

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 that end, 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 policies recognize the right, enshrined in the United Nations Charter, of all nations to provide for their legitimate self-defence. At the same time, however, it is Canada's view that the excessive accumulation of conventional weapons has a destabilizing effect on both regional security and global order.

Canada has worked actively to promote greater transparency in the trade of conventional weapons. As part of this effort, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) has published an annual report on the *Export of Military Goods from Canada* each year since 1990. Few other countries, as yet, provide this level of detail.

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, thus preventing 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.

The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNCAR) also makes a significant contribution to transparency, confidence building and enhanced global security. Canada strongly promoted the creation of UNCAR, established by the Secretary-General in January 1992, and was a founding contributor. Canada also participated in the 1994, 1997 and 2000 UN Group of Governmental Experts on the Register of Conventional Arms. We are actively participating in follow-up efforts on the 2000 Group's recommendations to further develop and expand the Register. This year, for example, Canada and Japan co-sponsored an UNCAR seminar in Cambodia to focus on increasing that region's participation in the Register. Similar regional seminars are being planned for 2001-2002 in conjunction with Germany and the Netherlands for South America/the Caribbean and for Africa.