

the States Parties. Thus, an incremental approach would envisage that the scope of the verification regime would only be extended from international to non-international armed conflict once confidence-building measures had provided a level of assurance that this would not unduly compromise the sovereignty or security of any State Party. An incremental approach to CCW verification could encourage non-parties to join by allowing them to become participants in the confidence-building process.

23. Second, an incremental approach would allow the verification mechanisms associated with any future CCW Convention to be tailored to the actual requirements of that Convention. At present, for example, it is unknown precisely how intrusive CCW fact-finding will have to be in order to be effective. Over time, practical experience will provide a better appreciation of the degree of intrusiveness required. Additionally, learning-by-doing will illuminate those practices which work well and those which are less effective. As this process continues, the incremental nature of the regime will allow it to evolve organically, with verification practices and institutions developing over time as operational requirements indicate and political circumstances permit.

24. An important corollary of this argument is that there is no fixed or pre-determined end point to this process. The regime and its specific elements need only evolve to the point where they are as effective as the international community agrees is adequate.

III. The Verification Process

25. Typically, verification involves several stages. The first stage is the **trigger stage** during which the verification process is initiated. After this comes the **initial review stage**. At this stage, frivolous, unfounded or otherwise inadmissible complaints are screened out. Following the initial review stage comes the **investigative stage**. During this part of the verification process, investigating authorities use a variety of means to collect and compile the facts regarding a case. These means range from interviews and hearings to fact-finding missions *in loco*. Finally (and not in all cases), a decision is made regarding the truth of the allegations. This is the **evaluation phase**. The process of evaluating alleged violations can be judicial, quasi-judicial or political in nature.

26. To maximize effectiveness, verification systems have to have several specific features. These include: a broad-based complaints system, an effective screening process, an ability to detect systematic violations, and an independent (ie. quasi-judicial) evaluation process. While in principle a system incorporating these elements would undoubtedly enhance the effectiveness of verification in the CCW context, such a system may prove difficult to implement in the short run. Moreover, experience may indicate that such an elaborate and/or rigorous regime is not necessary to uncover patterns of gross and reliably attested violation.