

tell the truth? To all of these questions these men had to defer to public sources,<sup>50</sup> despite the fact they both had been intimately familiar with the data for at least a month. As of October 1993 the UNCDA did not feel that it could even rank order exporters and importers based on the official data.

As for verification of the data, previously addressed in this report, the UNCDA has an even more sensitive problem on its hands. First, the Register is a confidence building mechanism in which verification per se is up to the Member States. It is not an arms control treaty with a verification body. As has been shown earlier in this report, however, it is possible to compare export and import reports to 'verify' the data up to a point. For similar political reasons, UNCDA did not conduct such an analysis, leaving it to Member States and NGOs to use the raw data of the report to draw such conclusions. These latter bodies are quite capable of doing so and the analyses produced were quickly accepted as valid and useful. But it only served to highlight the minimal role of UNCDA in an information management role. It should be added that UNCDA has recently added staff experienced in such analysis, increasing its *capability* to do much more in the way of information management. This will certainly produce valuable internal assessments but it remains to be seen if this capability will translate into a more proactive role for UNCDA in the management and promotion of the Register as envisioned in the Chayes and Chayes cooperative security scheme.

As for the other components of the management function — policy review, capacity building, interpretation and dispute settlement — the ground work for such a development has yet to be started. Even if the UNCDA role in information management should grow to the point where it can be more proactive in enhancing participation and conducting analysis, the large question remains. What is to be done with the information? How will it be used to accomplish the consensus goals of 46/36L, preventing the excessive and destabilizing accumulations of conventional weapons? Resolution 46/36L assigned this task to the CD in paragraph 12: 'Requests the Conference on Disarmament to address as soon as possible the question of the interrelated aspects of the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms.' As can be seen from a perusal of the final report of the 1993 CD, this is and always has been an impossible task. China, Algeria and Egypt pressed to identify a 'common understanding' of the concept, while most other states felt that it was either impossible, very difficult or premature to attempt such a definition.<sup>51</sup>

---

<sup>50</sup> By this time Laurance and Wulf had published their analysis of the first year of reporting. Also publishing reports were BASIC, *Moving Toward Transparency: An Evaluation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Armaments* (Washington: British American Security Information Council, October 1993); Malcolm Chalmers and Owen Greene, *The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms: An Initial Examination of the First Report* (Bradford, UK: Bradford University Department of Peace Studies, October 1993).

<sup>51</sup> 1993 CD Final Report, *op. cit.*, 7-8.