

- The recent focus on partnerships between like-minded states and NGOs has blunted the energies of many NGOs in pushing their governments forward. This is particularly true where the government in question appears to be "on side" and genuinely interested in cooperating with NGOs. Thus, we have the absurd situation in Canada where we purport to lead internationally on SALW, but we have not yet managed to ratify the Organization of American States convention against illicit trafficking that we signed several years ago. *And there has been virtually no criticism of this by NGOs.* It should be self-evident that such criticism, far from "hurting" Foreign Minister Axworthy's efforts, would strengthen his hand in cabinet.
- The economic impact of SALW, while vastly overstated globally, has tremendous significance for a specific group of supplier countries – namely those newly emerging democracies of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, which are heavily dependent on defence exports. Russia has stated flatly that, until the problem is squarely faced and solutions are offered, there will be no effective curtailment of exports of SALW to problematic destinations.

The discussion following Peggy Mason's presentation touched on many issues.

Canada has fairly good controls over direct SALW exports. But further regulation is needed over the practice of "brokering": that is, arranging transport, finance, and general deal-making. As brokers do not handle the weapons directly, they are often un-regulated or under-regulated in Canada and many other countries.

Verification of prohibitions or embargoes on the export of SALW may be difficult, but is no longer commonly seen as impossible. Canada and UN ambassador Fowler deserve praise for showing how other UN embargoes were being breached (for example, conflict diamonds). Fowler's report named names, and shamed countries into coming into line. The lesson is that it is important not just to declare embargoes, but also to follow through on their implementation.

It was suggested that shocking images of the impact of SALW could be used to generate support for their control. The landmines campaign used images to great effect.

Many newly emerging democracies (as in Eastern Europe) rely on hard currency earnings from SALW exports. We must think about economic reform and assistance to end this reliance. Finding alternatives is a vital task.

Some countries in the past have suggested that conventional disarmament should not happen before nuclear disarmament. Fortunately, the issues of SALW and nuclear disarmament have, in practice, been de-linked in international forums.

We must look at how companies seek to avoid trade restrictions by licensing production to developing countries.