Netherlands) |
| 2018 | 6 (Bhutan, China, the Dominican Republic, Madagascar, Russia) |
| 2017 | 7 (Finland, Germany, Italy, Romania, Slovakia, Turkey, Ukraine) |

2. Views of Member States, as received

2018 (A/73/185)

United States [Original: English]

Revised United States policy for conventional arms transfers

On 19 April 2018, the President issued National Security Presidential Memorandum No. 10 (NSPM-10), approving a new and updated United States conventional arms transfer policy to support allies and partners, expand opportunities for American industry and create American jobs, and maintain the national security of the United States while thoroughly reviewing arms transfers to ensure that they are in the interest of the United States. A/73/185 18-11597 135/138 [Beginning of text] Section 1 — Purpose The security of the United States and the defense of our interests
require a strong military, capable allies and partners, and a dynamic defense industrial base, which currently employs almost 2.5 million people. Strategic conventional arms transfers lie at the intersection of these interests and play a critical role in achieving our national, economic security, and foreign policy objectives. This policy will be implemented consistent with requirements of the Arms Export Control Act of 1976, as amended (22 U.S.C. 2751 et seq.). By better aligning our policy regarding conventional arms transfers with our national and economic security interests, the approach outlined in this memorandum will serve several functions. It will help us maintain a technological edge over potential adversaries; strengthen partnerships that preserve and extend our global influence; bolster our economy; spur research and development; enhance the ability of the defense industrial base to create jobs; increase our competitiveness in key markets; protect our ability to constrain global trade in arms that is destabilizing or that threatens our military, allies, or partners; and better equip our allies and partners to contribute to shared security objectives and to enhance global deterrence. These security objectives include countering terrorism, countering narcotics, promoting regional stability, and improving maritime and border security. When a proposed transfer is in the national security interest, which includes our economic security, and in our foreign policy interest, the executive branch will advocate strongly on behalf of United States companies. The executive branch will also streamline procedures, clarify regulations, increase contracting predictability and flexibility, and maximize the ability of the United States industry to grow and support allies and partners.

Section 2 — Policy With respect to arms transfers, it shall be the policy of the executive branch to:

