

illicit arms trafficking. Another is the Arms Sales Monitoring Project of the Federation of American Scientists, which is conducting field research and attempting to form a campaign to ban illicit arms trafficking. Donor states are now looking for model projects to demonstrate the utility of arms-focused policies. Only a broad based coalition of NGOs can contribute to this process.

NGOs who are capable and willing to participate in the campaign must be identified and brought together. The Federation of American Scientists has begun this process but as indicated previously, it will be more challenging than was the case for the land mine campaign. Such a coalition exists for promoting a Code of Conduct, so perhaps that is a starting point. If NGOs are to play a major role in monitoring compliance with this treaty, as is the case in the land mines treaty, some sort of educational campaign will be required.

Early warning

In their effort to be neutral, NGOs have a bias toward not being involved in things military. The increasing casualties suffered by humanitarian NGOs has begun to change this orientation. In many cases these NGOs are in place, on the ground, and could be the source of early warning, not just on the factors related to starvation and health epidemics but also to arms buildups as well. In Albania neutral observers observing the black market for arms note how the prices for an AK-47 rise and fall, one of several indicators of how many such weapons are on the market. To the extent that these NGOs do not do this because of lack of familiarity with weapons and their means of transfer into a zone of potential conflict, this could be rectified by the proliferation of knowledge on this dimension. But the risk to these NGOs should not be understated.

D. Supporters and opponents

Developing a strategy to galvanize public opinion and develop the political will in governments to support the campaign will require a clear understanding of natural supporters and opponents of such an effort. And these will be somewhat different than either the traditional arms control approach or the land mine campaign

If the goal is focused on eliminating illicit arms trafficking, in most cases the uniformed militaries of the world, as well as the police will be supportive. In those cases where military style weapons have proliferated throughout the society (e.g., South Africa, Albania, El Salvador), one of the first groups to call for collection and destruction are the forces of law and order.

If the goal is to eliminate or lower the levels of such arms in order to allow a society to develop economically, socially and politically, those NGOs and government organizations charged with policymaking and implementation in these areas will be natural allies. Human rights and refugee policy organizations can also be counted on to be supportive. Also, the business community which must operate in these violent arenas will be the first to assist. In El Salvador the 1996 weapons turn-in program originated with a committee of business persons who were faced with seeing all their post-1992 rebuilding work dissipated as violence with military weapons destabilized the society.