

## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

### Scope and Purpose

The last five years or so have seen a rapid expansion of both SALW-related commitments and the programming and resources necessary to give practical effect to these commitments. But while these developments have unfolded, to date little systematic attention has been paid to the 'fit' between SALW-related commitments, programmes, and resources. No clear picture exists, for example, of the resource implications of many of the global, regional and sub-regional undertakings currently in effect (ie. what resources would be required to implement programmes that would fulfill widely subscribed commitments). Nor do we have a clear picture of aggregate SALW spending by the international donor community. Nor, finally, is there any clear picture of which areas – in terms of both geographic region (eg. east Africa) and functional programmes (eg. weapons collection) – are being adequately resourced and which would benefit substantially from even a modest infusion of financial or other support.

This gap in the research is significant for several reasons. In a general sense, not having a clear picture of the general pattern of the relationship between SALW-related commitments, programmes and resources allocation makes possible – perhaps even probable – needless and wasteful overlap, duplication, and inefficiency. It also creates a potential for gaps to emerge in resource 'coverage'. For individual donor governments (like Canada), not having a clear picture of what commitments/programmes are already adequately resourced has the added effect of seriously complicating the formulation of and implementation of sound public policy. Simply put, without such a picture it is difficult to develop an coherent/integrated 'action plan' to address the SALW problem in a comprehensive and efficient way.

In light of these considerations, the purpose of this report is threefold: to develop a broad-brush picture of existing SALW-related programming (types of activity, geographical foci, etc); to develop a better understanding of the resourcing of existing commitments and programmes; and, finally, to develop a set of policy options that will allow Canada to channel its available resources more effectively – that is, in ways that meet real and pressing operational needs, minimize duplication and overlap, enhance coordination, and that are highly visible and accessible. It proceeds in the following manner:

- Chapter 2 addresses the scope and scale of SALW-related activities being undertaken by major *global* international organizations and programmes;
- Chapter 3 addresses the scope and scale of SALW-related activities being undertaken by major *regional* international organizations and programmes; and,
- Chapter 4; addresses the scope and scale of the SALW-related activities being undertaken by the various departments, branches and agencies of the government of Canada.

The report concludes with a discussion of the important, if relatively modest, leadership role Canada can play in mobilizing the international community to deal with the light weapons problem. Specifically, it discusses three broad policy options regarding future SALW programming within the government of Canada: the status quo, focusing on a specific regional or geographic niche, and creating a multi-donor trust fund to support the UN *Program of Action*.