

SECTION I -- ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT

1. ARMS TRANSFERS

BACKGROUND

Post-war efforts to seek agreement on the limitation or regulation of arms transfers have been limited. Broader efforts to create regional or multilateral controls on arms transfers, however, have until recently received little support. In part, this has reflected the preeminent role of the major powers in the arms trade. Together, the five permanent members of the Security Council supply approximately 90 percent of the arms trade. The Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls (COCOM), which consists of the NATO countries minus Iceland plus Japan and Australia, has been effective in controlling exports to communist countries. Since the Gulf War, with the partial exception of China, all the major powers have made or supported proposals for curbs on arms transfers.

Meeting in Paris on 8 and 9 July 1991, representatives of the five Permanent Members of the Security Council agreed that a comprehensive programme of arms control should be implemented in the Middle East. In addition to a number of measures relating to the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, the five declared their intention to observe rules of restraint in conventional weapons transfers using national control procedures and developing guidelines on this basis. They also agreed to develop procedures for consultation and the exchange of information. Experts from the Permanent Five met through the first half of 1992. While they were able to agree, in May 1992, on "Interim Guidelines Related to Weapons of Mass Destruction," the Permanent Five made little progress on key conventional arms transfer issues such as advanced notification of arms sales.

At the end of the London Summit of the G-7, held from 15 to 17 July 1991, the participating countries published a "Declaration on Conventional Arms Transfers and NBC Non-Proliferation." The Declaration noted that many states depend on arms imports, but distinguished this from the threat to international stability caused by the accumulation of "a massive arsenal that goes far beyond the needs of self defence." The Declaration asserted that this could be prevented by the application of the three principles of transparency, consultation and action.

The principle of *transparency* should be extended to international transfers of conventional weapons and associated military technology. As a step in this direction we support the