

as in the case of the Middle East.<sup>15</sup> Other Member States, particularly in Africa, have made it clear that the categories of weapons to be reported (which exclude small arms and light weapons) have little relevance to the security concerns of that continent. To the surprise of many, the register has revealed information that was not known before<sup>16</sup> and has helped foster better national procedures for the monitoring and reporting of conventional arms transfers. Perhaps most important, however, the Register has proven to be an important stimulus for security dialogues, both governmental and 'second track',<sup>17</sup> at the regional and sub-regional levels.<sup>18</sup>

Proposals for expanding the register include the addition of holdings and procurement through national production, as well as the inclusion of the types and models of weapons at the same level of reporting as transfers. Other Member States continue to favour inclusion of weapons of mass destruction while still others argue that the first priority is to expand the participation in the current register. Given this continuing difference of views, prospects for an expansion of the scope of the register or a measured improvement in the qualitative nature of the data remain modest. On the other hand, it may be possible to make certain institutional improvements with respect to both a consultative mechanism and the role of the UN Secretariat in promoting the register.

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Pursuant to a resolution passed in June of 1995 by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC),<sup>19</sup> the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division at the

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<sup>15</sup> In this region, only Israel and Jordan submitted data for 1995. Several others took a deliberate decision not to do so in light of concerns about the lack of expansion of the register to include weapons of mass destruction.

<sup>16</sup> See: *Developing the UN Register of Conventional Arms*, Malcolm Chalmers, Owen Greene, Edward Laurence and Herbert Wulf editors (Bradford Arms Register Studies No. 4, 1994), Chapter 4.

<sup>17</sup> For a discussion of "second track" dialogues in the Asia Pacific context, see *The ASEAN Regional Forum: Confidence-Building*, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (February 1997) at pp. 7-9.

<sup>18</sup> See, for example, the sections *infra* in relation to the OAS Hemispheric Security Committee and the ASEAN Regional Forum.

<sup>19</sup> Document E/1995, chapter II, paras 9-20