

The Panel has also noted the parallel activity taking place under the auspices of the United Nations Economic and Social Council and the Vienna-based Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. The latter Commission has undertaken the United Nations International Study on Firearm Regulation, using a project team under a Canadian Coordinator.¹³ While this Study focusses on "law and order" issues, common ground with the Panel on Small Arms has been identified in the area of export controls and destabilizing accumulations of military-style small arms. There may also be commonalities with respect to the utility of embargoes and sanctions. The Panel therefore anticipates making cross-references to the Vienna process in its final report.

It is too early to properly assess the progress of this Panel -- it will only begin to consider its recommendations on the margins of a workshop to be held in Tokyo at the end of May. With its diverse composition and differing priorities, finding a meaningful consensus will not be easy. Nonetheless, given the magnitude and urgency of the problem of light weapons, and the strong call to action by then Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, it is to be hoped that the Panel will seize this singular opportunity to make decisive progress by reaching agreement on concrete, practical recommendations.

UN Register of Conventional Armaments

Pursuant to resolution 50/70D of 1994, a UN Group of Governmental Experts is meeting once again¹⁴ to review the operation of the Register and its possible expansion. The first of three sessions was held in March 1997, with two further sessions in June and August respectively, before the report is presented to the General Assembly in the autumn of 1997. Japan has announced that, in conjunction with Bradford University, it will host a seminar and intersessional meeting for the Expert Group from May 12-24 in Tokyo, where members will have an opportunity to consider the 1996 reports, due April 30, 1997.

The UN Register was an important practical step by the United Nations to create operational instruments of transparency at the global level. While limited in scope, it has enjoyed a reasonable level of support with approximately 90 states reporting in each of the first three complete years of reporting (1993-1996) since its creation. Participation is low from certain regions, in part for political reasons,

¹³ This Study, the Report of which has just been released, is briefly discussed *infra*. The Canadian Coordinator is Mr. Jim Hayes of Canada's Department of Justice, who also participated in the CCIPS Workshop.

¹⁴ The first review was in 1994.