

Due to time constraints I will limit my recommendations to practical measures for implementing the aims of this resolution in the following areas;

- controlling legal firearms flows
- controlling illicit weapons trafficking
- increasing the resources available to effectively implement control agreements

For detailed information on the recommendations proposed I refer you to the BASIC paper "Overcoming Domestic Obstacles to Light Weapons Control"² and the forthcoming BASIC research report "Combating Illicit Light Weapons Trafficking: Developments and Opportunities".³

BASIC's RECOMMENDATIONS

CONTROLLING LEGAL FIREARMS FLOWS

1997 has seen significant progress on regional and international efforts to control the illicit traffic in light weapons. Echoing concerns voiced at the United Nations (UN) over the last few years, regional institutions such as the Organization of American States (OAS), the European Union (EU) and the Group of Eight Industrialised States (G-8) have begun developing concrete proposals to stem these transfers. While these intergovernmental initiatives on illicit weapons are encouraging, these proposals address only one element of light weapons proliferation.

Targeting illicit trafficking may allow governments to clamp down on the black market trade but dealing with this aspect of light weapons transfers is not enough. It is not only the light weapons traded by criminals, bandits, and thieves that cause violence and suffering. Rather, governments themselves must re-examine their own policies and practices that contribute to the perpetuation of violence. The international community cannot allow governments to use controls on illicit trafficking as a smokescreen to divert attention away from their commitments and responsibilities as producers, suppliers and recipients of light weapons. Effective controls on light weapons necessitate a dual track approach addressing both licit and illicit transfers.

1. Improve national enforcement

Although most supplier regimes incorporate end-use certification into the national export controls, light weapons exports are not so stringently monitored as heavy weapons systems. There is much more tolerance of supply to third-party traders, and thus to possible circumvention of end-use statements and grey or black market trading. For instance, Between 1989 and 1993, the Office of Defense Trade Controls at the US

² "Overcoming Domestic Obstacles to Light Weapons Control", Dr. Natalie J Goldring, Director of BASIC's Project on Light Weapons, April 1997.

³ "Combating Illicit Light Weapons Trafficking: Developments and Opportunities", Susannah Dyer and Geraldine O'Callaghan, January 1998.