

acquisition of conventional arms. It should include the leading producers, exporters and importers and include representatives from all regions where 'excessive and destabilizing' accumulations might occur. In addition to governmental 'experts' it should include consultants who are specialists in analyzing military balances. If it was an annual panel, which met for a week in the fall of each year, it would have the latest data and could take advantage of the fact that the First Committee meetings usually involve the top security experts from each Member State. It would have the advantages of a 'stand-alone' organization,⁵² that is an independent entity unencumbered by previously established procedures and other aspects of organizational culture. It would also overcome the problem of assigning analytical, interpretative and dispute settlement tasks to the UNCTDA, which would perform a support role for this panel. The disadvantages would be a reluctance to establish yet another organization to deal with security and disarmament issues.

GATT-Like Panel. If the norm development analyzed above comes to pass, i.e., states continue to reinforce the norm of transparency by submitting more data to the Register and eventually agree to take actions to prevent excessive and destabilizing accumulations, it is possible to contemplate using the approach of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), soon to become the World Trade Organization (WTO). GATT is an agreement in which Member States agree to a certain set of norms in the form of fair and open trading practices over a range of specific commodities. Should any state object to the practices of any other, this state may formally bring the complaint to GATT, which then initiates a dispute settlement process. The first step is for GATT to host a face to face meeting with the concerned parties, in an attempt to have them settle 'out of court.' Should this fail, the dispute is then evaluated by a panel of independent and disinterested experts, which decides in favour of one party or the other. These rulings have gained in weight over the years, along with the growth of the consensus on the norms established by GATT. When the WTO takes effect in 1995, these rulings will be binding on members.

The Register process is only beginning to develop a set of norms which could be utilized by such a panel. But this approach has some clear advantages. First, while the process would be a permanent part of the UN system (perhaps part of UNDC or the CD), it only would meet when there is a complaint. In the case of the Register, a state might use such a system to query a particular state on a particularly troublesome acquisition (e.g., the Iranian submarine). Second, if like in GATT all member states agree to such a procedure, there is little political cost in convening the panel. Third, it does not require a permanent set of experts. In GATT there is a roster of experts who serve on

⁵² I am indebted to Ron Cleminson of the Canadian government who has used this term, as well as 'stand beside' and 'stand within,' in describing options for an international verification agency in support of a nuclear test ban treaty.