

this impasse, which continues to this day, is much deeper and important to understand as states seek ways to improve and enhance the Register.

The first critical factor contributing to this impasse is that the issue of military holdings go at the heart of the security concerns of states, and that data submitted in this category, if at all, will be at a different level than either transfers or procurement through national production. As the Middle Eastern representative stated above, military holdings data, once submitted, are forever. A second factor is that military holdings data, in the context of transparency and confidence building, only make sense at the local or regional level. Continuing the debate on this point only exacerbates the north-south tensions. It is disingenuous for states from the north to continue insisting that states from conflict regions must duplicate what many arms producing states have done, and submit their holdings data. Making public the number of tanks in the U.S., French or Canadian inventory has no bearing on confidence building or conflict prevention, which will occur in areas far from the U.S., France or Canada. These arms producing states should continue to submit such data, perhaps to set a general example. But they should not be under any illusions that this is easy for states in conflict regions. In any event, most military holdings are known through national intelligence means. Furthermore, they cannot be changed in the short run through CBMs or negotiations. It is interesting to note that the recently promulgated Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisitions, a major initiative of the Canadian government, does not include data on military holdings. This is an implicit recognition of the sensitivity of such data, and that even when a Register is "regionalized", there are limits to transparency measures.

V. Conceptual framework to guide further development of the Register¹⁵

The above discussion of transparency and military holdings was intended to demonstrate that the current lack of progress in expanding the scope and utility of the Register is due in part to an incomplete and underdeveloped understanding of how these two concepts relate to the operation of the Register at the global level. There are other conceptual misunderstandings as well, including how the presence of a consultative mechanism and early warning contributes to a more comprehensive cooperative security system that could make more effective use of data generated by the Register.

¹⁵ . The following is based on Edward J. Laurance, "A Conceptual framework for arms trade transparency in South-East Asia." In Bates Gill and J.N. Mak (eds.), *Arms Transparency and Security in South-East Asia*. SIPRI Research Report No. 13. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 10-24. While it is not new research conducted for this specific report, it is a critical element to the overall analysis of the Register. Also, other than the SIPRI report, it has not received very wide distribution. For these reasons this work is summarized here and integrated into the report.