

The cost factor will be a variable which can only be determined with accuracy once the framework of the establishing umbrella agreement, the number of participants and the demand for the data are more readily definable. However, it seems reasonable to conclude that, based on other experience, the costs of starting and operating a simple light weapons register should not be exorbitantly high.

## CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, then, one can put together a picture of desirable characteristics of a light weapons arms register.

It must fit the aims of the establishing agreement. That is, it must provide the transparency which (presumably) is desired by the participants and it must be in sufficient detail to provide meaningful insight into the situation pertaining to the region in which it is to be applied. In this regard, it must rely upon and reflect official data from the recognized national authority in each participating state.

Each participating nation should have the opportunity to provide amplifying comment on their submission and the resulting data base should reflect these notations to allow a full understanding of the participant's position. There should also be a mechanism to allow both technical, administrative clarification as well as a more formal consultative mechanism to raise observations or ask questions without creating diplomatic incidents. Some periodic review or report may be desirable as a methodology to gauge the effectiveness of the agreement or to focus domestic or international efforts to stem light weapon proliferation.

In the mechanical operation of a light weapons register, the main aim should be to cover as many classifications of military-style light weapons as possible but exclude the lower end of the weapon spectrum to recognize legitimate national and cultural needs for private arms possession within national criminal law boundaries. Because of the size of the light weapons trade and its geographical dispersion, the best that can be accomplished is probably an accounting by type and quantity rather than by serialized single-unit manifest lists.

Ammunition and munitions should be catered for in order that complete data on the light weapons situation can be accurately reflected. To give visibility to the dimension of the illicit trade in light weapons and to allow nations to show their efforts in curbing this manifestation of the problem, information should be included in the register concerning illicit weapons apprehended by national or international authorities. Likewise, to reflect accurately the size of light weapon data, information of national holdings and production should be tracked. Reporting of movement of light weapons by both exporting and importing nations will allow a degree of cross-checking of data by researchers.