

REPORT FROM THE ROUNDTABLE ON SMALL ARMS AND THE OAS

**April 28, 2000
Ottawa**

On April 28, 2000, the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development, in partnership with the Non-proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament Division and the Inter-American Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, organised a roundtable on small arms in the Hemisphere. The roundtable brought together experts, academics, NGOs and government officials to share views, ideas and recommendations on various small arms initiatives. Participants included, among others, Wendy Cukier (Ryerson University), Peggy Mason (Council for Peace and Security), Juan Ronderas (York University), Renata Wielgosz (Canadian Permanent Mission to the OAS) and Mark Gaillard (Non-proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament Division, DFAIT). Yvon Dandurand (International Centre for Criminal Law and Justice Reform), Edward Laurence and William Godnick (Monterey Institute) joined the roundtable by phone.

1. Framing the Discussion

Steve Lee, Chair, opened the discussion by welcoming everybody and outlining the goal of the roundtable. He said that small arms is an important part of the human security agenda in the Hemisphere and a critical area for policy attention. Canada could have an opportunity for leadership on small arms issues/initiatives at the OAS General Assembly in Windsor (June 4-6, 2000) and the Quebec City Summit (Summer 2001). He encouraged the participants to contribute to the development of Canada's overall policy on small arms in the Hemisphere and practical initiatives at the OAS.

Yvon Dandurand said that there has been a limited success with reigning in proliferation of small arms in the Hemisphere. He pointed out that the proliferation of small arms is not only a security issue, but impacts human security, stability and democratic development. The surplus of small arms and aggressive marketing strategies contribute significantly to proliferation. He also drew attention to the arbitrary distinction between illicit and licit trade in small arms. While about 60% of the small arms market is controlled by the OAS member states, attention is almost exclusively paid to illicit trade. Moreover, many small arms traded legally between states end up illegally in the hands of mis-users.