

In acting to co-sponsor the UN resolution and to develop support for it, Canada made it clear that it would continue to support development of the register. Speaking to the 46th Session of the UNGA, Secretary of State for External Affairs Barbara McDougall commented:

With respect to conventional weapons, transparency is vital -- not only for knowing what is happening in the arms trade, but also for building confidence and trust. A global arms transfer register that is universal, non-discriminatory and effective is long overdue. That register should include national inventories as well. And we must be prepared to act on that information.⁷

Speaking to the First Committee, Ambassador Peggy Mason commented:

Canada has already provided to the Secretary-General for the calendar year 1990 data on Canada's exports of military equipment. We intend to provide an even more comprehensive report for 1991. With respect to our first formal reporting to the register, for the calendar year 1992, we intend to provide both data for arms transfers...and information on Canada's military holdings and national production.⁸

Following the UNGA debate and resolution, in December 1991 a background paper prepared by the Department of External Affairs outlined the broader context of Canadian support for the register:

Our aim is not to put an end to the arms trade or to prevent countries from acquiring weapons for reasonable defence purposes. It is rather to prevent the development of arsenals that exceed reasonable defence requirements, particularly in areas of tension and conflict. In general, we hope to encourage the development of habits and processes that regard excessive conventional arms build-ups as appropriate cause for international concern and action. In view of the disparate views on this issue and the past failure of initially-complex technical approaches, we believe the greatest chance of success lies in beginning with modest efforts -- involving both suppliers and recipients -- that can be sustained over time and might facilitate the development of farther-reaching methods later on.⁹

While the formal report to the register is not due until April 1993, in March 1992 the government published its second annual report on the export of military goods from Canada for 1991. In comparison to 1990, in 1991 Canada's exports rose approximately \$30 million from about \$159 million to \$189 million. The

⁷ Quoted in *Disarmament Bulletin*, No. 18, Winter 1991-92: 4.

⁸ A/C.1/46/PV. 37: 39.

⁹ Department of External Affairs, Arms Control and Disarmament Division. *Arms Transfer Control*. December 1991: 4-5.