

Foreword

Arms Control and Security Policy Framework

The promotion of international peace and security is a key Canadian foreign policy objective. It constitutes one of the three pillars of the Government's comprehensive foreign policy statement of 1995, *Canada in the World*, namely "the protection of our security, within a stable global environment." To that end, Canada is a major proponent of arms control and disarmament agreements as well as measures to promote transparency and to build confidence at the regional and global levels.

Canada's policies recognize the right, enshrined in the United Nations Charter, of all nations to provide for their legitimate self-defence. At the same time, however, it is Canada's view that the excessive accumulation of conventional weapons has a destabilizing effect on both regional security and global order.

Canada has worked actively to promote greater transparency in the trade of conventional weapons. As part of this effort, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) has published an annual report on the Export of Military Goods from Canada each year since 1990. We have, over time, endeavoured to improve the report by providing additional information about the types of goods exported, and we hope that other countries will seek to provide the same standard of information.

An important element of international efforts to promote greater transparency with regard to the trade in conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies, as well as the exercise of responsibility among supplying countries, is the Wassenaar Arrangement, which Canada helped to form in 1996. Its objective is to contribute to regional and international security and stability by promoting transparency and greater responsibility in transfers of conventional arms and strategically sensitive goods and technologies, thus preventing destabilizing accumulations in areas of concern. The 33 participating states seek, through their national policies, to ensure that transfers of these items do not contribute to the development or enhancement of military capabilities that would undermine these goals, and to ensure that such goods and technologies are not diverted.

The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms also makes a significant contribution to transparency, confidence building and enhanced global security. Canada strongly promoted the creation of the Register of Conventional Arms, established by the Secretary-General in January 1992, and was a founding contributor. Canada also participated in both the 1994 and 1997 UN Group of Governmental Experts on the Register of Conventional Arms. We are actively participating in the Group of Governmental Experts that the Secretary-General has convened this year (2000) to review the operation of the Register, and we continue to advocate the Register's further development and expansion. In support of the Register, which is maintained at UN headquarters in New York, all UN member states are asked to supply data annually on their imports and exports in seven major categories of conventional weapons