

database where data on exports and imports from the forms submitted by each country are entered. But as the first year's experience demonstrated, even this most simple of tasks can create problems. Some states did not participate because the form and its associated procedures were not clear. Although they did conduct workshops, UNCDA did not feel that they had the mandate to be proactive in soliciting submissions, given the voluntary nature of the Register. More importantly, several of the major powers on the 1992 panel insisted that the 1992 report outlining the procedures for the Register specifically limit the role of UNCDA, even in this most mundane of tasks. As a result, Colombia submitted its inventory of weapons using the arms import form, and there was little that UNCDA did or could do to let Colombia know of this error in reporting. And there were other examples where a state mis-reported items by putting them in the incorrect weapons category. But the most important effect of this restricted role was in the collection of data. UNCDA is still reluctant to remind member states of the responsibilities that they themselves agreed to in 46/36L. For example, the 1994 group is charged with taking into account the views of individual Member states on the first year of operation of the Register and its expansion. This seems like an ideal opportunity for the administrative arm of an organization to become proactive and solicit such views. This has not happened.

As for the evaluation and analysis of the data, UNCDA is even more proscribed from conducting this type of function. Some of this is a function of the 'Cold War UN' where the superpowers, especially the United States, insured that any attempt by the UN to develop an independent analytical role, especially in security and disarmament matters, was squashed even before it got started. An illustration of the effects of such a role came during the publication of the report in October 1993 of the results from the first year of operation of the Register. All through the summer of 1993 states were submitting their returns. UNCDA had set up a database and found it easy to enter data, almost in real time. But when it came time to compile the data for the required report to the Secretary General and the public at large, UNCDA felt that their 'receive and compile' mandate allowed them only to reprint the forms submitted by the Member States. This resulted in a very long report (over 100 pages), with the only analysis being a chart showing which countries had participated and the type of information submitted by each.<sup>49</sup> The director of UNCDA and the head of the 1992 Panel, Ambassador Wagenmakers (who was in New York for the First Committee meetings) held a press conference to publicize the historic nature of the report and declare it a successful first step. Some 20 journalists were in attendance and asked in vain for a summary of the report. Which country exported the most weapons? Which regions imported the most? Did China report? Did everybody

---

<sup>49</sup> UN Secretary General, *United Nations Register of Conventional Arms*, UN Document A/48/344 (New York: United Nations, 11 October 1993).