(a) Bolster the security of the United States and our allies and partners, including by defending against external coercion, countering terrorism, and providing capabilities in support of shared security objectives;
(b) Maintain technological advantages of the United States military, including by ensuring that there are appropriate protections on the transfer of United States military technologies;
(c) Increase trade opportunities for United States companies, including by supporting United States industry with appropriate advocacy and trade promotion activities and by simplifying the United States regulatory environment;
(d) Strengthen the manufacturing and defense industrial base and lower unit costs for the United States and our allies and partners, including by improving financing options and increasing contract flexibility;
(e) Facilitate ally and partner efforts, through United States sales and security cooperation efforts, to reduce the risk of national or coalition operations causing civilian harm;
(f) Strengthen relationships and enhance military interoperability where doing so serves national security and foreign policy interests of the United States;
(g) Prevent proliferation by:
   (i) Exercising restraint in transfers that may be destabilizing, be dangerous to international peace and security, involve materials that may be used as delivery systems for weapons of mass destruction, or result in potential adversaries obtaining capabilities that could threaten the superiority of the United States military or our allies and partners;
   (ii) Continuing United States participation in and support for multilateral arrangements that contribute to the objectives and interests outlined in this memorandum, including the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures, regional initiatives that enhance transparency in conventional arms transactions, the Missile Technology Control Regime, and the Wassenaar
Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies; (iii) Continuing to use multilateral arrangements to promote shared national policies of restraint against the acquisition of armaments and sensitive dual-use goods and technologies for military end uses by States whose behavior is cause for serious concern; (iv) Working bilaterally and multilaterally to assist other State suppliers of conventional arms in developing effective export control mechanisms in support of responsible export policies that align with those of the United States; (h) Continue to meet the requirements of all applicable statutes, including the Arms Export Control Act, the Foreign Assistance Act, the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, and the annual National Defense Authorization Acts. Arms transfer decisions will be consistent with the requirements of all applicable export control regulations and international commitments and obligations of the United States. These laws and regulations will apply, as appropriate, regardless of whether transfers are accomplished through direct commercial sales, Government-to-Government transfers, United States assistance programmes, approvals for the retransfer of arms, changes of end use, or upgrades. Section 3 — Arms transfer decisions In making arms transfer decisions, the executive branch shall account for the following considerations: (a) The national security of the United States; (i) The appropriateness of the transfer in responding to United States security interests; (ii) The degree to which the transfer contributes to ally and partner burden sharing and interoperability in support of strategic, foreign policy, and defense interests of the United States; (iii) The transfer’s consistency with United States interests in regional stability, especially when considering transfers that involve power projection, anti-access or area denial capability, or the introduction of a capability that may increase regional tensions or contribute to an arms race; (iv) The transfer’s effect on the technological advantage of the United States, including the recipient’s ability to protect sensitive technology; the risk of compromise to United States systems and operational capabilities; and the recipient’s ability to prevent the diversion of sensitive technology to unauthorized end users; (v) The recipient’s non-proliferation and counterproliferation record; A/73/185 18-11597 137/138 (vi) The transfer’s contribution to efforts to counter terrorism, narcotics trafficking, transnational organized crime, or similar threats to national security; (b) The economic security of the United States and innovation: (i) The transfer’s financial or economic effect on United States industry and its effect on the defense industrial base, including contributions to United States manufacturing and innovation; (ii) The recipient’s ability to obtain comparable systems from competing foreign suppliers; (c) Relationships with allies and partners: (i) The degree to which the transfer meets the objectives of bolstering the security and counterterrorism capabilities of our allies and partners and contributes to international peace and security; (ii) The degree to which the transfer increases access and influence in ways that support our strategic, foreign policy, and defense interests; (iii) The recipient’s ability to field, support, and employ the requested system effectively and appropriately in accordance with its intended end use; (iv) The likelihood of the transfer reducing ally and partner dependence on United States adversaries; (v) The risk that the transfer will have adverse economic, political, or social effects within the recipient country; (d) Human rights and international humanitarian law: (i) The risk that the transfer may be used to undermine international peace and security or contribute to abuses of human rights, including acts of gender based
violence and acts of violence against children, violations of international humanitarian law, terrorism, mass atrocities, or transnational organized crime; (ii) Whether the United States has actual knowledge at the time of authorization that the transferred arms will be used to commit: genocide; crimes against humanity; grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions of 1949; serious violations of Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions of 1949; attacks intentionally directed against civilian objects or civilians who are legally protected from attack; or other war crimes as defined in section 2441 of title 18, United States Code. If the United States has such knowledge, the transfer shall not be authorized; (e) Non-proliferation: The risk that the transfer could undermine the integrity of international non-proliferation agreements and arrangements that prevent proliferators, programs, and entities of concern from acquiring missile technologies or other technologies that could substantially advance their ability to deliver weapons of mass destruction, or otherwise lead to a transfer to potential adversaries of a capability that could threaten the superiority of the United States military or our allies and partners. Section 4 — Implementation (a) Within 60 days of the date of this memorandum, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Secretaries of Defense, Commerce, and Energy, shall submit to the President, through the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, a proposed action plan to implement the policy set forth in sections 2 and 3 of this memorandum. A/73/185 138/138 18-11597 (b) The proposed action plan shall include actions that the United States Government should take in the short term and long term to improve its ability to identify, communicate, pursue, and support arms transfers in the manner most beneficial to the national security interests of the United States, including economic security, the broader economy, and United States foreign policy interests. The proposed action plan should account for the competitive environment in which the United States must operate and the need to protect and expand our technological advantages and our defense industrial base. The proposed action plan should include an outline of the financial and personnel resources necessary to implement the roadmap with minimal increase in the total of otherwise budgeted funds, with offsets identified if necessary. (c) Within 60 days of the date of this memorandum, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Secretaries of Defense, Commerce, and Energy, shall submit to the President, through the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, a proposed initiative to align our unmanned aerial systems export policy more closely with our national and economic security interests. The initiative should address the status of, and recommend next steps for, Missile Technology Control Regime adoption of revised controls for Missile Technology Control Regime Category I unmanned aerial systems, consistent with the unmanned aerial systems export policy. Section 5 — Earlier presidential actions This memorandum supersedes and replaces Presidential Policy Directive -27 of 15 January 2014 (United States Conventional Arms Transfer Policy). Section 6 — General provisions (a) Nothing in this memorandum shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect: (i) The authority granted by law to an executive department or agency, or the head thereof; or (ii) The functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relating to budgetary, administrative, or legislative proposals. (b) This memorandum shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations. (c) This memorandum is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United
States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

