

security. In addition, the massive downsizing of military forces in the former Eastern and Western blocs has meant that arms industries throughout the world are struggling to survive, and that states are being forced to promote exports in order to maintain their defence industrial base. The rise in domestic welfare concerns in industrialized and industrializing states, and the long recession of the early 1990s has also meant that the economic and employment benefits from military exports cannot be overlooked. How to reconcile these two contradictory impulses, in both the short and long term, is a major theme of this report.

Canadian policy with respect to the trade in conventional weapons has been restrictive for many years. Canada is not a major player in the international arms trade (although it ranks among the top ten exporters), nor a large producer of weapons, and it occupies a unique position because of its close defence and security relationship with the United States (made concrete in the defence development and production sharing arrangements). The most recent statement of Canada's restrictive arms export policy (1986), denies military exports to:

- countries which pose a threat to Canada and its allies;
- countries involved in or under imminent threat of hostilities; and
- countries under United Nations Security Council sanctions; or
- countries whose governments have a persistent record of serious violations of the human rights of their citizens, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable risk that the goods might be used against the civilian population.¹

In addition to a "blacklist" (the Area Control List) that bans all military exports to a specified countries, since the late 1980s most sales have been evaluated on a case-by-case basis that involves high level and often Ministerial review. Details of the Canadian export control system are given in chapter six. At a global level, Canada is a full participant in a range of multilateral instruments that address conventional weapons, most of which will be detailed below. Canada's general foreign policy goals also include a commitment to enhancing the effectiveness of the UN Register of Conventional Arms, and to exploring ways in which overseas development assistance can be used to encourage reductions in military and armaments spending.²

This report examines several aspects of the issue of *constraining conventional proliferation*, and provides some answers to the questions posed at the outset. It offers no panaceas, but is driven by a conviction that the contemporary international climate is ripe for some modest initiatives that could contribute to reducing the impact of the trade in conventional weapons on regional and internal conflicts, and on the pursuit of other social, political or economic goals that will guarantee greater security into the next century. Its concrete proposals and recommendations are detailed in chapter eight.

A Snapshot of Facts and Figures

Although a more detailed presentation will appear in subsequent chapters, it is useful to set the stage for the subsequent analysis with a brief overview of relevant facts and figures.

¹ Canada, Department of External Affairs and International Trade, "Export Controls Policy," *Communiqué*, 10 September 1986.

² Government of Canada, *Canada in the World* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 1995), 33; "Canada Planning Arms-Cut Reward," *Toronto Star*, 18 April 1995.