

## **Verification Research Program Preface**

This report examines the issue of conventional arms proliferation from a Canadian point of view. It places particular emphasis on identifying pragmatic options for action, based on Canadian national interests, that could contribute to international efforts to constrain conventional arms proliferation. It also addresses the strengths and limitations of Canada's ability to contribute to such international efforts.

Among the issues discussed are the global conventional arms trade, Canada's defence production and exports, export controls, transparency measures (such as the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms), the relationship of arms spending to human rights as well as social and economic development, and post-conflict conventional weapons disarmament measures. While primarily directed at exploring a possible role for Canada in constraining conventional weapons proliferation, the report's findings have wider relevance to international discussions on this issue.

This comprehensive and thorough examination of the issue of conventional proliferation underlines the complexities surrounding the identification of both causes and practical solutions in this area. While the ability of Canada to influence these questions is limited, as the report points out, there are constructive actions that might be undertaken both unilaterally and, particularly, in concert with like-minded countries. Several of the research avenues suggested by the report are actively being pursued.

This study was commissioned under the Department's Verification Research Program to support bilateral and multilateral efforts by Canada to address aspects of the conventional arms issue as identified by the Minister of Foreign Affairs in his statement to the Forty-Ninth General Assembly of the United Nations and as outlined in the Government's foreign policy statement of 1995, "Canada in the World". It was prepared by a study team assembled through York University's Centre for International and Strategic Studies and under the skilful direction of Dr. Keith Krause. The study team completed its work in late 1995. The report is published as part of an on-going commitment to share selected independent research undertaken for the Department to promote a dialogue on important non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament issues.

The views contained in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade or of the Government of Canada.