2017 (A/72/331)

Lebanon

[Original: Arabic]

The Ministry of National Defence affirms that it does not engage in the transfer of conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons. It has not imported any such weapons for over seven years. The Lebanese Army does not manufacture, produce or export any kind of weapons or ammunition. All of its weapons are imported or confiscated. There are no weapons of mass destruction present in Lebanon. Lebanon proposes that not just conventional weapons, but also weapons of mass destruction should be included in the United Nations Register.

2016 (A/71/138)

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]

Transparency in armaments can help to strengthen trust and security among States if it conforms strictly to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, including those of equal rights, self-determination of peoples, right to self-defence, respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. Measures to improve such transparency must be taken on the initiative of the States concerned and on a voluntary basis. Because they are voluntary in nature, such measures cannot be imposed. States must decide freely, with equal rights and in exercise of their sovereignty, whether to participate in and the scope of such measures. Cuba recognizes the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms as a confidence-building measure. The Register should include weapons of mass destruction. The inclusion of only conventional weapons is insufficient and discriminatory. To show its commitment to transparency in armaments, Cuba responds annually to the requests for State contributions to a large number of General Assembly resolutions related to disarmament, international security and arms control. It has also submitted reports to the Register of Conventional Arms, and Cuban experts participated in the groups of governmental experts on the Register in 1994, 1997, 2000 and 2013.

Japan

[Original: English]

Related policies: three principles on the transfer of defence equipment and technology On 1 April 2014, the Government of Japan, in accordance with its National Security Strategy adopted on 17 December 2013, outlined a set of three new principles on the overseas transfer of defence equipment and technology to replace its three principles on arms exports and their related policy guidelines. 1. Intent of the new principles Surrounded by an increasingly severe security environment, it has become essential for Japan to make more proactive efforts in line with the principle of international
cooperation. Japan cannot secure its own peace and security by itself, and
the international community expects Japan to play a more proactive role
for peace and stability in the world, commensurate with its national
capabilities. Against this backdrop, Japan will contribute even more
proactively in securing peace, stability and prosperity for the international
community while achieving its own security, as well as peace and stability
in the Asia-Pacific region, as a proactive contributor to peace based on the
principle of international cooperation. From the viewpoint of achieving the
fundamental principle of national security by implementing concrete
policies, the Government of Japan decided to review its existing policy
guidelines on the overseas transfer of defence equipment and technology
and set out clear principles to fit the new security environment by
consolidating the policy guidelines comprehensively with consideration
for past exemption measures while giving due consideration to the roles
that the existing policy guidelines have played so far.

2. Main contents of the principles
While maintaining its basic philosophy as a peace-loving
country that conforms to the Charter of the United Nations and the course it
has taken as a peace-loving nation, Japan will control the overseas transfer
of defence equipment and technology based on the three principles on the
transfer of defence equipment and technology. The main contents of the
principles are as follows:
(a) First principle: clarification of cases where transfers are prohibited
The overseas transfer of defence equipment and technology will not be permitted when:
(i) The transfer violates obligations under treaties and other international agreements that Japan has concluded;
(ii) The transfer violates obligations under resolutions of the Security
Council of the United Nations;
(iii) The defence equipment and technology is destined for a country that is party to a conflict and against which the
Security Council of the United Nations is taking
measures to maintain or restore international peace and security in the
event of an armed attack.
(b) Second principle: limitation to cases where transfers may be permitted as well as strict examination and information
disclosure in cases not falling under (a) above, transfers may be permitted
under the following circumstances. Those cases will be examined strictly
while ensuring transparency and involve situations where the transfer
contributes:
(i) To the active promotion of peace contribution and
international cooperation;
(ii) To Japan’s security. Significant cases that
require especially careful consideration from the viewpoint of Japan’s
security will be examined by the National Security Council. The
Government will disclose information on the cases deliberated by the
National Security Council in accordance with the Act on Access to
Information Held by Administrative Organs (Act No. 42 of 1999).
(c) Third principle: ensuring appropriate control regarding extra-purpose use
or transfer to third parties in cases satisfying the conditions of (b) above,
the overseas transfer of defence equipment and technology will be
permitted only in cases where appropriate control is ensured. More
concretely, the Government of Japan will, in principle, oblige the
Government of the recipient country to gain its prior consent regarding
extra purpose use and transfer to third parties. The Government of Japan
will thus contribute even more actively to the peace and stability of the
international community as a proactive contributor to peace based on the
principle of international cooperation. Under such a policy, it will play a
proactive role in the area of controlling defence equipment and technology,
as well as sensitive dual-use goods and technologies, to achieve the early
entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty and further strengthen international export control regimes.

