

Results from the First Year of the Register²²

Participation

A major aim of the first year of the exercise was to maximize the number of states participating. Eighty-three national reports, over 45 percent of all member states, were submitted. This was much more than in the older and somewhat parallel exercise of reporting military expenditures to the United Nations. Participation varied significantly by region. In Europe and North America the member states of NATO and the CSCE went on record as supporting the Register and committed themselves to participation and the sharing of reports. On the other hand no state in Sub-Saharan Africa reported any imports. In the crucial area of the Middle East, no Gulf States reported. The significant number of countries not reporting can partly be explained by the fact that in 1992 they traded no arms in the seven categories of weapons of the UN Register, although they were all asked to report even if it was a nil report. The major weapon importers not reporting included Saudi Arabia, Iran, Thailand, Syria, Taiwan (not a UN member state), Bangladesh and Kuwait.

The 83 states submitting reports generally did so at four different levels. Some states participated at a maximum level, using the forms provided with maximum transparency of data and also submitted background information on their military holdings and procurement through national production. A second but small group of states announced their non-participation for some specific reason. In the case of South Africa, it was the UN embargo (still in place). A third group submitted only a *note verbale* covering miscellaneous topics while a fourth group submitted information only on the regulations and policies related to arms exports and imports in their respective states.

The reports also show that exporter participation was greater than that of importers. Of the 192 discrete deals or transfers reported to the Register, 159 (83%) came from exporter reports while only 33 (17%) additional deals originated with importers. This created the situation whereby a significant number of items were made transparent due to the participation of exporters. The non participation of three key states — the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Syria and Iran — where public information indicated that significant trade in missiles took place in 1992, creates a major gap in government-produced data.

²² The following assessment contains excerpts from Edward J. Laurance and Herbert Wulf, *An Evaluation of the First Year of Reporting to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms*, Research Report, Program for Nonproliferation Studies, Monterey Institute of International Studies, October 1993. For additional assessments of the first year of reporting see Edward J. Laurance, Siemon T. Wezeman and Herbert Wulf, *Arms Watch: SIPRI Report on the First Year of the UN Register of Conventional Arms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); and Ian Anthony, 'Assessing the UN Register of Conventional Arms,' *Survival* 35, 4 (Winter 1993), 113-129.