

its inception much more is known about the concept of transparency and how it relates to conflict prevention, leading to the conclusion that it has both positive and negative effects. A second problem exists in misunderstanding the importance of military holdings data, which has led to unrealistic expectations in terms of reporting by states.

The key to improving the Register lies with utilizing a conceptual framework which includes five components that must be in place in order for a Register to function as envisioned by its founders. These components include data submission format and procedures, policy relevant theory which explains how arms buildups can lead to instability and conflict, developing early warning indicators, developing a multilateral consultative mechanism, and the generation of policies to address arms buildups.

An analysis of the Egyptians campaign starting in 1997 to include weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in the Register reveals that it has less to do with the Register and more to do with North-South security issues, Middle Eastern policies and nuclear weapons issues that belong in various fora such as the NPT deliberations. WMD are qualitatively different than major conventional weapons and should be treated differently.

As recent conflict has been dominated by the use of small arms and light weapons not covered by the Register, there have been calls to add these weapons to the Register. There are some arguments in favor of this inclusion, especially that it would deal with weapons actually being used. However, there appears to be many more factors working against inclusion of small arms and light weapons in the Register than for their inclusion. These reasons include the difficulty in monitoring the flows, more complex trading patterns, the prominence of surplus weapons as opposed to new production, uncertainty as to their role in leading to conflict, the sensitive nature of their role in internal security, and the multidimensional nature of the effects of these weapons which go far beyond normal arms control and disarmament paradigms.

Recommendations for action include recognizing the sensitivity of military holdings data, developing a standard form for reporting production, conducting seminars on the relationship between arms buildups and conflict, enhancing the role of the UN Department of Disarmament Affairs, supporting the transparency of small arms and light weapons through regional efforts, developing practical means of dealing with the issue of WMD outside of the Register, and supporting seminars on developing a separate nuclear weapons register as well as assessing the relationship between WMD and conventional weapons.