Senegal

Senegal has no industrial arms production infrastructure. The conventional arms of the Senegalese defence and security forces are imported. In fact, arms included in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms may be acquired only by the armed forces under a specific procedure to protect the integrity of the country. No other individual or legal entity is authorized to make transfers related to such arms. The flow of conventional arms held by the Senegalese defence and security forces is therefore controlled. The situation with regard to small arms and light weapons not included in the Register of Conventional Arms, however, is very different. A survey conducted in Senegal in 2009 on behalf of the National Commission to Combat the Proliferation and Illicit Circulation of Small Arms and Light Weapons confirmed the main trends in the circulation of such weapons in Senegal. Circulation is widespread in the southern region of the country, in particular in Casamance (Ziguinchor, Kolda and Sédhiou). The low-intensity armed conflict linked to the pro-independence Casamance insurgency in which the region has been mired for more than thirty years has been a major historical factor in the illicit circulation of firearms and their parts, components and ammunition in that part of the country. Illicit proliferation of arms has also developed in the north-east, from Mauritania, and along the Malian border and in the south-east, as a result of armed banditry, conflicts between farmers and herders relating to transhumance, and sociocultural factors in those livestock grazing areas, where bearing arms is perceived as a cultural practice. Dakar and its suburbs are also considered areas of illicit trafficking in arms, which are used in acts of urban violence, although they have a higher number of people with a licence to possess or bear arms. The increase in the number of hotspots in West Africa, where borders are porous and a war economy based on trafficking in arms and drugs has emerged, has contributed to the proliferation of arms, to the benefit of criminals who commit acts of banditry, such as robbery and cattle rustling, across borders. The survey also showed that a sense of insecurity and ignorance of arms related legislation are among the main reasons for the acquisition of arms. That would justify the need to step up the fight against transnational organized crime related to the illicit circulation of arms. The Government of Senegal therefore gives a high priority to the fight against crime, which is facilitated considerably by the proliferation of small arms. To eradicate this scourge and contribute to transparency in the regulation of arms transfers, the Senegalese Government participates in all the international, A/71/138 86/86 16-12115 regional and national processes related to arms control, including the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the Arms Trade Treaty, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Firearms Protocol, the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, the work of groups of experts on munitions, and the Economic Community of West African States Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their
Ammunition and Other Related Materials. In line with that policy of transparency, in 2015 Senegal submitted its initial report on its implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty and its 2015 report on its implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and the International Tracing Instrument. Clearly, the major challenge in conventional arms control is ensuring that transfers of small arms and light weapons are transparent to avoid misappropriation. That situation is of most concern to West African States, notwithstanding the threat posed by other conventional arms. The establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms constitutes an important step forward in the promotion of transparency in military matters, but the continuing operation of the Register should be reviewed in order to secure a Register that is capable of attracting the widest possible participation. Such a review of the Register has revealed significant weaknesses that result from the exclusion of illegal small arms and light weapons, which pose a greater threat to African States because of their porous borders and political instability. Given the evidence provided in connection with the general observation that such arms must urgently be included in the Register, Countries of the South must be supported in their efforts to improve transparency and build capacity to combat the illicit proliferation of and trafficking in firearms and their parts, components and ammunition. Senegal has no weapons of mass destruction. The control of such weapons, however, should be strengthened in producing countries, particularly those that produce dual-use items.

