

*and should link these with longer term reintegration projects.*

### ***3.4 Reversing cultures of violence***

Programmes are needed throughout most of Southern Africa to promote community awareness of, and involvement in programmes to remove weapons from society and to reverse the “cultures of violence” that have developed in parts of the region. Such programmes should be seen as part of a wider integrated programme to improve governance and enhance the capacity of the police and other services to assure the security of citizens (and enhance the confidence of all citizens in such services). In this context, Southern African countries should consider:

- Developing national and regional public education and awareness programmes to enhance public involvement and support for efforts to tackle light arms proliferation and illicit trafficking, and to challenge and reverse “gun cultures” or cultures of violence where they occur;
- Establishing systems of information exchange and consultation throughout the region, and also developing contacts with relevant groups beyond the subregion, to identify and learn from successful practices in this area.

## **4. ENHANCE TRANSPARENCY, INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND CONSULTATION ON ARMS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA**

A prerequisite for Southern African states to exercise responsibility, control and restraint in the import, export, transit and accumulation of arms, is the development of confidence-building and information exchange measures between states within the subregion. This will require the establishment of improved mechanisms for information exchange, consultation and wider transparency.

### ***4.1 Enhancing Public Transparency***

*Transparency in arms accumulations, flows and policies, and also regarding the role and importance of arms in society, is essential not only for international confidence-building, but also to engender public confidence in the state and to enhance the public’s perception that their security is assured.*

Southern African countries should consider enhancing public transparency on arms by:

- Participating regularly in the UN Register of Conventional Arms and supporting its extension in scope to include at least some “lighter” categories of armaments;
- Starting a process to establish a regional register covering information relevant to light arms;
- Exchanging information, within the region, on levels of armaments in order to arrive at a common understanding of the appropriate level of armaments which is required or national for self-defence;
- Developing an arms control community in the region, and strengthening and developing centres for disarmament studies;
- Recognising the useful role NGOs can play in enhancing such transparency.