

II Why Constrain Conventional Weapons Proliferation?

A response to the question "why constrain conventional weapons proliferation?" would be incomplete if it isolated non-proliferation concerns from a larger security discussion. The issues surrounding conventional weapons constraint are embedded in wider security interests that in turn have greatly evolved as a result of the end of the Cold War. The dismantling of the Berlin Wall brought the collapse of the East-West security regime of containment and deterrence, and raised a very different set of security challenges, including greater attention to the global proliferation of conventional weapons.

At the broadest level, security interests are being shaped by two main factors. The first, and most obvious, factor in light of the dramatic political, economic and strategic changes that arose from the end of the bipolar superpower confrontation, is the improved military security environment, in which the threat of global war has dramatically receded. The second factor is an emerging concept of security that broadens security interests from narrow military-strategic concerns to a more inclusive view that is intended to address the global military and non-military concerns of a changed world.

Both factors are acknowledged in the most recent Canadian government foreign policy statement, *Canada in the World*, which notes that "the dangerous but predictable post-war system is gone" and lists in detail the circumstances and components of an "evolving context for foreign policy." The security component is defined as "freedom from a wide array of challenges," particularly "non-traditional" threats that transcend political borders. *Canada in the World* identifies protection of Canadian security within a stable global environment as one of three key policy objectives. In elucidating the methods by which Canada will move toward this security objective, the document also states that "Canada will be at the forefront of those helping to shape a broader framework that responds to the demands of a changing security environment."

This chapter tackles the question "why constrain conventional weapons proliferation?" first by describing the factors shaping contemporary global security interests - the new security environment and a broadening view of security - and then placing conventional non-proliferation concerns in this larger context. In the first section we note that efforts to develop new security regimes and architectures have taken on increased urgency since the end of the Cold War. Dozens of current and potential regional conflicts overlie advancing international problems such as environmental degradation and poverty. This is the difficult international environment in which Canada and other nations must define their security policies. It is also the environment in which the United Nations and other multilateral institutions have become central vehicles to achieve security goals, including measures to address conventional non-proliferation.

At the same time new understandings of security are still in flux. As described in the second section below, these understandings have been defined in a number of ways, and by different terms, including "common security," "cooperative security," and "human security," among others. Whatever the term adopted, the view that security encompasses much more than narrow military/strategic interests is gaining wider support, as aptly demonstrated in the process and outcome of Canada's recent foreign policy review.

In a concluding section we note that the adoption of a broader understanding of security implies that policy-makers need to take into account a wider range of possible areas where unrestrained conventional weapons transfers may have an impact and suggests that many of these offer strong rationales for promoting constraint.

A New Security Environment

For more than four decades the Cold War "security dilemma" shaped security theory and practice. States pursued security in a zero-sum game where an attempt by one state to achieve security through expanded