

registers should be set up to reflect local concerns. Finally, a definition must be formulated for key terms such as, "excessive and destabilizing accumulations of weapons."

317. Laurance, Edward J. and Herbert Wulf. "The Continued Quest for Transparency in Armaments: Quantity Versus Utility of Information." In *Disarmament Topical Papers 15: Transparency in Armaments: The Mediterranean Region*, New York: United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, 1993, pp. 82-94.

Laurance and Wulf offer a chronology of the development of the transparency in armaments concept from the Gulf War to the creation of the UN Register of Conventional Arms. Writing prior to the publication of the Register's first annual report, they maintain that its creation has already had several benefits: first, it provides a focal point for discussion; second, it demonstrates what can be done to build confidence in the post Cold War world; third, it encourages transparency at the national level (i.e. some states have changed secretive laws, which forbid the disclosure of weapons information, to participate); fourth, it creates a forum in which official data can be exchanged, thereby enhancing dialogue; fifth, it provides an opportunity to evaluate the performance of a self-checking style of verification (i.e. both importer and exporter should report the same transfer); and, finally, it represents the first attempt to link disarmament with international peace and security.

Laurance and Wulf examine the information available in the public domain under the following headings: military holdings and personnel, arms trade, characteristics of weapons, and military expenditures. The weakness of delivery data on arms transfers was one of the primary reasons for the creation of the Register. It differs from previous arms restraint efforts (e.g. the failed 1978 Conventional Arms Transfer Talks, and the stalled efforts of the 1991 Permanent Five Talks to curb arms sales) in that it does not attempt to determine whether a transfer is destabilizing before it takes place. While this approach is a good starting point, the Register must be expanded to include military holdings and procurement through national production if it hopes to maintain its relevance.

Several steps are suggested to promote transparency in armaments: first, expand the Register from a transfer register to an acquisitions and holdings Register (i.e. include military holdings and procurement through national production); second, simplify and expand the standardized reports of military expenditures to the UN to complement the Register; third, address the issue of including weapons of mass destruction and the transfer of high technology with military applications; fourth, initiate seminars on military doctrine and force structures; and, finally, initiate regional arrangements to complement global approaches.