2015 (A/70/168)

Germany

With reference to resolution 68/43 entitled “Transparency in armaments”, in particular paragraph 6 (a), Germany would like to make the following comments:

The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms has proved to be one of the few important global transparency and confidence-building measures. Germany strongly supports this instrument and has regularly made comprehensive reports to the Secretary-General. Even after the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty, as long as this treaty is not universal in adherence, the Register will serve as a reference and retain its usefulness. As proposed in the Treaty, potential synergies in reporting for States that are party to both mechanisms could be explored.

Germany has also encouraged States to provide comprehensive reports, including on small arms and light weapons. Germany believes that the inclusion of small arms and light weapons as a mandatory reporting category of the Register would substantively enhance the usefulness of this instrument. In many parts of the world, small arms and light weapons are the main factor of instability. In general, it is small arms rather than heavy weaponry that fuel regional as well as internal conflicts.

The groups of governmental experts that convened in accordance with resolutions 57/75, 60/226, 63/69 and 66/39 in 2003, 2006, 2009 and
2013, respectively, all debated the possibility of including small arms and light weapons in the Register. As the Arms Trade Treaty includes in its scope small arms and light weapons, their inclusion in the Register seems even more pertinent.

Germany is concerned about the declining number of reports submitted to the Secretary-General since the beginning of the past decade and proposes to start analysing the reasons for this development. Germany believes that a renewed effort should be made to strengthen the universal use of this instrument of transparency and trust-building, including by submitting “nil” reports. The online reporting mechanism established by the Office for Disarmament Affairs is a very useful tool to that end. In view of the dynamic technological progress and the resulting changes regarding the shape, operation and nature of conventional weapons, Germany regards it as essential to allow for a flexible evolution of the Register. Owing to the recommendations of the respective groups of governmental experts, the Register has undergone further development since its inception. Germany believes, however, that technology has evolved even faster in recent years, allowing for the emergence of new weaponry that is potent enough to have an impact on overall military effectiveness but that is not being properly reflected in the Register. Therefore, Germany believes that it is time for a more fundamental debate on the nature of the categories, in particular with regard to continuous technological progress in the future.

Jamaica

The United Nations Register should be amended to include small arms and light weapons as a separate category of conventional arms. Such an amendment would result in the items in the Register being consistent with the definition and scope of conventional arms under the Arms Trade Treaty. In addition, the information may also prove useful to developing Caribbean States, such as Jamaica, with respect to the development of small arms control policies to mitigate the scourge of illicit trade in conventional arms, primarily firearms and light weapons.

Jamaica’s impending status as the world’s fourth logistics hub, as well as improvements to the Panama Canal, will result in greater movement of conventional arms, including small and light weapons, throughout the region, which could exacerbate the crime situation if not carefully managed.

The Ministry of National Security of Jamaica seeks clarification as to what exactly constitutes an “arms transfer”, as this term is not clearly defined in the relevant resolution.

2014 (A/69/124)

Germany

Related policies

Germany consistently pursues a restrictive export control policy as regards armaments and dual-use goods intended for military purposes. This
policy is based on article 26 of the Basic Law (Constitution), under which the State is required to control war weapons at all stages from manufacture to marketing. This constitutional obligation is given statutory form through the War Weapons Control Act, the Foreign Trade and Payments Act and the Foreign Trade and Payments Regulation. To underline its political will to pursue a restrictive arms export policy and render transparent the way in which this policy is administered, the Government of Germany adopted, on 19 January 2000, a thoroughly revised version of the Political Principles Governing the Export of War Weapons and Other Military Equipment. The restrictive arms export policy of Germany is that war weapons may in principle be exported only to States members of the European Union or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization or countries that have been granted equivalent status by special decision. Deliveries to other countries are permitted only in exceptional and precisely defined circumstances.

A key factor in deciding whether to grant an export licence is the conditions within the recipient country, in particular the human rights situation. Furthermore, deliveries must not contribute to exacerbating existing tensions. Lastly, special attention is paid to ascertaining the definitive end use in the country of destination. At the end of the 1980s, intensified efforts by a number of countries to acquire equipment for the development and manufacture of weapons of mass destruction and delivery systems resulted in the extensive reform and further tightening of the German export control regime, notably concerning dual-use goods. The Government is committed to harmonizing arms export control policy at the European Union and international levels. The common basis of European arms export control was made legally binding on 8 December 2008, when the Council of the European Union adopted Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment, which contained eight common criteria for arms exports and procedure rules for the cooperation of States members of the European Union in this field. The European Union regulations on export controls for dual-use goods (Council of the European Union regulation 428/2009 of 5 May 2009) have contributed to greater harmonization in this field. Germany is actively involved in the various international control regimes to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and delivery systems (in particular the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Australia Group and the Missile Technology Control Regime) and to harmonize the export of conventional arms and related dual-use goods, including a comprehensive, general exchange of information among participating Governments (Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technology).

