

part of it. Also absent from the regime are a number of other suppliers (or potential ones) like North Korea, Israel, Argentina and Brazil.

Equally significant is the lack of verification mechanisms to ensure compliance, or the mention of any possible sanctions to be used against violators. In addition, the language of the agreement has been criticized as being too vague. Critics contend that a state can simply claim that the rocket technology it wishes to import is for civilian purposes, even if such technology has equally possible military applications. This claim alone, according to some analysts, might be sufficient to allow an exporting state to ship the technology in question. Even though the MTCR guidelines state that a supplier government must receive "appropriate assurances" that the receiving government will use the items only for the purpose stated (i.e. that the imports would not contribute to a nuclear weapons delivery system), nothing is known about the type of safeguards or 'assurances' demanded by suppliers, and even less about the effectiveness of such assurances.

As cooperation between states outside the MTCR increases, and domestic programmes continue to grow, it is evident that export restrictions alone may not suffice to reverse the trend of proliferation, and other approaches will have to be explored.

FURTHER MEASURES

MTCR

Since the MTCR remains the only multilateral effort to address missile proliferation, there is a strong consensus that it should be maintained, but strengthened. In addition to increasing its adherents, the agreement could be made into a treaty. In September 1988, Soviet Foreign Minister Edouard Shevardnadze stated that a multilateral agreement to constrain the spread of ballistic missiles should be sought in the framework of the United Nations.

Another suggestion is to increase the number of items on the regime's list, and to lower the threshold so as to include missiles other than those capable of carrying nuclear warheads. Problems relating to the language of the agreement could also be carefully reviewed, and consistent and effective measures of verification could be devised.

While missile proliferation is itself a problem, actions could be taken related to the development of warheads of mass destruction, the other half of the ballistic missile proliferation equation.

Other Proliferation

Three multilateral agreements covering acquisition, production, stockpiling or use of weapons of mass

destruction are already in existence. The Non-Proliferation Treaty, which came into force in 1970, proscribes the acquisition of nuclear weapons or other explosive devices by non-nuclear weapons signatory states. While the NPT has been successful in slowing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and is now the arms control agreement with the greatest number of signatories, it still lacks universal adherence. The absence of India, Pakistan, Argentina, Brazil and Israel is a serious threat to the non-proliferation regime. Increasing the number of adherents to the treaty and ensuring its continuation in the future, could, combined with other measures, reduce the incentive to acquire ballistic missiles.

The 1925 Geneva Protocol proscribing the use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and of bacteriological methods of warfare has now been signed by 125 nations. The agreement, however, does not regulate the production, stockpiling or the use of such weapons in retaliation. For the past several years, negotiations have been underway to devise a more comprehensive agreement. While important progress has been made, stumbling blocks remain. The implementation of a comprehensive agreement covering production, stockpiling and all use of chemical weapons would reduce the potential deadliness of missiles.

Acquisition of biological weapons is already proscribed under the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) signed in 1972. Yet no verification mechanisms are attached to the agreement and parties are authorized to continue research for "defensive" purposes. Furthermore, states like Israel, Syria, Iraq and Egypt have either not joined the BWC, or have signed without taking any further actions. Here again the strengthening of the agreement would be welcomed.

Lastly, it has been suggested that one way of strengthening the new missile regime would be to deny all space or missile and rocket technology to nations that do not adhere to one, or all of the above agreements.

Diplomatic actions

A whole range of diplomatic initiatives has been proposed to deal with the missile programmes of most concern. Often made on a case-by-case basis, these proposals have been mainly US initiatives, ranging from rewards for good behaviour to sanctions of all types for violators. While the use of sanctions by the international community has often had mixed results, this option, as well as others in the diplomatic field, should be considered further. Particularly, an effort should be made to apply diplomatic pressure on a multilateral basis.

Regional measures

Since ballistic missile proliferation, as well as other types of weapons proliferation, is primarily driven by the security environment of particular regions, many