

Department of State verified end-user certificates for only 21 out of 1632 applications for small arms transfers to eight Latin American states.<sup>4</sup>

### ***Recommendations***

- Review existing end-use systems in supplier states and identify and adopt best practice through regional organisations and arms control bodies such as the Wassenaar Arrangement.
- Condition arms exports on the supplier state having the right to request, receive and check information on end-use delivery, and to be consulted if the recipient state is considering re-export or change of use.
- Exchange information on sensitive end-users and deny exports to countries with a history of systematic diversion.

## **2. Improving domestic legislation in post-conflict societies**

In post-conflict societies, it is often the case that domestic legislation controlling the possession of weapons is either too lax or has not been enforced.

### ***Recommendations***

- Advocate the immediate review of domestic legislation governing weapons possession in conflict regions.
- As part of the post-conflict reconstruction process, states should impose or enforce existing licensing requirements on civilian possession of small arms and light weapons.

## **3. Links between military and civilian weapons**

To date, military and civilian light weapons issues have been largely viewed as independent phenomena. In general, there has been little focus on the international consequences of light weapons transfers in the development of national legislation even though the distinction between arms control and firearms control has become increasingly blurred. As military weapons are diffused into civil society, their lethality is a cause for concern. This military-style weaponry, which has a far higher potential for violence, is now available widely on the international market. A semi-automatic civilian version of an M-16 can easily be converted into a fully automatic military-style weapon by installing a component widely available in the US from magazines and spare part shops.

Lax domestic legislation can clearly encourage international light weapons trafficking. National legislation on light weapons ranges from very lax to extremely stringent. Such inconsistencies can lead to situations in which lax laws in one country may fuel illegal trade into a neighboring country (e.g. US gun-running into Mexico and Canada). The reduction of international violence will require international cooperation and will require governments to acknowledge that the nature of light weapons, including their portability, value on the black market, and difficult traceability is such that each country's domestic situation cannot be viewed in isolation.

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<sup>4</sup> "A Review of Arms Export Licensing," Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, cited in Micheal Klare and David Andersen, *A Scourge of Guns*, (Washington DC, Federation of American Scientists), 1997, p.66.