Germany was very actively involved in the negotiations on the Arms Trade Treaty, which was adopted by the General Assembly on 2 April 2013. Germany signed the Treaty at its opening for signature at the United Nations on 3 June 2013 and was among the first States to ratify it, depositing its instrument of ratification on 2 April 2014. On that occasion, Germany also declared the provisional application of articles 6 and 7 of the Treaty. Germany considers implementation assistance to be vital for the overall effective implementation of the Treaty and is willing to offer help to other signatories, in particular developing countries, on a bilateral basis and together with
European Union partners. In 2013, Germany devoted considerable funds in this regard.

Related views

With reference to General Assembly resolution 66/39 on transparency in armaments, in particular to paragraph 5 (a), which reads:

“5. Reaffirms its decision, with a view to further development of the Register, to keep the scope of and participation in the Register under review and, to that end:

(a) Recalls its request to Member States to provide the Secretary-General with their views on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development and on transparency measures related to weapons of mass destruction”,

Germany would like to make the following comments.

The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms has proved to be one of the few and effective global transparency measures. Germany strongly supports this instrument and has regularly reported to the Secretary-General. Even after the Arms Trade Treaty has entered into force, the Register will retain its usefulness until all States become parties to the Treaty.

Germany has also encouraged States to report in a comprehensive manner, including on small arms and light weapons. Germany believes that the inclusion of reporting on small arms and light weapons as a mandatory category of the Register would substantively enhance the usefulness of this instrument. In many parts of the world, small arms and light weapons are the main factor of instability, often exceeding heavy weaponry as a stability challenge. In general, it is small arms rather than heavy weaponry fuelling regional and internal conflicts.

The groups of governmental experts that convened in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 57/75, 60/226 and 63/69 and 66/39 in 2003, 2006, 2009 and 2013, respectively, all debated the possibility of including small arms and light weapons in the Register. With the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty, the Register will serve as a reference at the moment of the entry into force of the Treaty. Given that the Treaty includes in its scope small arms and light weapons, including small arms and light weapons in the Register as well seems even more pertinent.

Germany is concerned about the declining number of reports submitted to the Secretary-General since the beginning of the past decade. Germany believes that a renewed effort should be made to strengthen the universal use of this instrument of transparency and trust-building, including by submitting “nil” reports. The online reporting mechanism established by the Office for Disarmament Affairs of the Secretariat is a very useful tool to that end.

In view of the dynamic technological progress and the resulting changes regarding the shape, operation and nature of conventional weapons, Germany regards it as essential to allow for a flexible and proper evolution of the Register. Owing to the recommendations of the respective groups of governmental experts, the Register has been further developed since its establishment. However, Germany believes that technology has evolved even
faster in this period, allowing for the emergence of new weaponry, potent enough to have an impact on overall military effectiveness, but without being properly reflected in the Register. Therefore, Germany believes that it is time for a more fundamental debate on the nature of the categories, in particular with regard to a further technological acceleration in the future.

**Lebanon**

[Original: Arabic]  
[16 April 2014]

The Ministry of Defence of Lebanon wishes to state that it has neither transferred nor imported any conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons. The army does not manufacture, produce or export any type of weapon or ammunition. All the weapons in its possession have been either imported or confiscated. No weapons of mass destruction are present in Lebanon. In that connection, the Ministry of Defence proposes that the scope of the Register be extended to include weapons of mass destruction.

**Qatar**

[Original: Arabic]  
[13 May 2014]

The State of Qatar possesses only conventional weapons and strives to ensure that it has only the minimum that is necessary to safeguard its territory. It is not seeking to stockpile weapons in quantities surplus to its needs and is working to reduce its imports of conventional weapons.

