

problem. As an arms control issue the focus should be on the political aspect of violence, particularly as it pertains to armed political groups. Facets of this division of violence will be taken up again when discussing the definition of light weapons.

Defining Light Weapons

Defining light weapons might seem like a pedantic issue if one takes the simplistic view that anything used to kill someone is inherently bad and therefore must be controlled or eliminated. There are several reasons why "light weapons" must be defined within the context of arms control. As already stated, arms control has always dealt with state to state security issues, focusing on the forces used by states or alliances in relationship to other states or alliances of states. Light weapons proliferation, on the other hand, has a fall out that deals to some extent with state security in the domestic sense - in short it becomes a law and order issue as well as a national security issue.⁹ With some states one may be as important as another - controlling who can possess a hunting rifle may be seen as more urgent than controlling who has hand grenades because hand grenades are not generally available.

In many instances the literature has anguished over the mechanical definition of what a light weapon is - it ranges from any handgun, rifle or shotgun (including homemade zip guns) all the way to all conventional armaments not covered under the UN Registry and/or the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE).¹⁰ Authors have attempted to address the issue by using the NATO definition of light weapons and small arms¹¹, by suggesting a range of definitions that include - those weapons carried by infantry, those transported by

⁹ See Joshua S. Krasna. "Narcotics and the National Security of Producer States" *The Journal of Conflict Studies*. Spring 1996, 100 - 125, for a discussion on the changing definition of international security. He would probably make less of a distinction about the legitimacy of arms control regarding non military threats.

¹⁰ According to UN Document A/47/342, 14 Aug 92, UN Register of Conventional Arms, this would include tanks with a main gun of at least 75mm, artillery of 100mm or more, armoured vehicles with an integral weapon of at least 12.5mm or a missile launcher. The Treaty Limited Equipment under the CFE Treaty is somewhat similar.

¹¹ Dikshit, Prashant. "Internal Conflict and Role of Light Weapons." In *Light Weapons and International Security*, Nirankari Colony, Delhi: Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, British American Security Information Council, Indian Pugwash Society, and Institute for Defence Studies and Analyzes, 1995, 41-49