

Foreword

Arms Control and Security Policy Framework

The promotion of international peace and security is a key Canadian foreign policy objective. It constitutes one of the three pillars of the Government of Canada's comprehensive foreign policy statement of 1995, *Canada in the World*, namely, "the protection of our security, within a stable global environment." To this end, it is important both to maintain the operational readiness of Canadian and allied forces and to prevent destabilizing accumulations of conventional arms and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. Thus, Canada is a major proponent of arms control and disarmament agreements as well as of measures to promote transparency and build confidence at the regional and global levels.

Canada's security rests on the existence of a strong defence industrial base that can provide the Canadian Forces with the equipment, munitions and spare parts they need to meet operational objectives, including combat and peacekeeping missions. To survive, however, Canadian defence firms must seek foreign, as well as domestic, buyers for their products, most of which go to allied or other closely aligned nations. Canada upholds the right, enshrined in the United Nations Charter, of all nations to provide for their legitimate self-defence. At the same time, we recognize the need to subject exports of defence products to close controls to ensure they are consistent with Canadian values and are not diverted to ends that would threaten Canada and its allies or have a destabilizing effect on both regional security and global order.

The international control regime that concerns itself with conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies is the Wassenaar Arrangement, which Canada helped establish in 1996. Its objective is to contribute to regional and international security and stability by promoting transparency and greater responsibility in transfers of conventional arms and strategically sensitive goods and technologies; in this way, it helps prevent destabilizing accumulations in areas of concern. The 33 participating states seek, through their national policies, to ensure that transfers of these items do not contribute to the development or enhancement of military capabilities that would undermine these goals, and to ensure that such goods and technologies are not diverted.

Canada has also played an important role in developing, in 1996, a set of UN Guidelines on International Arms Transfers and is fully implementing the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)'s 1993 Principles Governing Conventional Arms Transfers. As well, Canada has endorsed the European Union's Code of Conduct for International Arms Transfers, as adopted in June 1998.

Canada has worked actively to promote greater transparency in the trade of conventional weapons. Canada strongly promoted the creation of the United Nations Register