Light weapons in the State of Qatar are held exclusively by the security forces. The possession of small arms by civilians is regulated by Act No. 14 of 1999 on arms, ammunition and explosives and its annexed tables, as amended by Act No. 26 of 2010, and by the implementing regulations contained in Ministerial Decision No. 30 of 2013. Those instruments set forth licensing terms for the possession, acquisition or trade in such weapons.

With regard to transfers of small arms and light weapons, Act No. 40 of 2002 on customs provides for controls to secure the country’s entry and exit points in order to ensure that no prohibited items, including varieties of weapons, are brought into the country.

**European Union**

[Original: English]  
[29 May 2014]

The European Union believes that the scope of the Register should be expanded to include small arms and light weapons as a stand-alone category because:

(a) Small arms and light weapons are not among the regular categories of the Register, thereby limiting its relevance because, for many States Members of the United Nations, small arms and light weapons are often the only arms that are actually traded;

(b) The Arms Trade Treaty, adopted by the General Assembly on 2 April 2013, requires States parties to report annually on their imports and
exports of arms covered by the Treaty. The Treaty covers the seven Register categories, in addition to small arms and light weapons, and provides that the report may contain the same information submitted by the State party to relevant United Nations frameworks, including the Register.Aligning the scope of the Register with the scope of arms covered by the Treaty would facilitate reporting under both instruments.

2013 (A/68/138)

China

Resolution 66/39

Transparency in armaments

China has always attached great importance to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and actively participated in the work of all the Group of Governmental Experts established for the Register and made important contributions to the establishment and development of the Register. Since 1996, a particular Member State had provided data to the United Nations Register on its arms sale to Taiwan Province of China, which contradicted the spirit of the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly as well as the objectives and principles of the United Nations Register. China was impelled to suspend its submission of data to the Register. In 2006, the problem related to Taiwan in the Register was solved. Since 2007, China has resumed submitting data to the Register annually.

Germany

With reference to General Assembly resolution 66/39 on transparency in armaments, in particular to paragraph 5 (a), which reads:

“5.  Reaffirms its decision, with a view to further development of the Register, to keep the scope of and participation in the Register under review and, to that end:

(a) Recalls its request to Member States to provide the Secretary-General with their views on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development and on transparency measures related to weapons of mass destruction”;

Germany would like to make the following comments.

The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms has proved to be one of the few and effective global transparency measures. Germany strongly supports this instrument and has regularly reported to the Secretary-General.

Germany has also encouraged States to report in a comprehensive manner, including on small arms and light weapons. Germany believes that the inclusion of reporting on small arms and light weapons as a mandatory category of the United Nations Register would enhance in a substantive way the usefulness of this instrument. In many parts of the
world, small arms and light weapons are the main factor of instability, often exceeding heavy weaponry as a stability challenge. In particular in Africa, it is small arms rather than heavy weaponry fuelling regional as well as internal conflicts.

The groups of governmental experts that convened in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 57/75, 60/226, 63/69 and 66/39 in 2003, 2006, 2009 and 2013, respectively, all debated on the possibility of including small arms and light weapons in the Register. With the adoption of a universal treaty on the global trade in arms, the Register will serve as a reference at the moment of the coming into force of this treaty. As the global trade in arms includes in its scope small arms and light weapons, including small arms and light weapons in the Register as well seems even more pertinent.

Germany is concerned about the declining number of reports submitted to the Secretary-General since the beginning of the past decade. Germany believes that a renewed effort should be made to strengthen the universal use of this instrument of transparency and trust-building, including by submitting “nil” reports. In this context, Germany welcomes the new online reporting mechanism established by the Office for Disarmament Affairs of the Secretariat.

In view of the dynamic technological progress and the resulting changes regarding shape, operation and nature of conventional weapons, Germany regards it as essential to allow for a flexible and proper evolution of the Register. Owing to the recommendations of the respective groups of governmental experts, the Register has been further developed since its establishment. However, Germany believes that technology has evolved even faster in this period, allowing for the emergence of new weaponry, potent enough to have an impact on overall military effectiveness, but without being properly reflected in the Register. Therefore, Germany believes that it is time for a more fundamental debate on the nature of the categories, in particular with regard to a further technological acceleration in the future.