

suppliers for different categories of weapons. If one is primarily concerned with the potentially destabilizing impact of advanced major weapons systems on particular regional conflicts, then the most important suppliers are the seven industrialized states of the second category. If, on the other hand, the concern is with the transfer of advanced military technologies to "rogue" states, then the eighteen states of the third category are important. If one is concerned with illegal transfers and the use of light weapons in internal or ethnic conflicts and wars, a much larger number of potential suppliers must be involved.

Terms and Definitions

In part because of these concerns, this report adopts a broad approach to defining conventional weapons. *Conventional arms* are defined to include all weapons and military technologies (including dual-use technologies whose primary application is military) that fall below the threshold of weapons of mass destruction (which are understood to encompass nuclear, chemical and biological weapons). At one end of the scale, delivery systems for weapons of mass destruction (such as ballistic missiles or combat aircraft) and major weapons platforms are included. At the other end, land mines, small arms, light weapons, and other non-lethal military equipment (transport vehicles, for example) are included.

Although we use a broad definition of conventional weapons, this does not, however, imply that all "conventional arms" are of equal importance, or that they should all be controlled. As later chapters in this report argue, broad initiatives that use expansive definitions of weapons and armaments, and whose main goal is to reduce or eliminate military-related trade, are impossible to achieve and rest upon a poor understanding of the nature of the problem being addressed. While perhaps an understandable reaction to the destructiveness of conventional wars, such approaches often mistake symptoms of conflict for causes, and over-simplify the complex relationships between armaments and conflict, or between armaments and social, political and economic development (which will be discussed in chapter five).

Instead, this report focuses on *conventional proliferation*, which is defined as:

the diffusion of weapons, associated technologies or expertise that produces an adverse effect on local, regional or global security and stability.¹

This definition has three main features. First, it distinguishes *proliferation* from the less controversial process of weapons diffusion that occurs as armed forces slowly modernize obsolete weapons that have reached the end of their life cycle, or adapt their forces to changing conditions (such as post-independence, post-civil war, or post-peace treaty changes). Second, by distinguishing between proliferation and diffusion, it allows one to highlight the hierarchical nature of the global military system. The process of weapons diffusion does not continue until "everyone has everything"; it is rather highly stratified according to the general distribution of military and economic power. One goal of a policy to constrain conventional proliferation will be to detect changes in this hierarchy, as states (such as Iraq) invest vast amounts of resources in indigenous weapons production that propel them well beyond the technological capabilities of the rest of their economy. Such investments are an "early warning" signal for potential future problem areas – in the Iraqi case, such

¹ See, for a discussion of this definition, David Mutimer, ed., *Control but Verify: Verification and the New Non-Proliferation Agenda* (Toronto: York Centre for International and Strategic Studies, 1994), 10.